

Notes
PCC Member Strategy Call
Wednesday, December 6, 2023
12:00 pm ET

1. Welcome

2. Membership Updates

- a. The PCC is prioritizing ways to increase membership.
 - i. We are actively targeting organizations that we assess would be good additions to our team.
 - ii. We're also in discussions with service providers to help with marketing on this front.
- b. We encourage current members who work with other eligible organizations to invite them to join the PCC. Please feel free to connect any such organizations with us.
 - i. As an example, if you're a certification organization, the complementary professional society with whom you work may be a logical member.

3. Federal Updates

- a. *Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act (H.R. 1477/S. 722)*
 - i. Background: This is a PCC bill that would allow individuals to use 529 education savings plans to obtain post-secondary education, including through credentialing and certification programs.
 - ii. House Sponsors
 - 1. As of December 5, 2023, we've reached 98 co-sponsors for the House version of the bill. We have every expectation that we will hit triple digits before the end of the year.
 - 2. Recent uptick in Democratic support: we've reached 36 Democratic co-sponsors.
 - 3. The most recent additions are Reps. Jarden Golden (D-ME), Mark DeSaulnier (D-CA), Madeleine Dean (D-PA), and Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA).
 - 4. We now also have 11 House Ways and Means Committee Members (all Republicans)

iii. Senate Sponsors

1. Increase in number of co-sponsors for Senate version of the bill—we have an equal number of Democrats and Republicans and the identity of the cosponsors is a group that is very conducive to progress on the bill.

iv. Outreach Efforts

1. Tomorrow's Workforce Coalition met in mid-November. Our membership is up to 763 organizations; thank you to everyone who has joined.
2. While any additional cosponsors for the legislation are welcomed, our key targets are Democrats on the Ways and Means Committee. We have several strong prospects, including Reps. Jimmy Panetta (D-CA), Dwight Evans (D-PA), and Danny Davis (D-IL)
3. **There are two Chicago-area members of the Ways and Means Committee. If anyone has an interest in reaching out to those offices, please let us know!**

b. *REBUILD Skills Act*

i. Background:

1. This is a PCC-proposed bill that would allow certification bodies and training organizations to offer scholarships to individuals who are long-term unemployed, are coming off of active-duty service in the military, or are military spouses. The scholarships offered would be reimbursed by the federal government up to \$3,000. The idea here is to allow individuals who can't afford high up-front costs to participate—and certification bodies would ultimately end up with more participation and greater visibility. The bill has not yet been introduced.
2. The bill also would create a mandate to the Department of Labor (DOL) to develop and maintain a directory of qualified certification organizations. An organization would be included if it is accredited by one of the national accreditation bodies or if it is included in a state or federal government database, like the VA's WEAMS database. Organizations that have not already gone through some form of accreditation or government state or federal vetting would still be able to apply for inclusion in the database under quality criteria established by the DOL.

ii. Status Update

1. We feel as though we're nearing a breakthrough in getting this bill introduced.
2. On the House side, the office of our longtime champion, Congressman Derek Kilmer (D-WA), has indicated that they're nearing the point of introduction. We are continuing to engage with their office. Congressman Kilmer is retiring at the end of next year, so we're hoping that this could be a swan song piece of legislation for him.
3. On the Senate side, Senator Amy Klobuchar, our Senate champion on this bill (and the Freedom to Invest bill) is ready to introduce the bill soon, provided we find her a Republican co-lead.
 - a. We're making progress on this front: Jeff and Craig had a meeting with Senator James Lankford (R-OK) and there is a high level of interest here. We do not have a commitment yet, but we are making significant progress.
 - b. Lankford is also a member of the Senate Finance Committee, which could be the committee of jurisdiction for this bill—an added benefit.
- iii. We will share with members updated draft language and our one-pager on the bill.

4. State Legislation & Advocacy

- a. Outreach & Networking
 - i. Women in Government Leadership and Innovation Summit
 1. Craig attended the Summit and gave a presentation to about 50 state legislators on PCC's activities. He discussed what the PCC does, what our objectives are, and the categories of state legislation we're interested in.
 2. This was successful all around: Craig spoke with many legislators who we hope can be resources if/when relevant bills are introduced in their states.
 3. This was also an opportunity for stakeholder outreach: Craig spoke with representatives from the Institute for Justice (IJ), a libertarian organization that has had a significant influence on occupational licensing reform legislation.
 - a. IJ had a table staffed by some of their policy officials who we'd previously engaged with on the issues; on the table

was IJ's model legislation related to occupational licensing reform, with included provisions that we had negotiated with them over the past several years, making the legislation much less troublesome from a PCC certification perspective. We will continue to engage with them.

ii. Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) Exchange

1. Julia Judish and Jeff Evans attended the ICE exchange and presented together on PCC priority issues. This was an opportunity to spread the word about the PCC and our efforts—and to represent the PCC as thought leaders/experts in this space.

b. **State Legislation Tracking**

i. Updated Terminology

1. We've historically used the term "ex-offender" to refer to legislation relating to how licensing organizations and/or certification organizations may consider past criminal conviction history. Based on our stakeholder outreach (including with groups like Prison Fellowship), we've decided to shift our language around these issues and will now use the term "returning citizens."
 2. You'll see this reflected on our watchlist; it is not a new or different category—just an update in terminology.
- ii. On bill movement, nothing to report since our last meeting. We continue to track bills in Massachusetts and Wisconsin—both of which are variants of returning citizen legislation. The Wisconsin bill had a hearing in October. The Massachusetts bill, while technically still "alive," likely won't move, as Massachusetts is in an informal session (which effectively means that only bills that have unanimous support will pass).
- iii. We are continuing to monitor pre-filed bills, but we've not yet added any to the Watchlist. Expect to see much more movement on this front come January.

5. **In-Person Member Meeting**

- a. Next in-person member meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 20, 2024**. As we've done in the past, we will host the meeting at Pillsbury's DC Office.
- b. We will also have our Capitol Hill Advocacy Day the day before, on **Tuesday, March 19, 2024**. We'll focus our advocacy on the Hill on the Freedom to Invest Bill and, potentially, the REBUILD Skills Act.
- c. In-Person Meeting Agenda Change:

- i. We've received feedback that members value the opportunity to connect with other PCC members during these in-person meetings. To avoid timing pressures, which inhibit opportunities to network, we'll start with programming late morning, break for an hour lunch to allow people to network and engage with one another, and then finish up with another 90 minutes of programming.

6. Wrap-Up

- a. Thank you for attending, everyone! And congratulations to Jeff Evans and Mary Kate Cunningham of ASAE, and Pillsbury's Craig Saperstein, on being recognized among The Hill's [Top Lobbyists in 2023!](#)