

**PROMOTING INNOVATIONS TO 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY CAREERS**

*U.S. Senator Patty Murray*

*September 24, 2008*

“Spurring innovative solutions within states and regions to help young people succeed in the classroom and in their future careers is key to maintaining America's standard of living for our children and future generations. We must equip students with the skills, knowledge, creativity, and flexibility they need for their future well-being, as well as that of their communities and the nation. This bill will bolster conversations and partnerships among education, industry, workforce and economic development leaders at all levels about how, together, we accomplish that goal.” -**Richard W. Riley, Former Secretary of Education (1993-2001)**

“I strongly support Senator Murray’s Promoting Innovations to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Careers Act, which would facilitate the modernization and integration of several clearly related activities—career development, high schools, community colleges, and regional and community development—into a more coherent system that would strengthen each component and make the whole developmental system much more effective. This bill could give a much-needed boost to America’s lagging education and training institutions.” -**Ray Marshall, Chair, LBJ School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin, and former Secretary of Labor**

“I want to thank you for your leadership in crafting legislation that promises to build the next generation of highly skilled workers: Promoting Innovations to 21st Century Careers... The legislation is very pragmatic – and practical – insofar as it gives due attention to several critical aspects for realizing success, particularly: local and regional partnerships among leaders throughout government, education, business, labor, and workforce; strong curriculum development; and professional development. Thank you, again, for your leadership in the United States Senate on this critical issue and know I stand ready to help move your legislation forward.” - **Christine O. Gregoire, Governor, Washington State**

"Senator Murray’s Promoting Innovations to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Careers Act is a bold proposal to move this Nation dramatically forward by initiating and expanding partnerships for high skill career education pipelines that will pay off in better futures for students, more skilled labor for businesses, and increased talent to advance regional growth and opportunity. She offers a clear call to transform the high school learning experience for thousands of students, equipping them with the career guidance, information, and skills they will need to succeed in the global economy." -**Ray Uhalde, Director, Workforce Development Strategies Group at the National Center on Education and the Economy, and former U.S Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor**

“Creating new pathways for preparing a skilled workforce is a critically important responsibility that requires collaboration among employers, educational institutions, the workforce system, and community leaders. Jobs for the Future commends Senator Murray’s leadership in Congress in exploring innovative ways that the federal government can support the creation of strong partnerships that will develop education and career opportunities linked to thriving local and regional industries.” -**Marlene B. Seltzer, President and CEO, Jobs for the Future**

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"A highly skilled workforce is essential to America's continuing economic competitive position and world leadership. Building that knowledgeable, creative, and productive workforce begins by providing all of the nation's students with the excellent education – including a variety of options – that will ensure that they can thrive and succeed in rewarding careers. We applaud Senator Murray's efforts to bring communities together and support the preparation of a strong American workforce for the 21<sup>st</sup> century." **-Bob Wise, President, Alliance for Excellent Education. Former Governor of West Virginia**

"Critical to its vision is the recognition that the talent pipeline must be filled by students who understand in school what it will take to engage in challenging careers. Providing accurate and engaging information of the future of work to students and young adults is one component. The other is building the curriculum and supports necessary for our teachers to prepare those young people for the challenge. This bill will help America do both well." **-James Vollman, President, Advanced Workforce Systems and former Associate Assistant Secretary of Labor**

"I believe that the further development of Career Pathways is a very important component of any strategy to address the needs of less-advantaged youth and young adults as they prepare to enter the labor market. I thus support this bill strongly and hope that it is the first step in a comprehensive effort to address this very serious issue." **-Harry Holzer, Professor of Public Policy, Georgetown Public Policy Institute, former Chief Economist, U.S Department of Labor**

"The Promoting Innovations to 21st Century Careers Act" would provide additional resources to align high school graduation requirements with the knowledge and skills necessary to enter postsecondary education, which is a critical goal for the nation's community colleges. Our colleges dedicate more resources than is desirable to helping students acquire knowledge that they should already possess. AACC thanks Senator Murray for her leadership on this issue and looks forward to working with her as this legislation progresses." **-George Boggs, CEO and President, American Association of Community Colleges**

"The National Education Association believes every student deserves the opportunity to prosper and succeed in this global economy. We need to prepare students for the real world, for success in the new industries of tomorrow like alternative energy, medical research, and cutting-edge technology. This is why NEA is a founding member of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, which is working with partners nationwide to define a vision for our schools in the 21st century. To that end, Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) introduced the Promoting Innovations to 21st Century Careers Act of 2008 that will strengthen careers paths for all students, help prepare them for tomorrow's highly needed and highly skilled jobs and build healthier and more prosperous communities." **-Dennis Van Roekel, President, National Education Association (NEA)**

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"No singular initiative can take on a national challenge as large as ensuring our nation's competitiveness through the critical preparation of America's young people for careers and civic engagement in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Not only do they represent the workforce of tomorrow, but also the community leaders who will guide this country through complex global, economic, and social challenges for the next 50 years. With youth unemployment three times the rate of adults, and high school dropout rates hovering around 50% in our nation's largest urban centers, leaders across all sectors and levels of government must come together to address this critical national problem. My colleagues in philanthropy are eager to join their counterparts in public policy, business, education, and workforce investment in designing creative responses, new pathways, and the right partnerships that will strengthen youth career training and lifelong learning opportunities." **-Steve Gunderson, CEO, Council on Foundations**

"I am so pleased that Senator Murray has introduced the 'Promoting Innovations to 21st Century Careers Act of 2008'. This is an important piece of legislation that recognizes the value of creating community-based partnerships that will help young people, including those with disabilities, prepare for jobs in their communities. This legislation recognizes that pursuing a four-year postsecondary education is not the only path that young people can follow to be successful in both work and as citizens in their communities. By stressing the importance of career planning, continuity beginning in secondary school through postsecondary education, and/or internships and employment opportunities, this legislation truly captures the essence of real pathways to 21<sup>st</sup> century careers." **-Bill East, Executive Director, the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)**

"Today's youth will be entering a workplace unlike any other in history, requiring a level of preparation far more complex than in the past. Traditional career ladders will give way to career lattices, with multiple choices for career progression. Not only will advanced technical knowledge be needed, but creativity, technological acuity, problem-solving, relationship-building, and the ability to accommodate rapidly to change will be the mainstays for long-term economic success. But our schools can't achieve these objectives on their own. Business, labor, community and government must work together with educators to create the pathways to success. Senator Murray's Promoting Innovations to 21st Century Careers Act provides the formula to bring together all those entities that have a stake in the future of our young people." **-Eleni Papadakis, Executive Director, Washington State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board**

"In order to develop a wide range of workers skilled in all areas – both academic and technical, both career-focused and knowledge-focused, both high –skills, and high-demand, our high school students must be given options that lead to the myriad career opportunities available in today's global economy. Senator Murray's Career Pathways bill paves the way for these innovative options to be imagined and carried out in high schools across our country." **-Sue Ambler, President and CEO, Workforce Development Council, Snohomish County**

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"It is my pleasure to write in support of the proposed bill establishing partnerships to create or enhance educational and skills development pathways to 21st century careers. "Promoting Innovations to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Careers" will help to ready students for careers in high-demand fields, increase graduation rates, decrease unemployment rates, and create a seamless transition from secondary education to post-secondary education, rigorous apprenticeships, and workforce preparation. It will improve the economic and personal wellbeing of students and their communities." **-Dr. Terry Bergeson, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Washington State**

"Our economic survival in this interconnected global economy depends upon a highly educated and skilled workforce and on competitive enterprises. Career Pathways supports strong linkages between high school and postsecondary education that encourage students to continuously learn and upgrade their skills and creativity. It offers an incentive to pull together education, workforce and economic forces to collaborate at a system level as a powerful engine of growth for both individuals and the regional economy. And it weaves together separate and disparate services into range of traditional and nontraditional pathways for students, including those who may not have planned their next steps after high school or know all of the options available to them, or those thinking of graduating from high school and going straight to college. Thus, it is worthy of our serious consideration." **-Robert G. Templin, Jr., President, Northern Virginia Community College**

"Thank you for your leadership in developing and introducing the Promoting Innovations to 21st Century Careers Act of 2008. If enacted, your proposed legislation would enable us to expand career pathways in Greater Philadelphia and throughout Pennsylvania. As a result, we could offer these much-needed opportunities for many more young people for their benefit and for that of our employers, citizens and regional economies. We also appreciate your recognition of intermediary organizations and the important roles they play in youth workforce preparation, and urge your continued support for regional systems and strategies that build on existing successful efforts and increase education and career opportunities for our young people." **-Laura Shubilla, Co-President/CEO, Philadelphia Youth Network**

"Senator Murray's Promoting Innovations to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Careers legislation recognizes the need to invest in our most valuable resource- our people. America's economy will remain strong as long as we give our citizens the skills and training they need to get the job done." **-Larry Brown, Legislative & Political Director, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO District 751**

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"Senator Murray has been a consistent champion for our economic growth. Her Promoting Innovations to 21st Century Careers Act shows her foresight for the skills development and education of workers that will keep us ahead of our competitors in the global economy." ***-Tim Probst, CEO, Washington Workforce Association***

"Thank you, Senator Murray, for your vision and creativity in developing the Promoting Innovations to 21st Century Careers legislation. It will enhance the work being done in Washington State to move Career and Technical Education forward. The students and the economy will be the real beneficiaries of your work." ***-Kathleen Lopp, Executive Director, Washington State Association for Career and Technical Education***

"Senator Murray, we applaud your leadership in advocating for funding to improve the ways in which our communities provide career information and education and skill development opportunities for youth, teachers, counselors, and parents...We are pleased to see the flexibility both at the state and local level to develop strategies that meet community and employer needs...We appreciate the opportunity for supplemental grants to support curriculum development that reinforces reading and math skills through real world applications along with teacher training." ***-Dale Lemmons, Board Chair, and Lisa Nisenfeld, Executive Director, Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council***

"Senator Murray's continued advocacy for workforce development is exemplified in this bill. The Promoting Innovations to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Careers Act is the type of federal policy needed to support state and regional partners, like those in Seattle, in our efforts to create innovative strategies to connect the education and skills development for young adults with the opportunities available to them in postsecondary education, careers and the needs of thriving industries. To the end, it encourages strategic partnerships between education, workforce, business, economic development and labor—partnerships that we know work because of the success of state and local workforce boards. I am very excited about this bill and thank the Senator for considering lessons learned from Washington State's leaders in this field."

***-Kris Stadelman, CEO, Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County***