



# Trade Adjustment Assistance

The expansion of global trade has been a major driver of growth in the U.S. economy over the last half century. However, increasing competition and improvements in automation, transportation, and information technology have led to significant worker disruptions in many sectors of the economy, as jobs are offshored to other countries or eliminated entirely due to globalization. For such trade-impacted workers, access to training and education—including developmental or remedial education for workers with significant work experience but limited basic skills—is critical to achieving successful transitions from one industry or occupation to another.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) provides a robust set of training, income supports, and other benefits for a broad range of workers who have lost, or are at risk of losing, their jobs as a direct result of foreign trade. Offering up to two years of training and income support, plus a tax credit to cover up to 80 percent of the cost of health care insurance premiums, TAA is often considered one of the best worker assistance programs available.

In 2009, Congress made many improvements to the program through the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act (TGAAA). TGAAA expanded eligibility to a broader range of manufacturing workers, covered service sector workers whose jobs are lost overseas, provided training for part-time workers, and increased the Health Coverage Tax Credit so that workers do not also face massive health insurance premium increases along with the loss of a job. These improvements are crucial to the program, as 42 percent of workers currently covered by TAA qualify for the program due to TGAAA. Since the changes were implemented, an estimated 155,000 dislocated workers who otherwise would not have been eligible have received benefits and services under the program.

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## Policy Recommendations

- ▶ Reauthorize the TAA program, maintaining current eligibility requirements, training options, and funding levels.
- ▶ Fully fund the Industry or Sector Partnership Grant Program, which would support partnerships between multiple stakeholders—including employers, educational institutions, and economic and workforce development agencies—to address the skill needs of local or regional industries in trade-impacted communities.
- ▶ Improve the TAA Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant Program by expanding participant eligibility, allowing a percentage of annual funding to be used for administration and evaluation, and providing flexibility to obligate appropriated funds over multiple fiscal years.

### National Skills Coalition

seeks an America that grows its economy by investing in its people, so that every worker and every industry has the skills to compete and prosper.

We organize broad-based coalitions seeking to raise the skills of America's workers across a range of industries. We advocate for public policies that invest in what works, as informed by our members' real-world expertise. We communicate these goals to an American public seeking a vision for a strong U.S. economy that allows everyone to be part of its success.

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