

# Upskill U.S. Workers to Support Economic Growth

**THERE ARE 24 MILLION AMERICANS** who have low literacy or numeracy skills, yet are currently employed. Their lack of foundational skills serves as an invisible drag on productivity, and can increase employer costs while limiting workers' ability to advance their careers. Congress can address these challenges by increasing funding for adult education programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and by expanding pathways for low-skilled workers in other education and workforce programs.

## Congress should

### **INCENTIVIZE PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN WORKERS WITH FOUNDATIONAL SKILL NEEDS.**

Congress should restructure the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) as the Work-Based Learning Tax Credit to reward private companies that invest in upskilling workers – including individuals exiting public benefits or with limited foundational skills.

### **INVEST IN CAREER PATHWAYS.**

As part of Higher Education Act reauthorization, Congress should invest \$500 million in a Career Pathways grant program to support proven strategies such as Integrated Education and Training (IET) that can help adults with foundational skills gaps to attain industry-recognized credentials.

### **SUPPORT EDUCATION AND TRAINING UNDER TANF.**

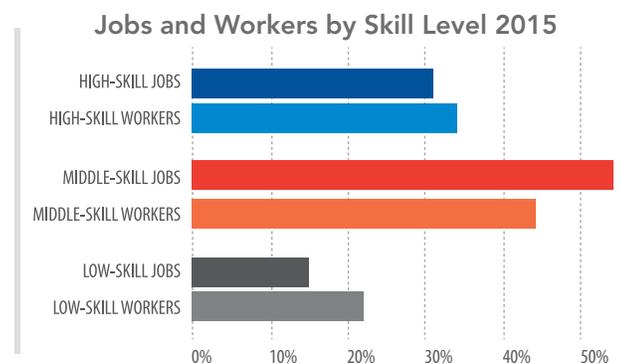
Fewer than ten percent of adult Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients have education beyond high school. Congress should remove restrictions on education and training under TANF and dedicate resources for proven upskilling strategies like career pathways.

## EQUIP WORKERS TO MEET EMPLOYER DEMAND FOR MIDDLE-SKILL JOBS

*There are millions of middle-skill jobs going unfilled in the U.S. economy, and millions of low-skilled U.S. workers who could fill those jobs with the right training. Let's invest in upskilling policies to match workers with better-paying jobs.*



Source: Survey of Adult Skills (OECD, 2013)



Source: NSC analysis

**ACT NOW!**

**Equip America's workers to upskill and meet employer needs through the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, HEA, and TANF.**

