

To: Interested Parties

From: National Skills Coalition

Re: Veterans Strongly Support Increased Investment in Skills Training



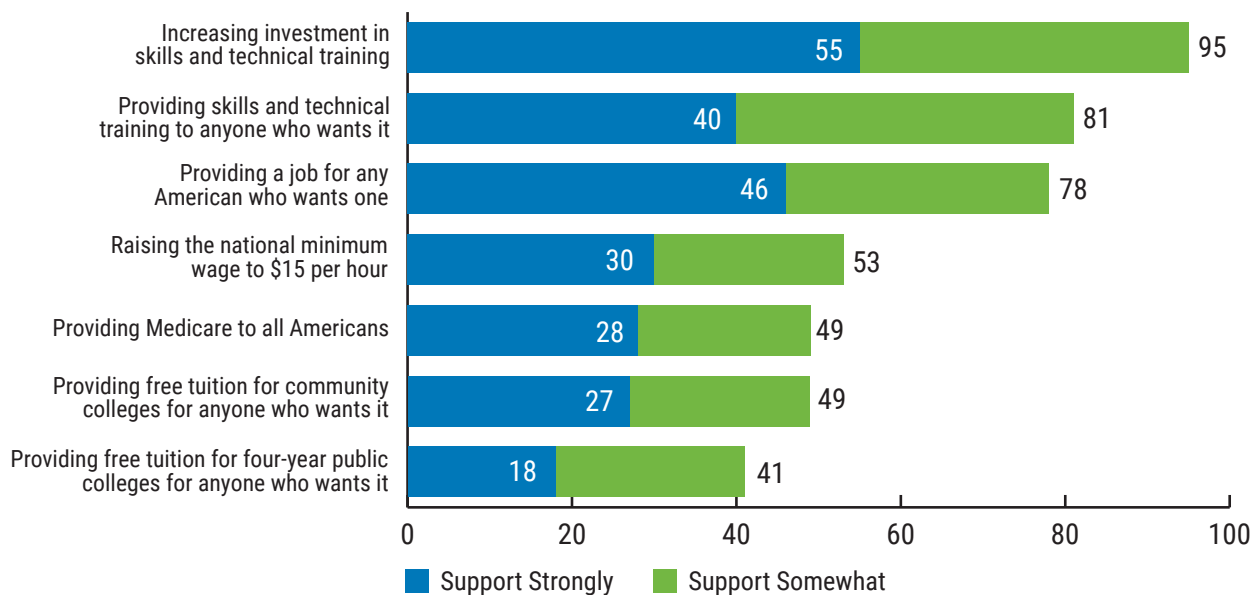
POWERED BY NATIONAL SKILLS COALITION

On behalf of National Skills Coalition, ALG Research conducted an online survey of 700 veterans to gauge their perceptions, priorities, and expectations of skills training, as well as other national economic policy issues. Overall, 88% of survey respondents are veterans who served in active duty, either overseas, in a combat zone, or in the US, while 12% served in the reserves or National Guard. The survey was conducted October 22-27, 2019.

## Key Findings

- 1. Veterans overwhelmingly support increasing investment in skills training.** More than nine-out-of-ten veterans (95%) support increasing investment in skills and technical training, with a majority of veterans (55%) strongly supporting more investment. Fully, 95% agree (60% strongly agree) that job and vocational training programs would help veterans transition back to civilian life and help them get good paying jobs.
- 2. Increasing investment in skills training was the most popular of seven popular economic proposals tested.** At 95% support, increasing investment in skills training was significantly more popular than other popular economic policy proposals tested, including providing a job for any American who wants one (78%), raising the national minimum wage to \$15 an hour (53%), providing Medicare to all Americans (49%), providing free tuition for community colleges for anyone who wants it (49%), and providing free tuition for four-year public colleges for anyone who wants it (41%).

## Support for Economic Policy Proposals



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3. **Support for skills training remains extremely high even when investment is framed as “government funding.”** Noting that increased funding for skills training would come from the government does little to dampen support, 78% of veterans outright support increasing “government funding” for additional skills training in the U.S.
4. **Veterans are more likely to vote for candidates who prioritize skills training.** By a 35-point margin, a plurality (49%) say they are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports increasing government funding for skills training, compared to just 14% who say it will make them less likely. This is consistent with two separate nationwide surveys of business leaders and likely 2020 voters, which ALG conducted earlier this year on behalf of National Skills Coalition. In the survey of business leaders, 54% say they would be more likely to support a political candidate who supports greater investment in skills training. Similarly, 59% of likely 2020 voters also say they would be more inclined to back a candidate who supports increasing government funding for skills training.
5. **Many veterans feel unprepared for the current job market.** Almost half of veterans (41%) felt unprepared to enter the civilian job market after returning from active duty, which swells to 45% of veterans without a college degree, 58% among veterans of color, and 67% among female veterans. Veterans strongly disagree that the federal government is currently doing enough to help them readjust to civilian life – 69% disagree overall compared to just 27% who agree.
6. **Many veterans are unaware GI benefits can be used for apprenticeship programs.** It is widespread knowledge that GI benefits can be used for both four-year colleges (88%) and community colleges (84%) but far fewer veterans are aware they can be used for apprenticeship programs (58%). African American veterans (43%) and veterans aged 18-34 (40%) are the least likely to be aware of this.
7. **Veterans believe skills training programs will benefit them even more than others.** Veterans are nearly unanimous in their belief that they would benefit from increased skills training in the U.S. – 92% overall say it would benefit them. More think that expanding skills training will be a significant benefit for veterans (64%) than workers generally (52%) or businesses overall (42%).
8. **There is strong support for a range of proposals related to skills training.** Six specific proposals related to skills training and education all received support from at least three quarters of survey respondents. Allowing GI benefits to be used for support services received particularly strong support from veterans of color (57% strong support), disabled veterans (58% strong support), and those age 18-34 (62%).

## Support for Proposals Related to Skills Training and Education

Skills Training Proposals	Total Support - Oppose	Strong Support
Create closer links between community colleges and businesses to help community colleges train people for the jobs businesses are hiring for.	94% - 5%	56%
Provide tax incentives to employers who invest in skills training for their workers.	91% - 7%	46%
Invest in skills training programs at the same level that we invest in college.	86% - 10%	47%
Make federal financial aid available to anyone seeking skills training, not just those seeking college degrees.	84% - 12%	43%
Make it easier for people who receive government assistance like welfare or food stamps to get skills training, so they can find a family supporting job.	82% - 15%	44%
Allowing GI benefits to be used for support services like housing, child care, transportation while in school or job-training classes.	80% - 16%	44%