

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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**MEMORANDUM**

October 20, 2023

**To: Members, Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Energy Policy, and Regulatory Affairs**

**From: Committee Staff**

**Re: Hearing titled “The Power of Apprenticeships: Faster, Better Paths to Prosperous Jobs and Less Waste in Higher Education”**

On Wednesday, October 25, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. ET in 2154 Rayburn House Office Building, the Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Energy Policy, and Regulatory Affairs will host a hearing titled “The Power of Apprenticeships: Faster, Better Paths to Prosperous Jobs and Less Waste in Higher Education.”

**I. BACKGROUND:**

As the total amount of outstanding federal student loans surpasses \$1.6 trillion, U.S. institutions of higher education are not producing graduates who fully meet U.S. employers’ needs in many cases. Cost-effective decisions surrounding higher education and skills-based training have never been more important. Cost-effective alternatives to traditional four-year degrees, including apprenticeships and career and technical education programs, have demonstrated successful results that can be replicated throughout the U.S. Expanding the role of these programs holds promise to improve educational effectiveness and boost overall economic output, while ensuring the development of a workforce to maintain U.S. global competitiveness in the future.

**II. HEARING PURPOSE:**

The hearing will discuss challenges surrounding the rising cost of higher education and examine the importance of apprenticeships and career and technical education programs as cost-effective solutions to prepare students for the workforce needs of the present and future.

**III. WITNESSES:**

**Dr. Paul Winfree**  
President & CEO  
Economic Policy Innovation Center

**Erin Davis Valdez**

Policy Director, Next Generation Texas  
Texas Public Policy Foundation

**Dr. Casey K. Sacks**

President  
BridgeValley Community and Technical College

**Tony Ewing**

President  
Advanced Fixtures, Inc.