



**Independent Electrical
Contractors**

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March 15, 2013

The Honorable John Kline
Chairman
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable George Miller
Ranking Member
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Kline and Ranking Member Miller:

On behalf of the Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC), a national trade association composed of 56 chapters with more than 3,000 members, I am writing in support of H.R. 803, the Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills (SKILLS) Act, as part of a much-needed effort to modernize federal job training programs.

Reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act, which provides funding and assistance that are integral to the education and training of the next generation of highly skilled electrical and systems contractors, is long overdue. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), electricians will have a 23 percent growth rate between 2010 and 2020, which is higher than the national average job growth rate. Even so, our industry is still experiencing a shortage of qualified workers.

A number of IEC chapters currently receive funding through several key workforce development programs that have helped them to train approximately 10,000 apprentices per year. However, navigating the bureaucracies of the multiple federal agencies administering these programs is often difficult and confusing. IEC supports the SKILLS Act because it streamlines and consolidates the array of funding streams for workforce development into one Workforce Investment Fund, through which states can more efficiently provide support services for employers, workers, and job seekers.

Further, by requiring that two-thirds of both state and local Workforce Investment Board members are employers, the SKILLS Act strengthens the involvement and decision-making power of business leaders familiar with the employment and training needs and priorities of their communities.

Additionally, the SKILLS Act removes statutory language barring merit shop contractors from accessing green jobs training grants. IEC has long supported expanding access to green jobs funding to all training programs.

H.R. 803 is a step in the right direction for workforce development reform. IEC applauds the Committee on Education and the Workforce for bringing this legislation forward, and encourages swift passage of the SKILLS Act by the House of Representatives today.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alexis Moch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alexis Moch
Vice President, Government Affairs
Independent Electrical Contractors