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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | ****ACCA Hails Workforce Development Legislation**** | | | |
| |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Arlington, VA, September 21, 2017 – The Air Conditioning Contractors of America (ACCA) has announced its enthusiastic support for S. 1841, legislation to amend the National Apprenticeship Act, introduced by Senator Roger Wicker (R-Miss).  This legislation would codify a portion of President Trump’s Executive Order “[Expanding Apprenticeships in America](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/06/15/presidential-executive-order-expanding-apprenticeships-america).” Specifically, it would require the U.S. Department of Labor’s (DOL) State Apprenticeship Agency to act on applications to create an apprenticeship program within 90 days. This legislation would require applications pending for more than 90 days to be forwarded to DOL, which would then have 30 days to make a determination or the application is automatically approved.  “Apprenticeships are an important workforce development tool,” Senator Wicker said. “These programs provide a unique opportunity for people to receive on-the-job training with experts in their field while they ‘earn as they learn.’ Streamlining government bureaucracy will make it easier for employers to create apprenticeship programs, which would help fill millions of jobs currently available in air conditioning, plumbing, electrical, and other high-tech industries.”  “This legislation could be a game changer for the HVAC and refrigeration industry, which is in desperate need of technical staff,” said ACCA Chairman of the Board, Don Langston, President of Aire Rite Refrigeration and Air Conditioning, Huntington Beach, CA. “My goal, as Chairman of ACCA, has been to help address the skills gap and workforce challenges that the industry is facing. I offer the full support of the Air Conditioning Contractors of America as Senator Wicker works to advance this legislation.”  “As a mechanical contractor in Mississippi, I am thrilled that my Senator is fighting for my industry," said ACCA Board Member Keith Paton, Vice President of Service for Ivey Mechanical Co., headquartered in Kosciusko, MS with offices located throughout the Southeast. "Our industry is in desperate need of new talent. Increased opportunities for apprenticeship programs will be vital to fulfilling the need for construction field co-workers and the 115,000 HVAC technician jobs that our industry has to fill by 2022.”  As the heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration (HVACR) industry grows, the HVAC Workforce Development Foundation estimates that the U.S. will need 115,000 HVACR technician jobs by 2022. And, the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce estimates that skilled apprentices in the U.S. earn more money over a lifetime than the average college graduate. Additionally, the average starting wages for apprentices is $60,000 annually, without the burden of student loan debt.  ACCA is playing a leading role working with the Department of Labor, Members of Congress, and numerous educational associations to address the skills gap and workforce development needs of the HVACR industry. ACCA is a Foundation Sustaining Member of the HVAC Workforce Development Program and a partner in the Rees Scholarship Foundation which has awarded more than $680,000 in HVACR education scholarships.  For more information, please contact Todd Washam, ACCA’s Director of Industry and External Relations, at [todd.washam@acca.org](mailto:todd.washam@acca.org) or 703-824-8864 (direct).   |  | | --- | | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |  | | --- | | **About ACCA**  The Air Conditioning Contractors of America, is the nation’s premier trade association for heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration contractors. ACCA’s member companies provide quality service in heating, air conditioning, refrigeration, building and home performance, solar, hydronics, and plumbing. ACCA has created the nationally-recognized and industry-endorsed standards needed to ensure HVACR systems are properly installed and maintained. Learn more at [www.acca.org](http://www.acca.org).  ### | | | | |