

Support for the Tools of the Trade Bill Passage Recommendation

In an attempt to support and increase apprenticeships, the committee recommends passage of the Tools of the Trades bill introduced last session in the Wisconsin legislature.

Wisconsin employers desperately need skilled workers and apprenticeships have been successful in helping meet that demand, however the road to complete them is long and paved with financial challenges that can discourage even the most motivated individuals. In response to this need, SB 44 will provide the Wisconsin Technical College System Board with an additional \$100,000 per academic year to assist technical college students who have undertaken apprenticeship training courses in conjunction with instruction at their schools. Each individual student who qualifies is eligible to receive up to \$1,000, which must be used to assist in paying for materials and expenses associated with the apprenticeship training program, including tools, clothing, equipment and supplies. The Technical College System Board is required to establish an application process and criteria for awarding these grants. The existing Tools of the Trade program is privately funded for the system by the Ascendium Education Philanthropy (formerly Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation) and dispenses \$200,000 annually in grants.

The proposal passed the full State Senate on a unanimous 33-0 vote this session, and the full State Assembly unanimously 95-0 the previous session. To see a full listing of testimony for this bill, click [here](#). As we work to restart our economy in Wisconsin, ensuring that people get the support and training they need to get to work is critical. Now is the time to pass the Tools of the Trade bill.