

### **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA):**

#### **What It Is**

WIOA replaces the Workforce Investment Act, a long-expired program that provided structure and funding for Workforce Investment Boards around the country with a goal of improving worker training. WIOA improved on WIA by eliminating duplicative programs, streamlining processes and placing an emphasis on the need for industry-recognized credentials.

#### **What it Means for Manufacturers**

Manufacturers need access to employees with the skills necessary for 21<sup>st</sup>-century advanced manufacturing. The NAM and the Manufacturing Institute have identified and endorsed the certifications that train potential employees with the specific skills necessary for success in the manufacturing workforce. WIOA places a specific emphasis on those credentials and the NAM continues to work towards implementation that allows for active employer participation in the workforce system.

### **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)/NCLB:**

#### **What It Is:**

The Act funds primary and secondary education though an emphasis on equal access to education and accountability. Funds are authorized for professional development, instructional materials, for resources to support educational programs, and for parental involvement promotion. The most recent reauthorization is known as “No Child Left Behind.”

#### **What It Means To Manufacturers:**

Manufacturers want to ensure access to a skilled workforce. Excellence in education and educational opportunities for all is the best guarantee of meeting the demands of the global economy. The NAM believes in a strong system of high-quality early learning, elementary, secondary and higher education, including career and technical education that effectively prepares students for the challenges of the 21st-century global workforce. Closer alignment of education and training programs to marketplace demands is critical to ensuring students and workers are prepared for the challenges of a high-skilled, dynamic workplace.

## Higher Education Act (HEA):

### What It Is

The HEA was enacted in 1965 with a goal of strengthening the “educational resources of our colleges and universities” and providing “financial assistance for students in postsecondary and higher education.” It increased federal money given to universities, created scholarships, gave low-interest loans for students, and established a National Teachers Corps.

### What It Means For Manufacturers

The HEA contains numerous opportunities to advance STEM education as a policy priority. The strength of U.S. manufacturing and the continued growth of high-technology industries are dependent on the availability of high-quality personnel, especially in the STEM disciplines. U.S. manufacturing leads the world in global innovation, but it is essential to inspire a continuing pipeline of students to pursue STEM careers to sustain our technological edge and compete in the global economy.

## Carl D. Perkins Act:

### What It Is

The Perkins act aims to increase the quality of technical education within the United States, through promotions of Career and Technical Education programs on the high-school and college level. It was most recently reauthorized in 2006.

### What It Means For Manufacturers

The Perkins Act funds some of the high-school programs most important to manufacturers. Though there is language that specifically points the use of industry-recognized credentials in the current act it is essential that a stronger alignment be established to ensure the limited funds from the Perkins Act are being used to train students with skills that are in-demand in the workforce.