

GROW AMERICA Act: Creating a Pathway to Transportation Careers

The GROW AMERICA Act will create jobs and take significant steps to strengthen our nation’s transportation workforce by preparing the next generation of transportation workers. Our nation’s transportation system depends on a skilled and qualified workforce equipped with a broader range of skills than in the past.

- Transportation accounts for 11 million jobs, and transportation-related employment accounts for about 8.7 percent of civilian workers in the United States.
- Every \$1 billion in public infrastructure spending creates 13,000 jobs.
- Studies indicate that 54 percent of the transportation workforce will be eligible to retire in the next 10 years— double the retirement rate of the nation’s entire workforce.
- Currently, women and minorities are underrepresented in highway construction employment. In 2008, African Americans comprised only 9 percent of the industry, and women comprised only 11 percent.
- As of December 2014, there were over 500,000 unemployed veterans in the civilian labor force. This includes 191,000 Gulf War II Era veterans, often with experience and training that could help them transition into good paying transportation jobs.

The GROW AMERICA Act includes \$369 million in workforce development grants over six years to support and enhance the size, diversity, and skills of our nation’s transportation workforce. The GROW AMERICA Act develops a pathway to help disadvantaged workers acquire the skills they need to pursue available jobs and careers by:



- Strengthening collaboration between transportation agencies, employers, and workforce programs to ensure effective workforce development;
- Promoting the use of registered apprenticeship and job training programs;
- Creating an incentive grant program for states that effectively use their on-the-job training funds;
- Having state DOTs develop transportation workforce plans that identify immediate and anticipated demographic and workforce gaps to ensure that future training helps create a diverse workforce with the right mix of skills;

- Providing grants to universities to support cross-modal transportation education, research, and technology transfer; and
- Giving priority to veterans in transportation research, commercial truck driver training, and workforce development programs.



Presently, the U.S. Department of Transportation provides over \$51 billion in surface transportation construction funding each year to build our nation’s highways, bridges, and public transportation systems. Communities across the country have long sought the ability to leverage those funds into local jobs and economic growth.

The GROW AMERICA Act directly supports communities by:

- Providing new opportunities for contractors to hire residents from communities, right where we are investing in our transportation infrastructure;
- Establishing standards under which a contract for construction may be advertised that contains local hiring requirements; and
- Strengthening Buy America rules and reinforcing fair wage provisions on transportation related projects.