



## **Independent Women Supports the Flexibility for Workers Education Act**

April 7, 2025

Dear Members of Congress,

Independent Women applauds the Flexibility for Workers Education Act (H.R. 2262), introduced by Representative Ashley Hinson (R-IA).

Independent Women advocates for policies that aren't just well-intended but actually enhance people's freedom, opportunities, and well-being. This bill can help address the skills gap plaguing our workforce by modernizing federal law to expand educational and upskilling efforts nationwide.

Employers have millions of unfilled positions because they cannot find qualified workers. In its most recent **April 2025 survey**, the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) found that 87% of small business owners hiring or trying to hire reported few or no qualified applicants for available positions. If employers could train their current employees, they could expand their pool of qualified workers.

However, federal law discourages employers from investing in training programs for employees. Currently, voluntary employer-provided training, upskilling, and educational opportunities for workers—even if offered outside of regular business hours—count toward hours worked. For example, a boutique hotel owner might want to offer a front desk staffer training in sales outside of work. Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the owner cannot offer to pay for a class or online certification earned outside of working hours without paying hourly wages to that employee. Employees lose out on valuable training that could help them advance their careers.

The Flexibility for Workers Education Act would modify FLSA to permit businesses to offer voluntary growth and development opportunities related

to the employee's job outside of work hours and without counting toward hours worked. This could encourage employees to invest in the development of their staff.

Independent Women appreciates Rep. Hinson's leadership on this bill and urges all lawmakers to pass it into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrice Onwuka', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patrice Onwuka  
*Director, Center for Economic Opportunity*  
*Independent Women*