The National Career Development Association (NCDA) would like to express our support of the Creating Access to Rural Employment and Education for Resilience and Success (CAREERS) Act. NCDA is the preeminent organization for career development professionals in the United States. As a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, members include career development professionals from every state and in both urban and rural communities. We work in schools, universities, career centers, nonprofits, large corporations, small businesses, and government agencies. Our vision is for all people to attain fulfilling career and life goals, and we help people throughout their school and working lives build skills, find jobs, and ultimately achieve career fulfillment. Our members are on the front line connecting Americans to employment opportunities, and our work directly contributes to helping prepare the next generation of workers.

NCDA takes note of the [Rural America at a Glance: 2023 Edition](https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=107837) report released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service (ERS) in November 2023. The report highlights that more than half of extremely low-income rural households that rent their homes experience housing insecurity. The same report shows that rural areas continue to struggle to return to their 2007 employment rate, while urban areas are more than 10% above 2007 levels.

As an organization that strives to help all people attain stability and fulfillment through jobs and careers, NCDA sees the CAREERS Act as a critical step in fighting rural poverty and unemployment. The Act’s goal to increase access to rural employment opportunities, including those in public utilities, conservation practices and management, health care, child care, manufacturing, and agriculture, is critical to connecting rural America to economic opportunities. We particularly support the important grants for career pathway programs and industry or sector partnerships that this Act would create, as well as increasing critical access to NCDA-credentialed career development professionals to support job seekers in rural areas.

NCDA is pleased to join Advance CTE, the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), and the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) in supporting the Creating Access to Rural Employment and Education for Resilience and Success (CAREERS) Act. Please consider us a source for information on career development and connecting Americans with jobs and careers. If we can provide any further insight or be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out.