



Summary of 2025 WLTI Congressional Visits

Legislative visits on Sept. 23, 2025:

SkillsUSA members submitted reports covering 25 congressional visits, including five Senate offices and 17 House offices identified below.

The following reports were submitted by students attending the 2025 WLTI:

ALABAMA

Sen. Katie Britt — met with legislative correspondent Emily Grace Lemak. A joint delegation of six Alabama students, one Mississippi student and advisors from both states shared personal stories about how SkillsUSA and CTE have transformed their lives, highlighting the technical training, employability skills and leadership qualities the programs develop. The group emphasized the critical role of Perkins V funding in sustaining high-quality CTE programs and asked for the senator's continued support of CTE and a future vote in favor of Perkins VI. Ms. Lemak was highly impressed that students of this age are actively advocating for CTE and said she wished she had been able to do this type of work when she was their age.

CALIFORNIA

Rep. Julia Brownley — met with legislative assistant Kesten Bozinovic. We discussed avenues for increased CTE funding through Perkins V, shared SkillsUSA's impact on our personal and professional lives and highlighted the importance of Perkins V funding to local and state CTE programs. Our call to action was sustained and increased Perkins V funding. Mr. Bozinovic described Rep. Brownley's enthusiasm for the skilled trades, particularly her work with the California New Car Dealers Association in the automotive sector.

Rep. Jim Costa — met with legislative aide Ellen O'Rourke. We talked about CTE and what it has done for us through SkillsUSA and our CTE programs, why CTE is so important and how crucial Perkins V funding is. Our call to action was to advocate for the support and protection of CTE. The office supports CTE, and the congressman is very pro-education.

Rep. Adam Gray — met with staffer Scotty Bryan. We discussed SkillsUSA California and our mission, the importance of CTE and Perkins V for middle school, high school and postsecondary students, and their impact on our communities. We asked for support in increasing Perkins V funding so students are career-ready day one and invited the office to the congressional networking reception. The office supports CTE, though the representative is not on the CTE Caucus; his focus is agriculture and health, and we provided information on those aspects.

Rep. Josh Harder — met with senior legislative staffer Taylor Reed. We discussed how SkillsUSA has affected our communities, the nation and the individuals in the organization, and how to protect the role of CTE in public schools so students can get the early hands-on training they need to help close the skills gap. We advocated for continued investment in the nation's CTE infrastructure through Perkins V. Rep. Harder supports CTE and advocates for policies like trades and career education packages and postsecondary CTE in cities like Stockton. Funding CTE through Pell Grants and Perkins V is a priority for him.

Rep. Sydney Kamlager-Dove — met with Kyler Gilkey. He was kind and interactive, and we talked about the impact our CTE programs have made on our lives. We advocated for more Perkins V funding for CTE programs. He supports SkillsUSA and CTE; his younger brother has told him about all the CTE programs he wishes he had in high school and how they help students with their career choices.

Rep. Kevin Mullin — met with staff assistant Mary Kett. We introduced ourselves, discussed the purpose of our visits, talked about why funding is important to CTE students and ended with an invitation to the networking event. Our call to action was to join the initiative for CTE and learn more through the informational folder we provided. She didn't have much prior knowledge of SkillsUSA and CTE.

Rep. Dave Min — met with Weston Beckmann and Ryan Embrahimy. We met briefly to drop off promotional materials for the office to review. We talked about the impact of SkillsUSA, our mission and the necessity of Perkins V funding, and asked for their support in increasing Perkins V funding so students gain more opportunities and experience. The representative is a member of the education caucus.

Rep. Jay Obernolte — met with legislative correspondent Tom Morel. We discussed Perkins V and the impact its funding has on students enrolled in CTE, along with projected career growth and opportunities through CTE and SkillsUSA. Our call to action was supporting Perkins V in CTE and public schools. Mr. Morel was highly supportive of SkillsUSA and agreed with the impact it has on the skilled trades and the opportunities CTE creates for students even after high school.

Rep. David Valadao — met with legislative assistant Olivia Speno. We gave an overview of SkillsUSA and its purpose and explained how crucial CTE is and how heavily it relies on Perkins V funding. Our call to action was to advocate for CTE and how advocacy helps SkillsUSA grow its membership. She wasn't familiar with SkillsUSA or CTE and noted that the federal government doesn't have direct control over state CTE funding.

Rep. Maxine Waters — met with chief of staff J. Ellis McGinnis. We spoke about career education, the skilled workforce and the impact of the SkillsUSA Framework, how Perkins provides classrooms with equipment and SkillsUSA's impact on students not just locally but nationally. Mr. McGinnis supported the active movement in CTE and SkillsUSA, closing the skills gap amid the struggle to find skilled workers, and the concept of the Framework and the employability skills students learn from it.

Sen. Alex Padilla — met with legislative aide Mason Arndt. We shared personal stories about how CTE and SkillsUSA have impacted our lives and the lives of other students, discussed the importance of postsecondary access and college opportunities, and asked the office to continue prioritizing Perkins funding. We closed by inviting the aide to our reception and took a photo together. Sen. Padilla has been a strong supporter of CTE and consistently backs CTE programs and funding that help students gain skills and career opportunities.

Sen. Adam Schiff — visited his office. We dropped off a folder with information about SkillsUSA and Perkins funding and spoke briefly with the receptionist, who accepted the materials on behalf of the office. We asked that the information be shared with the senator so he can continue supporting CTE initiatives that help students gain skills and career opportunities.

Rep. Pete Aguilar — met with Grace Kenney. We introduced ourselves, discussed the purpose of our visits, talked about why funding is important to CTE students and ended with an invitation to the

networking event. Our call to action was to join the initiative for CTE and learn more through the informational folder we provided. She didn't have much prior knowledge of SkillsUSA and CTE.

INDIANA

Rep. André Carson — met with legislative aide Ryan George. State officers shared an overview of SkillsUSA and presented information about CTE with personal touches, covering Perkins funding, personal experiences, CTE needs and the need for more classroom spots — available slots are only half of what's needed. Asked what else Rep. Carson should address beyond education, the officers shared their thoughts on awareness and accessibility, teacher pay and mental health. They invited the representative to the SkillsUSA Indiana State Leadership and Skills Conference, April 10-11, 2026, and left SkillsUSA materials and a reception invitation. Mr. George didn't know much about SkillsUSA but shared that Rep. Carson is an advocate for education and is on the House CTE Caucus.

Rep. Jefferson Shreve — met with legislative aide Stephen Kocerha. State officers shared an overview of SkillsUSA and presented information about CTE with personal touches, covering Perkins funding, personal experiences, CTE needs and the need for more classroom spots in their programs. They asked for continued support of CTE and Perkins V funding, with a possible increase given limited program capacity, and invited Rep. Shreve to the SkillsUSA Indiana State Leadership and Skills Conference, April 10-11, 2026. Mr. Kocerha shared that Rep. Shreve supports education.

Sen. Todd Young — met with legislative aide Burke Miller. State officers shared an overview of SkillsUSA and presented information about CTE with personal touches, covering Perkins funding, personal experiences, CTE needs and the need for more classroom spots in their programs. They asked for continued support of CTE and Perkins V funding and invited Sen. Young to the SkillsUSA Indiana State Leadership and Skills Conference, April 10-11, 2026. Mr. Miller pointed out that Sen. Young is one of four chairs of the Senate CTE Caucus.

KENTUCKY

Rep. Morgan McGarvey — Macy Waddle. Fifteen SkillsUSA members thanked the office for funding, and each student described their pathway and what they've had to work with because of that funding. The group asked for continued Perkins funding, with increases as budgets allow to help close the skills gap and provided data on rising program completion and lower dropout rates. The staff then took the group on a Capitol tour.

NORTH CAROLINA

Sen. Thom Tillis — met with staffer Cameron Morra. We talked about CTE, what SkillsUSA is and the opportunities and benefits it offers, then shared our Framework stories of how SkillsUSA impacted us and how Perkins V funding made that possible. Our call to action was to help give students the same opportunities we were given by supporting Perkins funding — with membership growing each year, programs will need more equipment, bigger facilities and more CTE teachers. Sen. Tillis is part of the CTE Caucus and a strong supporter of Perkins V funding.

Rep. David Rouzer — met with staffer Alexander Blum. We introduced ourselves, shared our Framework stories, discussed how Perkins funding has impacted our schools and chapters, and finished by discussing current legislation dealing with Perkins funding and CTE. We asked him to help maintain Perkins funding and increase it when possible; our stories helped convey why Perkins funding matters. Rep. Rouzer is a supporter of CTE and Perkins funding and votes to maintain it.

TEXAS

Rep. Pete Sessions — met with staff member Sloan Hamill and intern Kaitlyn Bernas. We discussed how CTE programs have been effective for us as students, shared data on the post-graduation success of students involved in CTE programs and told our Framework stories. We asked the representative to

consider joining the CTE Caucus, to vote for legislation that supports SkillsUSA members and to expand funding for CTE programs. The staff agreed that CTE programs are an essential part of what should be taught in schools, said the hands-on training students receive is something they'd like to see become more common and agreed that more funds should go toward helping students pay for trade school through Pell Grants.

VIRGINIA

Rep. Don Beyer — visited his office. This was a drop-in visit. The office was too busy to meet that day but provided the scheduler's card. We shared the SkillsUSA Legislative Priorities flyer and networking flyer, and the staff said they would pass the information along to the representative.

Rep. Suhas Subramanyam — met with legislative correspondent Zoe Calderazzi. We shared the SkillsUSA Legislative Priorities flyer and networking flyer and discussed how Perkins supports our school programs and helps keep them up to date. Our call to action was continued support of Perkins, increased funding and keeping programs current. The office supports CTE and shared how they are currently supporting Perkins.

Rep. Eugene Vindman — met with him and Fabian Caris Mendez. We shared the SkillsUSA Legislative Priorities flyer and the congressional networking flyer. It was a good visit — Rep. Vindman supports Perkins and CTE and would like more information about the CTE Caucus. The office was unable to attend the evening networking event.

Rep. Rob Wittman — met with legislative correspondent Caroline Kuhn. The visit went well, and she responded warmly to the group of five. She took notes on what the students shared and expressed the office's passion for CTE. The group discussed Perkins funding and its importance to their programs, and how SkillsUSA supports CTE and closing the skills gap. The office supports SkillsUSA and CTE.