



Testimony of Dr. Amy Loyd, President & CEO, All4Ed

Democratic Members, House Committee on Education and
the Workforce

*Codifying Chaos: What Breaking Up the Department of
Education Means for CTE*

July 2026

Ranking Member Scott and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I am Dr. Amy Loyd, President and CEO of All4Ed, a national nonprofit that drives transformation in education-to-career systems so that every young person thrives in learning, work, and life.

In the Biden-Harris Administration, I was the Senate-confirmed Assistant Secretary for the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, known as OCTAE, at the Department of Education. There I led a \$2 billion portfolio serving nearly 12 million career and technical education learners, and 1.3 million adult learners. When I describe what moving OCTAE to Labor is doing to CTE, I am not speculating, I ran that office. I have three to make today, and three asks of you.

First, career and technical education *is education*. It is not workforce training.

The illegal interagency agreement that is currently enacted, and the bill introduced last week that would permanently move OCTAE and the Carl D. Perkins Act to the Department of Labor, both rest on one premise: that career and technical education is workforce development, so it belongs at the workforce agency. That premise is wrong, and every CTE educator, and every CTE student, knows it.

At its core, career and technical education is *education*. It is delivered by licensed educators, and it is grounded in academic standards. It prepares students, starting as early as fifth grade, for thriving in choice-filled futures, so that they have the agency to choose fulfilling careers, continue their education, and contribute to their communities. CTE builds pathways that span secondary and postsecondary education, blends rigorous learning with real-world relevance, and propels students to and through college.

Eighty-five percent of our American high school graduates take at least one CTE course. This is not a niche program for “other people's kids.” It is core to the mainstream American high school experience. It belongs to all our kids.

Ultimately, CTE programs are not only about training students for a good job; they *educate and prepare* our young people to navigate life. They build the critical thinking, engagement, and adaptability that our students need to thrive in our ever-changing and complex world and contribute to their communities.

The Department of Labor’s mission is crucial, but different: help individuals with barriers to employment through training, job placement, and employer engagement. Help dislocated workers get back to work as quickly as possible. Help youth, ages 14-24, who are not in school and not employed, in preparing for and securing employment. These efforts matter, but they are distinct from the developmental, identifying-shaping work of education.

I worked in close partnership with my DOL counterparts when I was at ED, and yes, we absolutely need better alignment between our education and workforce systems. We need to strengthen collaboration, break down silos, provide joint technical assistance, coordinate funding opportunities, align credentials, and co-invest in talent development.

But moving CTE to DOL sends the message that young people need to be prepared for today’s vacancies instead of equipped to lead tomorrow’s industries. It risks recreating a tracking system in which academics and career-connected learning are distinct endeavors, perpetuating the still too pervasive stigma of CTE as being “lesser than.” Such tracking systems determine who is “college material” and who should go straight to work and counsel students accordingly, taking the freedom to make their own choices away from students and parents. CTE has worked for decades to overcome our nation’s legacy of tracking and to advance rigorous academics, and this reckless collapse of CTE into workforce undoes the progress our nation has made to improve outcomes and build bright and thriving futures for young people.

CTE is education that opens doors to endless opportunities, it is not a workforce pipeline that is designed to fill this quarter’s vacancies.

Second, the so-called proof of concept already failed.

The Secretary called the OCTAE interagency agreement a “proof of concept.” Here is what it proved.

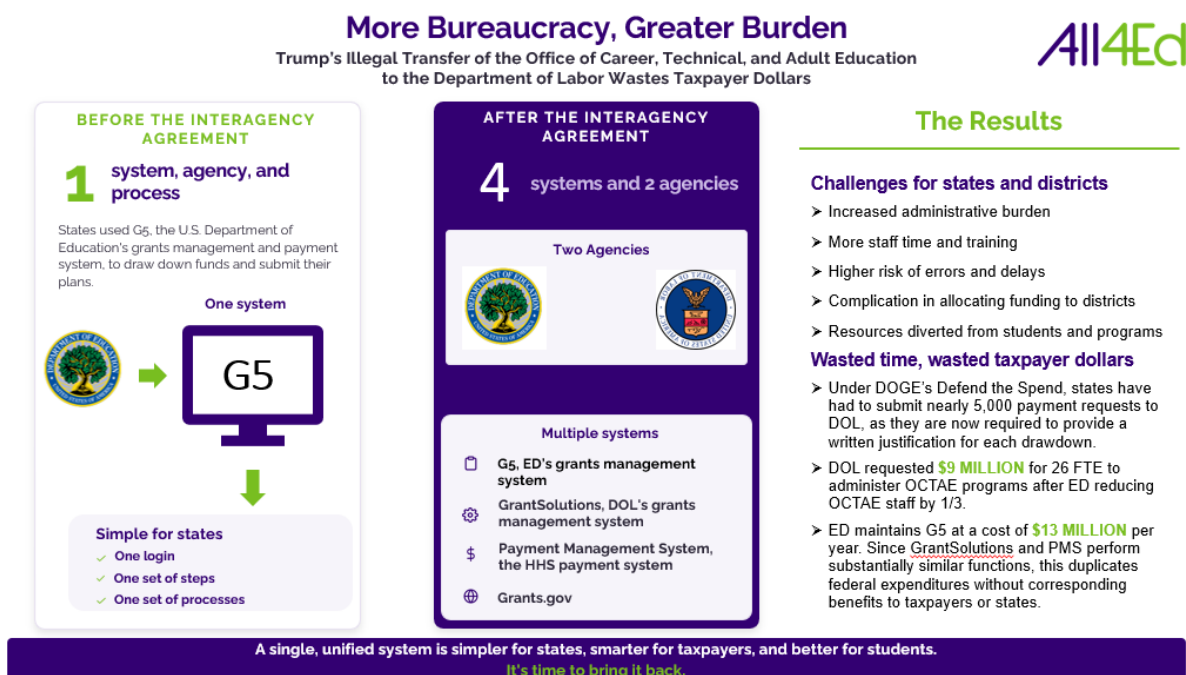
Before the transfer, we had one agency, one system, one process for managing grants. States logged into G5, drew down their Perkins and adult education funds, and submitted their plans. Now we have two agencies and four systems: G5 at Education, GrantSolutions at Labor, the Payment Management System run by the Department of Health and Human Services, and Grants.gov.

The Secretary claimed this move would simplify federal bureaucracy. The reality is that it added three systems. And look at the results.

- **States now have to take time to justify their own money.** Under DOGE’s “Defend the Spend,” states have submitted nearly 5,000 payment requests to Labor, each one requiring states to spend time preparing a written justification to draw down funds Congress already appropriated to them.

- **The money did not arrive.** As of December 5 (the day the departments held an event celebrating “successful implementation”), only 43 of 53 states and territories had drawn down their funds. One state fronted \$22 million of its own money to keep programs running.
- **Taxpayers are paying twice.** Education still spends \$13 million a year on a payment system that's now been duplicated by two systems used by Labor. Meanwhile, Labor wants \$9 million to hire 26 people to run OCTAE programs, after this administration cut OCTAE’s staff by a third. You do not spend \$9 million rebuilding expertise you just threw away.

This is inefficiency, it’s more bureaucracy, and it’s a greater burden on our school districts, states, and taxpayers.



Third, codifying an illegal act does not make it legal. It makes it permanent.

Section 512 of the bipartisan Labor-HHS-ED appropriations law bars transferring appropriated funds to another agency without authority in an appropriations act. This administration never sought that authority. So ask yourselves why these bills exist: you do not codify a lawful action. You codify one you are afraid a court will undo.

As Assistant Secretary, I had to give Congress 90 days’ notice to reclassify two career job descriptions. Two. An entire office—its statutory duties, its staff, and billions of dollars flowing into your districts—was moved with no notice, no input, no hearing, and no vote. If this move stands, Congress is signaling that the only purpose of education is job training, and Congress is signing away its own authority.

My three asks:

First, demand the facts before any vote. I joined six other former senior leaders of OCTAE, and AFGE Local 252, in asking the Acting Inspector General to investigate what this agreement has cost, the waste and duplication in systems, how states and grantees are impacted, and who is now accountable for it. Send your own letter. No markup should move while the administration cannot tell you what this has actually cost in dollars and impact on CTE programs.

Second, vote no on these bills in markup. Make every member say on the record whether Congress's power of the purse is real.

Third, protect what remains in statute. Amidst the chaos of the disruptions to funding, the arbitrary and capricious abrupt cancellation of grants, and an opaque state waiver process that is resulting in much ado about nothing, I urge Congress to preserve and expand the appropriations language barring these transfers—and extend it to every core function of the Department of Education.

In Conclusion,

Career and technical education is one of the last truly bipartisan priorities in federal education policy. Do not let CTE be dismembered by a reorganization no one asked for, no one authorized, and no one can afford.

A single, unified system for CTE, housed in a Department dedicated to education, saves taxpayer dollars while producing better results for states and students. It is time to bring it back.

Thank you for your time and your leadership.