



# WASHINGTON, DC UPDATE: DECEMBER 15, 2023

## 1. ECA-SUPPORTED WORKFORCE BILLS ADVANCE IN THE HOUSE

The House of Representatives Education & Workforce Committee [advanced](#) two bipartisan ECA-supported bills that are critical to helping the industry attract and train our next-generation workforce.

- [The Bipartisan Workforce Pell Act](#), which would expand Pell Grant eligibility to include high-quality, shorter-term job training programs that would provide workers with the training and credentials they need for careers in high-demand fields like those in our sector. In 2023, the U.S. spent \$23.9 billion on Pell Grants; this legislation would open up access to that funding for skills-based training that could provide pathways into industry careers.
- [A Stronger Workforce for America Act](#), which would modernize the Workforce Innovation Opportunities Act to promote upgrading the skills of the U.S. workforce by dedicating 50% of all dislocated worker funding towards upskilling programs, including new individual accounts where transitioning workers could spend money directly with skills-based training providers.

**Why it matters:** Our industry's ability future depends on our collective ability to attract, train, and grow the next-generation skilled workforce. These two bills would open billions of federal dollars annually to providing with high-quality skills training that our workforce of the future needs.

- ECA will strongly advocate to get these bills passed and signed into law in 2024!

## 2. CHICAGO PAID LEAVE LAW TO EXCLUDE INDUSTRY VISITORS

Chicago's new [paid leave law](#) has been amended to exclude those coming to the Windy City to attend and exhibit at business events.

- **Go deeper:** The law's original definition of "covered employees" has been changed to only include those who work a minimum of 80 hours in a 120-day period. As a result, nearly all out-of-town business event exhibitors and attendees will no longer be subject to the new ordinance.

ECA applauds the work of industry leaders and other key stakeholders, including ESCA, for working on the ground in Chicago to secure this important technical correction.

## 3. IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

- *The Hill* named ECA's Tommy Goodwin to its 2023 [Top Lobbyists list](#).
- EDPA shared a remarkable [video](#) about the workforce challenges facing the industry and what its Future Workforce Committee is doing to help recruit the next generation of workers.
- The latest EXHIBITOR Now Association Focus Podcast EXTRA [episode](#) features late-breaking advocacy updates from ECA.
- PCMA's Convening Leaders event will feature a [panel discussion](#) on the intersection of politics and the business events industry that will include ECA.

## 4. NEXT WASHINGTON, DC UPDATE PUBLISHES ON JANUARY 5

ECA wishes all of its *Washington, DC Update* readers a happy holiday season!