

## FREEDOM TO INVEST IN TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE ACT (H.R. 1477/S. 722)

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### Background

Landscape architects plan and design all outdoor spaces such as community master plans; streets and sidewalks; water management projects; parks; plazas; campuses; and other active public areas, which must account for a variety of potential hazards. Significant physical and financial harm has occurred when landscape architectural projects are not designed by licensed professionals.

Landscape architects are licensed in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and are charged with protecting the public's health, safety, and welfare. Licensing of the profession provides a broad base of public protection from substantial risks of physical injury, harm to property, and potential for economic damage. Like all licensed professionals, landscape architects and licensure candidates incur substantial costs for the educational and professional development requirements to obtain and maintain their license.

The Internal Revenue Service permits contributions to state-sponsored education savings vehicles, known as 529 savings plan, to help pay for certain expenses for educational institutions. Contributions to 529 plans are exempt from federal taxes if funds are used to pay for qualified education expenses, including for enrollment, attendance, books, supplies, and equipment.

Currently, 529 plans do not cover expenses related to postsecondary credentials and skills training that are required for many professions, including landscape architecture professionals.

### Solution

To strengthen America's workforce and enhance economic development, Representatives Robert Wittman (VA) and Abigail Spanberger (VA) introduced [H.R. 1477, the Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act](#). A Senate version of the bill, [S. 722](#), was reintroduced by Senators Amy Klobuchar (MN) and Mike Braun (IN).

Specifically, this bipartisan measure would expand eligible expenses under 529 savings plans to enable landscape architecture professionals to cover costs associated with:

- Licensure prep courses, practice exams, and study materials
- Licensure exams
- Continuing education and licensure renewal

The Joint Committee on Taxation estimated the bill would only cost \$85 million over ten years.

The Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act will help reduce the financial burdens of achieving and maintaining a professional license, which is critical for landscape architects in maintaining the public's health, safety, and welfare.

### Request

The American Society of Landscape Architects urges legislators to cosponsor the Freedom to Invest in America Workforce Act (H.R. 1477/S. 722) and help to pass this measure into law.

- In the House of Representatives, please contact Will Sroka at [will.sroka@mail.house.gov](mailto:will.sroka@mail.house.gov) in the office of Congressman Robert Wittman (VA) to cosponsor H.R. 1477, the Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act.
- In the Senate, please contact Max Hurst at [max\\_hurst@klobuchar.senate.gov](mailto:max_hurst@klobuchar.senate.gov) in the office of Senator Amy Klobuchar (WA) to cosponsor S. 722, the Freedom to Invest in America's Workforce Act.