



# AMERICANS FOR PROSPERITY®

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## NEW JERSEY

Monday, August 27, 2018

Dear Senator / Assembly Member,

On behalf of taxpayers and Americans for Prosperity activists across New Jersey, I would like to express my **concern with Senate Bill 2293**, a measure that would allow a question on the November ballot that could burden future generations with even more debt at a time when our state is one of the most indebted states in the nation. **It is most telling that the bill's price tag went up with each reprint, from \$500,000,000 to \$750,000,000 to \$1,000,000,000 in bonding.**

Americans for Prosperity is a strong proponent of giving every student in New Jersey access to a high-quality education while at the same time promoting education funding accountability and transparency. We believe that the shortest path to achieving these goals is to introduce innovation into the education system, and re-aligning existing resources to reflect new priorities, rather than solely issuing more debt to boost existing programs. Unfortunately, **the proposal being debated today falls short of providing much needed innovation or fiscal prudence to a system that desperately needs both.** Instead, devoid of real policy solutions, this measure intends to ask voters to burden future generations with more debt to funnel more resources towards existing vocational programs. And given its bleak fiscal situation, New Jersey simply cannot afford this irresponsible approach.

Vocational education is an important part of our education system, but funding alone cannot ensure that more students will be equipped with the skills they need to compete in today's economy. As noted by a [recent report](#) by the American Enterprise Institute, beyond the need for funding, **a number of structural and policy barriers make it far more difficult for community colleges to start or expand vocational programs.**

For example, accreditation requirements that favor terminal academic degrees make it challenging to identify qualified vocational instructors. In some fields, programmatic accreditation requirements are a problem because they ration the number of institutions that can offer a particular program and sometimes the number of students each program can serve. Programmatic accreditation and professional licensure or certification are also the main reasons why, for instance, many students who enter college dreaming of a job in a high-paying field, such as nursing, end up in a lower-paying nursing assistant or patient care program by default. In this sense, as the report notes, **the funding challenges may be secondary to other policies and practices that create barriers to developing responsive career and vocational**

**education programs, and the legislature should work to tackle these challenges before pouring more debt-fueled spending into the system.**

As the legislature considers way to boost vocational education, it should focus first on removing the structural barriers that limit the effectiveness of vocational programs. In this sense, I respectfully urge you to please oppose Senate Bill 2293 and I look forward to working with you in the future.

Should you wish to discuss further, please feel free to reach out directly at [EJedynak@afphq.org](mailto:EJedynak@afphq.org) or 862-229-4953. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erica L. Jedynak". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Erica L. Jedynak  
New Jersey State Director  
Americans for Prosperity

*Americans for Prosperity (AFP) exists to recruit, educate, and mobilize citizens in support of the policies and goals of a free society at the local, state, and federal level, helping every American live their dream – especially the least fortunate. AFP has more than 3.2 million activists across the nation, a local infrastructure that includes 36 state chapters, and has received financial support from more than 100,000 Americans in all 50 states. For more information, visit [www.AmericansForProsperity.org](http://www.AmericansForProsperity.org).*