



August In-District Campaign: Meeting Talking Points

Note: If you are meeting with several people, decide among your group who will take the lead on the different topics, and how you might divide the conversation during the meeting, so everyone has a chance to speak.

Starting the Conversation:

- Introduce yourself and share your role in the construction and program management industry. If you are meeting with other advocates, allow others to introduce themselves.
- Share that you are a member of the Construction Management Association of America.
- Thank the staff or Member in attendance for their time and meeting with you.
- Introduce the topics: I am here to meet with your office today to share more about the construction and program management industry, and ask for your help on a crucial piece of legislation, the Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act (S. 722/H.R. 1477)
- If the legislator's office is already a cosponsor, be sure to thank them for their support.

Education on Program and Construction Management:

- Ask the staff or legislator if they are familiar with construction and program management.
- If they are familiar, explain your role and the type of work you do within the industry. Points you could mention include:
 - The type of projects you work on
 - How long you've been a part of the industry
 - How you got started in the industry
- If they are unfamiliar, you'll want to provide a short and easy to understand explanation of program and construction managers, and the role they play on construction projects. Points you could mention include:
 - Construction management is a professional service.
 - Construction managers represent the project owner's interest and provide oversight and assistance to the owner throughout the project lifespan.
 - The construction manager's role is to work with all parties on the project, to make sure that it is delivered on time, and at or under budget.
 - Specifically, the CM/PM manages the project's schedule, cost, quality, safety scope, and function.
 - In short – program and construction managers play an essential role in the successful execution of a program and manage risk for the owner.
- Explain what CMAA is – the voice for construction and program management, what opportunities CMAA offers – professional development, education and training, networking, advocacy – and that CMAA has more than 23,000 members across the country and 30 local chapters.

Credentials for Construction and Program Managers:

- Briefly talk about the credentials that the Construction Manager Certification Institute (CMCI) offers to recognize, through certification, that an individual has the knowledge and experience that meet the established practices of construction management. CMCI has three credentials:
 - Construction Manager-in-Training (CMIT®) Stackable Credentials
 - Certified Associate Construction Manager® (CACM)
 - Certified Construction Manager® (CCM®)
- Certifications in the industry protect the investment of these programs, helping deliver them on time, within budget, and with the highest of quality and safety standards.

Personal Story:

- If you have a professional certification, share that now. You can share how this certification has provided you with the training and knowledge to successfully execute projects, and how the certification has assisted you in your professional career.
- Share additional details from our Advocacy Storytelling Worksheet, emphasizing the value your role brings and the benefit it provides.
- Examples of projects where a CM/PM helped are excellent to share, highlighting any projects that are/were within the office's district.

Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act (S. 722/H.R. 1477):

- Transition here from talking about yourself to sharing more about the bill.
 - You can say something along the lines of, "I hope you can see why having certified construction and program managers is so important to a project, especially a public one. And I'd like to ask for your support on a piece of legislation that will make it easier to obtain and maintain certifications – the Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act."
 - **Important:** If the office is already a cosponsor, you don't need to overly educate them on the bill. Focus on how this would benefit the industry.
- S. 722 is led by Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Mike Braun (R-IN).
- H.R. 1477 is led by Representatives Rob Wittman (R-VA) and Abigail Spanberger (D-VA).
- This bill would expand qualified expenses under 529 savings plans to include postsecondary skills training and credentialing programs, including certifications like the Certified Construction Manager (CCM).
- This would empower Americans of any educational background or age and would benefit all industries and professionals that rely on employees with specialized training or credentials. The bill would cover both obtaining and maintaining postsecondary credentials and skills training.
- This legislation would help industries and businesses right here in our district.

- If not a cosponsor – I’d ask you to please cosponsor this legislation and support it when it comes to a vote in the House/Senate
- If a cosponsor – Thank you so much for cosponsoring this legislation, please help us secure more cosponsors from your colleagues, and help us bring it up for a vote in the House/Senate.

Additional Information: This is additional information that may be helpful for you to know. This information isn’t required to talk about during a meeting, but feel free to share it if asked.

What are 529 Savings Plans?

- 529 savings plans are state-sponsored education savings vehicles that are exempt from federal taxes if funds are used to pay for qualified education expenses.
- Qualified expenses include college, graduate, or professional degrees; programs from Title IV-accredited institutions, registered apprenticeships, up to \$10,000/year in K-12 tuition; and certain student loan repayments.
- There is approximately \$450 billion nationwide in 529 savings accounts, according to the College Savings Plan Network.
- **529 plans do not currently cover expenses related to postsecondary credentials and skills training.**

Postsecondary Credentials:

- Postsecondary credentials include government licenses, nongovernmental certifications, registrations, and other specializations.
- Under this legislation, credentialing and training eligibility includes:
 - Programs included in any state Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) database and those considered “recognized postsecondary credentials” as defined under WIOA statute—section 3(52);
 - Programs accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI); and
 - Programs accredited by the National Commission of Certifying Agencies (NCCA).
- Licenses and certifications reduce race and gender wage gaps by more than 40 percent, according to the University of Chicago.
- Many credentials do not require a college degree to obtain.
- Credentials provide for higher income and increased career prospects.
- Professional certifications enable professionals to distinguish their own skills, experience, and expertise from their peers.
- There are approximately 40 million workers with credentials in the U.S., according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Legislation Specifics:

- Sponsors/Cosponsors – This information is subject to change frequently, but currently there are:

- 25 bipartisan sponsors and cosponsors in the Senate (12 Republicans, 11 Democrats, 2 Independents)
- 141 bipartisan sponsors and cosponsors in the House (85 Republicans, 56 Democrats)