



Air Conditioning Contractors of America

*Air Conditioning Contractors of America
Legislative Priorities for the 117th Congress*



March 17, 2021

Workforce

Background: The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) forecasts the demand for HVACR technicians to grow by 15 percent over the next five years. While growth means more business and overall opportunity for the HVACR contracting industry, it also means that the existing skilled labor gap will continue to grow. A growth rate of 15 percent over five years means that there will be nearly **115,000 job openings in the HVACR industry by 2026.**

Solution: ACCA supports robust federal funding for career and technical education (CTE). Great progress has been made on this front in recent years. In 2018, the Perkins Program was reauthorized, providing nearly \$2 billion in federal funding for career and technical education. Federal funding for CTE through Perkins helps to build the



capacity of secondary and postsecondary institutions to prepare students for college and career success. Reauthorization was a step in the right direction, but there is more work to be done to close the predicted gap of 115,000 job openings. **ACCA supports further funding for CTE at the federal level. ACCA also supports secondary and post-secondary education and training opportunities for HVACR workers and those who are interested in the skilled trades. As part of this initiative, ACCA will educate lawmakers on the importance of skilled labor in respect to developing a national workforce capable of competing in the modern global economy.**

Energy Efficiency Tax Incentives

Background

The federal government offers several energy efficiency tax incentives including the 25C and 45L credits for homeowners and developers respectively as well as the 179D deduction commercial buildings. These incentives are an extremely useful tool for taxpayers who plan to make energy efficiency investments. Many taxpayers take advantage of these programs to install HVACR equipment. As such, energy efficiency tax incentives work to drive business in the HVACR contracting industry.



Solution

In the 116th Congress ACCA supported the expansion and extension of energy efficiency tax credits. Both 45L and 25C were extended through 2021, and 179D was made permanent. **ACCA supports the expansion of 179D, 25C, and 45L as well as the permanence of the 25C and 45L credits. In addition, ACCA supports a verifiable quality installation requirement for these programs because systems that are not installed correctly will not realize their full energy efficiency**

COVID-19 Liability Protection

“ACCA supports liability protection for essential workers”

Background

There is real and growing concern that essential workers, like HVACR contractors, who have worked tirelessly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic will be subjected to COVID-19 exposure related lawsuits. ACCA members across the country have adapted in incredible ways to provide services to their customers and should not be penalized for simply doing their job.

Solution

In the past, Congress has come together in times of crisis to pass needed liability protections with strong bipartisan support. ACCA strongly feels that the same resolve is needed today to protect our members from unnecessary, costly COVID-19 related legal actions. **ACCA supports liability protection for essential workers.**



Refrigerants and A2L Transitions

Background

With the passage of the AIM Act in the 116th Congress, we now have a pathway forward for a transition from HFC refrigerants to mildly flammable A2Ls, with the intended goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Given their mildly flammable properties, A2L refrigerants pose potential hazards for contractors and consumers alike, especially if they are improperly handled.

Solution

ACCA's priority regarding this transition has been and remains safety for contractors, consumers, and all others who might encounter mildly flammable A2Ls. ACCA has led the charge on this front by developing a comprehensive A2L training course for contractors on how to properly handle, store, transport, and identify potential hazards associated with mildly flammable A2Ls. The training is one of the first of its kind.

ACCA will work with Congress, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy, and any other relevant government agency to ensure a safe transition from HFCs to mildly flammable A2L refrigerants. ACCA supports updating the Section 608 Stationary Refrigeration and Air Conditioning requirements to reflect the implementation of A2L refrigerants in the marketplace. In addition, ACCA will oppose the attempts of any state to phase out HFC refrigerants without a comprehensive plan to address the potential hazards posed by mildly flammable A2L refrigerants.

State Licensing Reform

Background

Licensing requirements for HVACR professionals vary widely from state to state. Many states do not have licensing requirements. In many states where licenses are required, the license functions more as a tax than it does an actual license, because the primary requisite to conduct business is that the proper fees are paid. Lack of strong licensing requirements allows and even incentivizes bad actors into the HVACR contracting marketplace who routinely cut corners and disregard safety and manufacturer guidelines.

Solution

ACCA supports common sense licensing requirements for HVACR contractors and technicians which include but are not limited to: testing to reflect competency in relevant areas of HVACR work as well as an annual or semi-annual continuing education requirements, because the industry is ever evolving.