For Immediate Release

Business and Policymakers Must Join Forces to Raise Workforce Participation

Washington, DC, October 31, 2019 – Increasing competition from abroad, an aging population, and the slowing growth of the American workforce could have profound consequences for US economic strength and global leadership, a new report from the Committee for Economic Development of The Conference Board (CED) warns.

The report, Growing the American Workforce, calls for business leaders and policymakers to work together to make it easier and more attractive for Americans to find work and remain working.

“Helping Americans who would like to work more to do so should be a critical focus of policymakers and business leaders right now,” said Paul Decker, President and CEO of Mathematica and Co-Chair of the CED Workforce Subcommittee. “It is an important route to ensuring more widely shared prosperity for families, building a more skilled and talented pool of workers for businesses, and maintaining US competitiveness in a global economy.”

The report outlines four specific policy initiatives to advance these goals:

• Strengthen the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for adults without qualifying children, incentivizing more people with initially low-income job prospects to enter the labor force and remain working.

• Lessen barriers to participation through improved employee-employer matching and increased mobility, reducing geographical limitations, information gaps, and unnecessary occupational obstacles.

• Help parents and caregivers remain connected to the workforce and meet family responsibilities, providing direct benefits such as paid leave and child care, and increasing the benefit for lower-income parents/caregivers through Child Tax Credit (CTC).
• **Support older workers who wish to remain working**, funding public information campaigns, eliminating health insurance cost disparities, piloting a modification of the Social Security retirement earnings test, and supporting flexible work arrangements.

“If we are going to leverage the full strength of our workforce, the private sector must take the lead in providing the necessary conditions and environments in their own institutions,” said Howard Fluhr, Chairman Emeritus of The Segal Group and Co-Chair of the CED Workforce Subcommittee.

“But public policy will also be essential to achieving these goals.”

The full report is available [here](#).

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**About the Committee for Economic Development**

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