



September 23, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor  
State of California  
1021 O Street, Suite 9000  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

I write to urge you to sign into law [Assembly Bill 1098](#), which would establish a California Education Interagency Council. This legislation, contingent on [Senate Bill 638](#) being signed into law, is critical to helping policymakers address the evolving nature of work and the economy by integrating and aligning education and employment systems across the state.

As the voice of all things work, workers, and the workplace, [SHRM](#) is the foremost expert, convener, and thought leader on the issues and innovations shaping today's workplaces. With nearly 340,000 members in 180 countries, SHRM directly impacts the lives of more than 362 million workers worldwide. SHRM California State Council connects all 16 local SHRM chapters with our regional and national organizations, uniting nearly 30,000 members across the state.

Our research confirms what many employers are experiencing every day: labor shortages and skills gaps are among their greatest challenges. The SHRM 2023–2024 [State of the Workplace Report](#) found that 65% of organizations cited concerns over access to talent. Similarly, our 2025 [Talent Trends Survey](#) shows that seventy percent of employers are still reporting difficulties recruiting for full-time regular positions, on par with 2016 — with 39% pointing to lack of work experience and 33% citing insufficient technical skills in applicants.

To help close this gap, SHRM launched the [Education-to-Employment \(E<sup>2</sup>\) Initiative](#), designed to strengthen education-to-employment pathways, improve the lives and livelihoods of workers and their families, and build a workforce ready for the future of work.

AB 1098 aligns closely with this vision. By maximizing the impact of federal and state education and workforce funding, supporting adult skill development, ensuring regional alignment of education supply with workforce demand, and providing a forum for cross-sector policy discussions, the Council can play a pivotal role in preparing Californians for tomorrow's jobs.

Should you sign into law this legislation and name individuals to serve on the Council, we respectfully encourage you to include a dedicated human resources representative on the Council. HR professionals are uniquely positioned to connect classroom learning to career pathways, advance skills-based hiring, and ensure alignment between education and the needs of the workforce. Their perspective will be essential in shaping a future-ready talent pipeline and achieving the Council's mission to improve student outcomes and economic mobility.



We would be honored to partner with you in this critical effort. Together, we can strengthen education-to-employment pathways and ensure California's workforce is prepared for the future of work.

To learn more about SHRM's E<sup>2</sup> Initiative or to explore opportunities for collaboration, please contact Mike Rose at ([mike.rose@shrm.org](mailto:mike.rose@shrm.org)).

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Emily M. Dickens". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Emily M. Dickens  
Chief of Staff, Head of Government Affairs  
& Corporate Secretary

CC: The Honorable Mike Fong, California Assembly  
The Honorable Stephen Padilla, California Senate