

Biden Administration Repeals Industry-Led Apprenticeship Program Established by Trump Administration

By **Amanda M. Connelly**

This past week, President Biden issued an Executive Order to reverse a 2017 Executive Order signed by former President Trump that established the industry-led apprenticeship program—a program that sought to minimize the federal government’s role in creating and monitoring training opportunities and sought to allow private companies to create their own programs for on-the-job training. The industry-led apprenticeship program, sometimes referred to as IRAP, also established standards recognition entities (“SREs”). SREs have the authority to oversee individual IRAPs and typically are made up of trade associations or groups of companies.

The program received criticism at first and was slow to get established, as Democrats in Congress blocked funding. The first industry-led apprenticeship program was not announced until October 2020. Now, just a few months later, Biden has asked the Department of Labor to rescind its 2020 final rule regarding the program and slow support for it. Biden further asked that the Department of Labor no longer consider the applications it receives from trade associations or companies to become SREs. To date, 27 SREs have been approved, and the Department of Labor has stated that Biden’s decision to repeal the industry-led program will not affect those SREs.

Biden is endorsing the Democrats’ National Apprenticeship Act, which passed in the House on February 5, 2021. The National Apprenticeship Act seeks to expand registered apprenticeship, youth apprenticeship, and pre-apprenticeship programs in an effort to create more job training opportunities.

Roetzel will continue to monitor developments in this area. For more information and insight on this matter, please contact one of the listed Roetzel attorneys.

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