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National Skilled Trades Day Aims to Bring Awareness to In-Demand High Paying Jobs

National Skilled Trades Day was May 5th. The day may have already passed, but it's still important to recognize our skilled trade workers who build our communities. National Skilled Trades Day aims to raise awareness for in-demand high paying jobs. Individuals who complete skilled trade apprenticeship programs have a near 100 percent job placement. The annual median salary for graduated construction apprentices is \$87,000 which is well above the median salary for students who graduate with a 4-year bachelor degree.

Skilled trade jobs vary from mechanics to machinists, electricians to construction workers, welders to plumbers. These jobs are fundamental to communities but are vastly underrated. Over the last 30 years, interest in skilled trade jobs has dropped drastically due to an increased push to four-year degrees from colleges and universities. 94% of contractors are having trouble finding qualified, skilled workers. We need to make a shift to encourage more people to go into these type of jobs.

Every component of the world around us from the floors we walk on to the roofs over our heads is the result of a trade worker's education, craftsmanship, and hard work. This past year, their contributions are even more noticeable. Trade workers around the world have adapted and acted quickly to help build and support the growing need for medical facilities, manufacturing facilities, and even the roads that first responders use to transport patients during a global pandemic.

Long before the pandemic, skilled trade workers were in short supply and today the shortage is only worse. I have talked to employers in my district, throughout Wisconsin and across the country that are finding it nearly impossible to find the workforce they need. People in the trades are true artisans. They're the ones putting their heart and soul, sweat and blood into the building's mechanical systems, electrical and plumbing systems, HVAC, walls and paint. They rarely get the credit that they deserve, nor will they ever ask for credit for what they do. They just roll-up their sleeves and get the job done. So please join me in recognizing all the fine men and women that build our communities, state and country!