



**Proactive Technologies News**

**Proactive Technologies Announces Significant Discount Program - March 10th to April 30th, 2017!**

**Free "No-Risk" Consultation Session - Witness Approach for One of Your Specific Job Classifications Before You Decide**

*by Proactive Technologies, Inc. Staff*

Due to the success of our last discount offer, and many requests from companies that could not act before the end of the last discount offer in 2016, Proactive Technologies Inc. is once again extending a **generous discount offer of up to 50% to employers from March 10th to April 30th, 2017!**

This [accelerated transfer of expertise™](#) approach is a tremendous offer without the discount, but with it can **help any employer quickly and completely train the skilled workers they need AND realize an increase in worker capacity, work quantity/quality and compliance (ISO/TS/AS, engineering specifications and safety) while reducing the internal costs of training.** New-hires and incumbent workers are driven to **full job mastery** and higher levels of return on worker investment (ROWI). The task-based, structured on-the-job training infrastructure is perfect for the apprenticeships; instead of marking the calendar for "time-in-job," job-relevant tasks are mastered and documented.

***"For companies eligible for a worker training grant or not, this discount program can significantly stretch a training budget in a impactful way. This approach makes a worker's mastery of the job the focus and incorporates, building structure around, loosely arranged worker development activities."***

In the event that anyone needs one more way (i.e. in addition to live online presentations, onsite presentations) to gather enough information to decide whether to move forward with structured on-the-job training to boost their training strategy, we thought of an idea that might help them decide. [Read Details](#)

**Estimating the Costs Associated With Skipping Employer-Based Structured On-The-Job Training**

*by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.*



It should go without saying that if there is no deliberate strategy to train workers for the things they were hired to perform, the employer will probably never realize the maximum output realizable from a worker. Multiple workers operating under-capacity can create exorbitant, and unnecessary, costs to the employer - bleeding from profits and often leading to sweeping and irreparable reactions from management as they try to "fix" all but the obvious.

**Proactive Technologies' Publications Archive**

Download a .pdf version of this issue at the bottom of this month's post on our website's [News & Publications](#) page. While there, check out past newsletters, articles and more.



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### Live Online Presentation Schedule - Free

If interested in attending one of the presentations below, click on the title, then select a date/time and press "Send." An online presentation invitation and link will be sent to you. On the date and time of the event, just click on link in email invitation and it will connect you to the presentation. **No special equipment required.**

[Click here](#) for descriptions of all of the available presentations. Click on a specific title for that specific description and schedule or to schedule a date and time that works for you.

**APPLIES TO ANY ORGANIZATION (Recorded - Available Any Time):**

[PTIpromo - A Preview of an Upcoming Presentation](#)  
(13 minutes)

**FOR FORMER EMPLOYER CLIENTS:**

[PTI1001 - MA, OH, PA and SC Former Client Employers - Restart Your Organization's PROTECH® Training Infrastructure](#)  
(45 minutes)

**FOR ANY EMPLOYER:**

[PTI1002 - Building an Effective Worker Training/Apprenticeship System - Registered or Not](#)  
(45 minutes)

[PTI1004 - If You Can't Find Skilled Workers, Develop Your Own](#)

The effect of worker capacity on any business strategy is the least misunderstood of factors, but one as important as innovation, process improvement and zero defect strategies. After all, fundamental to each of these strategies is the worker's ability to competently carry the intended actions to maximize those efforts efficiently.

Employers need to seriously consider the human factors, not ignore them and focus on everything but this. After decades of neglect, supported by workforce development institutions that have no tools to address this stage of worker development and often unknowingly promulgate distractions in their efforts to claim they do, management has come to simplify the human factor into a cost that can be easily eliminated or replaced by a lower cost alternative in another location. Lacking in this reaction is the underlying fact that moving operations to lower-wage labor markets with even more need for training (e.g. new challenges such as language, culture) only appears to be adding to profits short-term; the same problems exist, but the lower cost of labor makes it more tolerable even if greater challenges to worker performance now exist. As wages rise, these challenges become more pronounced and management becomes more critical.

[Total Cost of Ownership](#) formulas, such as the one used by the [Reshoring Initiative](#), try to capture the hidden and overlooked costs of off-shoring operations, with labor challenges being one factor considered. But even so, the factor's significance is understated.

Here is a simple formula for estimating the cost/benefit of a worker's contribution to the organization for consideration: [Read More](#)

### Employers Say They Struggle With a "Skills Shortage," Yet They Cut the Training Budget. What Gives?

by Stacey Lett, Regional Manager - Eastern U.S., Proactive Technologies, Inc.



Everywhere you read these days, you find commentary on the "skills gap" that employers seem to face when trying to find the workers they need for their critical job classifications. Either there is a skills gap or there isn't, and more and more economists are challenging that premise. Some, like Nobel prize winning economist [Paul Krugman](#), say that if there is such a skills gap creating a shortage of skilled labor, then wages should be skyrocketing for those positions in a capitalistic, free market model.

Some point to the exploitation of loop-holes in the U.S. H-1B visa program, recently highlighted in a [CBS 60 Minutes episode entitled "You're Fired"](#) that allows employers to replace long-time, experienced employees with lower-wage temporary workers (with no benefits) from countries such as India - even requiring the laid off worker to train their replacement or forego severance pay.

Yet other companies, genuinely experiencing a shortage of skilled workers in their region, seem to either accept the skills gap theory as the norm or have made assumptions that the right skilled workers already came through the front door. Some surprise everyone by redirecting training dollars that should be used to make sure each employee can perform the tasks for which they were hired to programs that are meant to improve performance - skipping the obvious. Trying to improve the performance of employees before being certain they can perform each task exactly seems incredibly counter-intuitive. Focusing dollars on LEAN, Kaizen, Six Sigma, etc. before being certain that employees have mastered each required task may be not only be a waste of money but probably will need to be repeated if the employees finally do master each task, since by then they will have forgotten any improvement techniques or how to apply them to the processes they are performing.

Some wonder why companies have not added to, or are even cutting, their training budgets in response to the challenge. Many of these companies seem to be forgoing structured on-the-job training that only they can deliver, hoping the local educational system, with all the federal funding they have received, will somehow wave a wand and all the skilled

(45 minutes)

[PTI1007 - Structured On-the-Job Training Supports ISO/AS/TS Process Training Requirement Compliance](#)

(45 minutes)

[PTI1008 - Preparing your Workers for Growth: Using Lulls Before Growth to Increase Your Worker's Capacity](#)

(45 minutes)

**FOR EDUCATION, WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS**

[PTI1003 - Adding Employer-Specific Structured OJT to Your Training Support Strategy\(45 minutes\)](#)

[PTI1005 - Adding Structured On-the-Job Training to Your Apprenticeships](#)

(45 minutes)

[PTI1006 - Building a Regional Workforce Development Infrastructure: Employer-Specific for Maximum Effectiveness and Lowest Investment](#)

(45 minutes)

If you would like more information or would like to discuss these presentations or anything else, click [here](#) and fill in the "Contact Us" with your request including information specifying an alternative date/time you prefer and how many will be attending. An invitation and link will be sent to you.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Onsite and group presentations**

are being scheduled for the following states in the month of:

**April, 2017**

**Colorado (Eastern Slope)**

**Florida**

**North Carolina (Ashland and Western Area, Charlotte)**

**Ohio (North-Central, Northeast and Southeast Area)**

**Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh and Western Area)**

**South Carolina (UpState and Charleston Area)**

**Tennessee**

labor needed will appear. In a January, 2017 issue of the **Proactive Technologies Report** entitled "[An Anniversary That You Won't Want to Celebrate: 30 Years Later and The Skill Gap Grows - Is it Finally Time to Rethink The Nation's Approach?](#)" the point was made that employers having been waiting on solutions from other than their own operation for decades, but to no avail. It is also significant to note that the U.S. is currently in a new presidential administration that seems to be set on cutting the funding for many of the Departments of Education and Labor workforce training programs these employers have come to rely upon. [Read More](#)

## Twelve Good Reasons Why Structured On-The-Job Training Should be Part of Your Business Strategy

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

Many articles have appeared in the **Proactive Technologies Report** covering how **Proactive Technologies' PROTECH® system of managed human resource development** can address many of the workforce development scenarios; from individualized, customized structured on-the-job training for a specific employer for specific job classification(s), to regional partnerships servicing multiple employers while partnering with regional educational institutions, private training providers, workforce development and economic development agencies to provide the related technical instruction. There are many winners with this approach, but none so important as the employer and the employee.

Several articles have appeared in the newsletter explaining how Proactive Technologies sets up for each client a unique, structured on-the-job training program, provides implementation support to ensure it is running effectively and provides documentation and monthly reporting to drive each employee's progress toward **full job mastery**. The most recent article appearing in the February, 2017 issue entitled "[Tips for Establishing Your Company's Training Strategy - Practical, Measurable, Extremely Economical and Scalable.](#)" While the article hints on some of the benefits to the employer-employee stakeholders, it might be more advantageous to focus on the benefits themselves rather than leave them nuanced. More can be found in other articles at the [News and Publications](#) page of the Proactive Technologies, Inc. website.

There are many significant reasons that structured on-the-job training will help any employer really maximize the value of each worker employed with the company, improve operational efficiency and lower the risk of non-compliance (ISO/TS/AS, Safety Mandates, EEOC Mandates). These are not just buzzwords. Here are twelve reasons (not in any order of importance, since some may be more important to different stakeholders) to consider.

1. **ISO 9001-2015 and TS16949 compliance** with regard to worker competence to perform task processes, the provision of support documentation and records, and the facilitation of retraining when processes change.

\* The data infrastructure will help **facilitate quality improvements** and incorporates the results of LEAN, continuous improvement, etc.;

\* Existing company process documents are incorporated into the job/task analysis data collection so all **worker development materials generated from the data are in sync with engineering and quality standards**;

2. **Risk mitigation** with regard to potential legal challenges to methods and assessments used by the company for determining pay increases and promotion.

\* The infrastructure and documentation will support the company's side in the event of a safety incident investigation;

3. The initial job/task analysis will **capture the technical expertise and wisdom in the heads of Company's skilled workers before they get a chance to leave** through retirement, attrition, promotion, etc.; [Read More](#)

**Tips for Workforce Developers - Partnerships That Matter...and Last**

Texas Southern, Northern)

West Virginia (North-Central,  
South Central)

Virginia (South-Eastern)

[Contact Us](#) to express your  
interest in an onsite or group  
presentation.

by Dr. Dave Just, Mpack Maintenance and  
Reliability Solutions

Having partnered with Proactive Technologies, Inc. on workforce development projects for the past 20 years, it gave me a chance to innovate and learn what works, what efforts are most appreciated by the employer, trainee and employee, and which projects utilized resources most efficiently and effectively. There are numerous resources available from many sources that can impact a trainee with varying effectiveness, but the secret is selecting those that are appropriate for the project outcome the employer expects.



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As Dean of Corporate and Continuing Education at community and technical colleges in Massachusetts, Ohio, Pennsylvania and South Carolina, at the start of each assignment I had to first learn what resources our school had available for the sectors we were targeting, and how current and relevant the courses, materials and instructors were for the specific skills employers were seeking. To be honest, in some areas our products and services were weaker than expected, so the determination needed to be made whether we had the resources and will to upgrade what we had or develop what we needed. We also had to consider if it would be more economical to strategically partner with outside providers who always had the current technical expertise and already created solutions we could incorporate into our offerings.

Too often there was internal resistance and a lack of understanding of how important being relevant was to workforce development. Many institutions grew complacent to change or were discouraged by shrinking budgets or misaligned priorities from innovation.

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*"There is no shortage of schools that think the solution to everything is a multi-million dollar technology center. "If you build it, they will come" only worked in movies."*

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Always feeling a sense of urgency to overcome the ubiquitous "skills gap" that cast a shadow on all education and workforce development efforts, there are some important steps that I developed for myself to help me better assess each employer's need and provide solutions client employers appreciated. This is the reason most employers we worked with kept us engaged year after year. We earned, and maintained, their respect and gave them confidence in our solutions, which ensured our continued role in their business model. This provided a continued revenue stream for the school to continue, improve and expand those efforts.

**1) Listen to the employer's description of the need** - not every employer has a clear grasp of their need, but if you listen to their frustration in the context of your experience gained from concerns of other employers facing similar symptoms, you can help the employer discover the root cause. Then a solution that makes sense can be developed;

**2) Formulate your proposed solution based on facts** - there is always the temptation to propose a solution that markets a product or service the school already has in place, even when its relationship to the problem or challenge is suspect. Resist that temptation. [Read More](#)

## Industry News

### Personal Income Rose in February, 2017, Disposable Income Declined



US Department of Commerce - Economics and Statistics Administration

Personal income in February 2017 increased 0.4 percent. Nominal personal consumption expenditures (PCE) rose 0.1 percent and real PCE decreased 0.1 percent. Nominal disposable income (DPI) rose 0.3 percent and real DPI increased 0.2 percent. The personal saving rate as a percentage of DPI was 5.6 percent in February. [Read Report](#)





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## Caterpillar Office Raid Fuels Biggest Slump in Eight Months

*IndustryWeek - Bloomberg*

Searches were conducted on March 2 in Peoria, East Peoria and Morton by the Internal Revenue Service, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. and the Commerce Department.



## Caterpillar Office Raid Fuels Biggest Slump in Eight Months

Caterpillar Inc. shares headed for the steepest decline in eight months as the biggest maker of machinery for mining and construction had its Illinois offices raided by U.S. tax and financial officials. [Read Article](#)

## Navistar, VW Complete Alliance, Look for Synergies

*American Machinist - Robert Brooks*

Navistar International Corp. and Volkswagen



Truck & Bus finalized the equity- and technology-sharing "strategic alliance" that the two manufacturers announced last Together, the new partners oversee six nameplates in the commercial vehicle market: Navistar oversees the International brand commercial and military trucks, plus the IC Bus brand school and commercial buses. Volkswagen Truck & Bus has the MAN, Scania, Volkswagen Caminhões e Ônibus, and RIO commercial truck brands.

September. The deal - which centers on a VW buying 16.6% of Navistar for \$256 million - includes a framework agreement for a procurement joint venture to be established by the two, as well as collaboration on product technology. [Read Article](#)

## US Manufacturing Expands at Fastest Pace Since 2014

*IndustryWeek - Bloomberg*

Manufacturing in the United States expanded in February at the fastest pace since August 2014 as factory managers reported stronger orders and production.



The Institute for Supply Management's index dimmed to 57.7, the sixth straight monthly advance, from 56 a month earlier, the Tempe, Arizona-based group's report showed Wednesday. Readings above 50 indicate growth. The median forecast in a Bloomberg survey of economists was 56.2. [Read Article](#)

## US to Accelerate Buying BAE Vehicle for European Deterrence

*IndustryWeek - Bloomberg*

The U.S. Army's war-fighting budget request for fiscal 2018 will include funds to accelerate deployment to Europe of its newest combat vehicle, a modern troop carrier built by BAE Systems Plc (IW 1000/157).



Responding to a request from the Army's European commanders, the service's Overseas Contingency Operations request will include as much as \$254 million to accelerate the purchase of 65 Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicles that had been scheduled to be acquired later. That's on top of 52 of the vehicles to be purchased in the regular base budget, including 10 to be used in live-fire testing, according to the service. [Read Article](#)

## GE, Baker Hughes Questioned on Merger as US Seeks More Details

*IndustryWeek - Bloomberg*

The U.S. Justice Department is seeking additional information from General Electric Co. and Baker Hughes Inc. over the pending merger to create an oil and gas behemoth.



The department's actions extend the waiting period related to the regulatory review until 30 days after the companies comply, GE and Baker Hughes said Monday in a statement. The deal, subject to a shareholder vote and other approvals, is still expected to close around the middle of 2017. The information requested wasn't specified. [Read Article](#)

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## US Oil Industry Becomes Refiner to the World as Exports Boom

*IndustryWeek - Bloomberg*

When PBF Energy Inc. (IW 500/84) scooped up a refinery from Exxon Mobil Corp. on the Mississippi River in 2015, it wasted no time sprucing up the plant with an eye toward quickly resuming lucrative fuel exports.



Within three months, PBF was ready to load its first tanker for shipment abroad. By late last year, the New Jersey-based company was exporting 22,000 barrels a day of fuel, or 16% of that refinery's output. Now, it wants to boost that to almost 25%. [Read Article](#)

## North America's Biggest Auto-Parts Maker Sees Border Tax Danger

*IndustryWeek - Bloomberg*

The maker of bodies and chassis, car electronics and vision systems relies on the U.S. for about one quarter of sales, and counts on Mexico for another 12%.



North America's largest auto parts maker said a border adjustment tax being studied by President Trump would probably hurt the automobile industry, while also increasing the odds that future factories will be located in the U.S.

Canada's Magna International Inc. said the growth of "protectionist sentiments" could hurt its operations and profitability, according to a company statement on February 24. [Read Article](#)

## Manufacturing and Trade: Inventories and Sales



*US Department of Commerce - Economics and Statistics Administration*

The U.S. Census Bureau today announced new data showing that January 2017 business inventories were \$1,841.4 billion, up 0.3 percent from December 2016, and up 2.3 percent from January 2016. Sales were \$1,359.3 billion, up 0.2 percent from the previous month and up 6.4 percent from one year earlier. [Read Report](#)

## Opinion: How the U.S. Could Bring Back Up to Half the Manufacturing Jobs That Moved Overseas

*Market Watch - Harry Moser and Sandy Montalbano*



For decades, U.S. companies have been chasing cheap labor offshore and then importing products to sell in the U.S. market.

Now, Trumponomics, a broader focus on Total Cost of Ownership (TCO quantifies all relevant costs, risks and strategic factors) and advanced manufacturing together have the potential to end the manufacturing stagnation of the past 30 years and create millions of manufacturing jobs in the U.S.

Over the past 20 years, the boom in offshoring drove our goods trade deficit up by about \$640 billion a year, costing us three to four million manufacturing jobs. [Read Article](#)

## Boeing to Save 747 by Buying Them and Leasing to Cargo Haulers

*IndustryWeek - Bloomberg*

Boeing Co. (IW 1000/29) has a temporary plan to save the iconic but slow-selling. With the effective shutdown by Congress of the U.S. Export-Import Bank – which traditionally has helped overseas carriers purchase planes – Boeing lost a key sales tool. Making matters worse, leasing companies have been hesitant to finance a plane with a dwindling customer base.



So Boeing is now renting out the massive, hump-backed 747s to cargo carriers in countries such as Russia and Azerbaijan, which increases the company's exposure to potential defaults on payments. [Read Article](#)



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## Recent Proactive Technologies News Article Quicklinks

### March:

[Proactive Technologies Announces Significant Discount Program - March 10th to April 31st, 2017!](#)  
by Staff

[Apprenticeships - An Alternative to the "400 Hours For Drill Press" On-the-Job Training Model](#)  
by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc

[Challenges Presented by the Widening Skill Gap](#)  
by Stacey Lett, Regional Manager - Eastern U.S., Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[Developing the Multi-Craft and Specialty Maintenance Technicians You Need: To Specification, With Minimal Investment](#)  
Dr. Dave Just, MPACTMaintenance and Reliability Solutions

[Education-Employer Partnerships That Work](#)  
By Frank Gibson, Special Projects Coordinator for The Ohio State University - Alber Enterprise Center

### February:

[Tips for Establishing Your Company's Training Strategy - Practical, Measurable, Extremely Economical and Scalable](#)  
by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[The High Cost of Employee Turnover](#)  
by Stacey Lett, Regional Manager - Eastern U.S., Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[Do U.S. Productivity Measures Measure Productivity?](#)  
by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[The Key To Effective Maintenance Training: The Right Blend of Structured On-The-Job Training and Related Technical Instruction](#)  
Dr. Dave Just, MPACTMaintenance and Reliability Solutions

## PBGC Provides Financial Assistance to Road Carriers Local 707 Pension Fund - Participants' Benefits Payments Cut to PBGC Guaranteed Levels



*Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation*

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation has started providing financial assistance to the Road Carriers Local 707 Pension Fund, a newly insolvent multiemployer pension plan based in Hempstead, New York. The financial assistance will help pay the guaranteed portion of pension benefits earned by nearly 4,000 participants.

"Over a million people participate in multiemployer pension plans that are expected to run out of money over the next 20 years," said PBGC Director Tom Reeder. "The insurance program for insolvent multiemployer plans is in dire financial condition and, absent reform, is likely to run out of money by 2025. I am committed to working with the Administration, Congress and other stakeholders to find solutions that stabilize multiemployer pension plans and make the pension insurance program one that people can rely on well into the future." [Read Press Release](#)

## Repatriating Cash in a Territorial Tax System

*CFO.com - John Kelleher and Howard Wagner, Contributors*



Under the existing U.S. worldwide tax system, the taxation of profits earned by foreign subsidiaries generally is deferred until the profits are repatriated to the United States. At that time, the profits are subject to a 35% income tax rate, with a credit available for the foreign taxes paid. Plans to set up a territorial tax system, however, are currently under discussion in Washington.

In a territorial tax system, income is taxed in the country where it's earned, and isn't taxed later when it's repatriated to its foreign parent. The House Ways and Means Committee's "Better Way" blueprint supports the replacement of the worldwide tax system with a territorial tax system. [Read Article](#)

## Geopolitics, Regulations Causing Wave of Divestments

*CFO.Com - Sean Allocca*



Geopolitical uncertainty and anticipated regulatory changes are leading companies to jettison some assets, according to new research by Ernst & Young, even if that means losing value in the process.

The EY Global Corporate Divestment study polled 900 corporate executives and 100 private-equity executives worldwide and found that unpredictable political and business landscapes have been among the top motivations driving companies to divest businesses in recent years. Eighty-two percent of companies surveyed say "macroeconomic volatility" will increase their chances of divesting a business over the next 12 months. [Read Article](#)

## Wall Street Cops Reined In as SEC Braces for Trump Budget Cuts

*Bloomberg - Matt Robinson and Benjamin Bain*

When Wall Street bond dealmakers congregated in Las Vegas last week for their annual get-together, one group of folks was conspicuously absent: SEC enforcement officials.

For years now, they've been crashing the marquee event, trying to, somewhat awkwardly, mingle and make industry contacts while sniffing around for their next big case. But those plans were scuttled this year when word came down from SEC headquarters recently that there was no room in the budget for investigators to attend.

The measure is part of a series of cuts that the enforcement department – the division responsible for policing federal securities laws – is implementing as it braces for deep spending reductions in President Donald Trump's budget proposal, according to two people with knowledge of the matter. In addition to the ban on non-essential travel, the department has also imposed a hiring freeze and curbed the use of outside

## January:

### [Economic Development Opportunities An Important Incentive in Attracting Companies to Your Region](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

### [Thinking Past the Assessment- Unfinished Goals and Unrealized Expectations](#)

by Stacey Lett, Regional Manager - Eastern U.S., Proactive Technologies, Inc.

### [An Anniversary That You Won't Want to Celebrate: 30 Years Later and The Skill Gap Grows - Is it Finally Time to Rethink The Nation's Approach?](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

### [Changes in ISO 9001: 2015 and Any Effects on Worker Training](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

## December:

### ["Understanding the Important Difference Between Classroom, Online and On-The-Job Training: Knowing the Difference Can Save Your Organization Time, Money and Disappointment"](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

### ["Retiring Workers and the Tragic Loss of Intellectual Property and Value"](#)

by Stacey Lett, Regional Manager - Eastern U.S.-Proactive Technologies, Inc.

### ["Cannot Find The Right Workers? Why Not Train Workers To Your Own To Specification?"](#)

Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

Click here for the Proactive Technologies Website "[News and Publications](#)" for Past Newsletters and Archived Articles

contractors who assist SEC lawyers with cases. [Read Article](#)

## International News

### Neoliberalism - The Ideology at the Root of all Our Problems

*The Guardian*

Imagine if the people of the Soviet Union had never heard of communism. The ideology that dominates our lives has, for most of us, no name. Mention it in conversation and you'll be rewarded with a shrug. Even if your listeners have heard the term before, they will struggle to define it. [Neoliberalism](#): do you know what it is?



Its anonymity is both a symptom and cause of its power. It has played a major role in a remarkable variety of crises: the financial meltdown of 2007-8, the offshoring of wealth and power, of which the Panama Papers offer us merely a glimpse, the slow collapse of public health and education, resurgent child poverty, the epidemic of loneliness, the collapse of ecosystems, the rise of Donald Trump. But we respond to these crises as if they emerge in isolation, apparently unaware that they have all been either catalysed or exacerbated by the same coherent philosophy; a philosophy that has - or had - a name. What greater power can there be than to operate namelessly? [Read Article](#)

### UK Factory Output Highest Since 2013 as Pound Effect Kicks In

*IndustryWeek - Bloomberg*

A measure of U.K. manufacturing output jumped to the most since 2013 this quarter as the pound's slide bolstered demand and confidence climbed, according to a survey by industry group EEF and advisers BDO LLP.



Export orders surged, fueled by sterling and a pickup in key overseas markets, the report published on March 6. Business confidence, which dropped in the wake of Britain's vote to leave the European Union, rebounded to the highest since 2015.

[Read Article](#)

### Brazil's recession worst on record

*BBC*

There are now 12.9 million people unemployed in Brazil. Brazil has been in recession for two years, the latest figures show, marking the deepest economic decline since records began. The economy contracted by 3.6% in 2016, meaning it is now 8% smaller than it was in December 2014.



The country has been hard hit by the fall in commodity prices and an internal political crisis that has undermined investor confidence. However, analysts believe the economy should start to pick up from here. [Read Article](#)

### Berlin Real Estate Boom Prompts Tenants' Protests

*DeutscheWelle*

In Berlin big real estate investment companies are facing ever more backlash from locals who fear higher rents or being pushed out of the city center. Is there still a future for grand real estate speculation?



Around 85 percent of people in Berlin rent the place they live in. But recently the status quo has been turned upside down. The city has sold thousands of apartments to investors. These apartments which were once for rent are often renovated - code for "luxury" - and then sold at a profit to individuals. Rental properties are becoming scarce. Naturally prices have skyrocketed. All this is rapidly changing the city that was once famously known for being "poor but sexy." [Read Article](#)

## China Shuts Hershey Joint Venture Plant in Latest Missile Spat Response

*Bloomberg*

The suspension order marks the first time that a U.S. company has also been pulled into the fray of a simmering political dispute between China and South Korea.



Shanghai Foods, a joint venture between Hershey Co. (IW 500/134) and Lotte Group, has been ordered by Chinese authorities to stop production, escalating China's economic retaliation for the deployment of a U.S. missile defense system in South Korea. The suspension order, confirmed by Lotte, marks the first time that a U.S. company has also been pulled into the fray of a simmering political dispute between China and South Korea. The factory suspension is the latest move by China against South Korean companies. [Read Article](#)

## E.U. Lawmakers Call for End to Visa-Free Travel for Americans

*NY Times - James Kantermarch*

BRUSSELS - The European Parliament has passed a nonbinding resolution calling for the reintroduction of visa requirements for American citizens, raising the stakes in a long-running battle over the United States' refusal to grant visa-free access to citizens of five European Union countries.



In the vote on Thursday, European lawmakers played tit-for-tat in their dispute with the United States, demanding restrictions on American travelers unless the Trump administration lifts travel requirements for citizens of Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Poland and Romania. [Read Article](#)

## Trudeau's Plan to Lure Silicon Valley Investors to Canada

*CNBC - Elaine Pofeldt*

When former elementary school teacher Tami Zuckerman dreamed up the idea for VarageSale, a Toronto-based site that runs local online garage sales, she had no shortage of funding options.



After her husband, Carl Mercier, a developer and serial entrepreneur, helped her build and launch the site, the couple began hunting for capital and raised an undisclosed amount in seed and Series A funding from both Canadian and U.S. backers. Then, in April 2015, they pulled in \$20 million in a Series B round in October 2014 from the Silicon Valley firms Lightspeed Venture Partners and Sequoia Capital, bringing the total raised from all investors to \$34 million. [Read Article](#)

## International Trade News

### EU, ASEAN Ready to Restart Free Trade Talks

*DeutscheWelle*

The EU and the 10-member bloc of Southeast Asian states are to put a trade pact back on the agenda after a 7-year hiatus. Currently only Singapore and Vietnam have free trade deals with Europe.



Trade ministers of the two regional blocs said in a joint statement on Friday they had asked officials to develop a framework for a future free trade agreement (FTA).

EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom said talks would restart, but there was no so far no targeted time-frame. "We believe it is important to connect two growing markets and to take away as many obstacles to trade," she told reporters in Manila.

[Read Article](#)

## U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services - U.S. Trade Deficit Increases

*U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Economic Analysis*



Economics & Statistics Administration  
United States Department of Commerce

U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Economic Analysis release new data showing January 2017 international trade deficit increased 9.6 percent from December, to \$48.5 billion. Exports increased 0.6 percent, to \$192.1 billion, and imports rose 2.3 percent, to \$240.6 billion. [Read Report](#)

The U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Economic Analysis released new data showing February 2017 international trade deficit decreased 9.6 percent from January, to \$43.6 billion. Exports increased 0.2 percent, to \$192.9 billion, and imports fell 1.8 percent, to \$236.4 billion. [Read Report](#)

### **In Face of Trump Rebuke, China Defends WTO**

*IndustryWeek - Agence France-Presse*

China will continue to support the "open and unbiased" World Trade Organization, according to a statement released Thursday that came on the heels of an announcement by President Donald Trump's administration that the United States is not bound by the group's rulings.



The world's second-largest economy is seeking to position itself as a defender of the international trade system in response to a rising tide of protectionist sentiment personified by the billionaire politician. Trump has repeatedly argued that Washington is better off pursuing country by country agreements rather than working within a global regime. [Read Article](#)

### **Nissan Could Face \$620 Million Brexit Toll, Senior VP Says**

*IndustryWeek - Bloomberg*

Nissan Motor Co. (IW 1000/25) could face a 500 million-pound (US\$620 million) hit to profit should the U.K. fall back on World Trade Organization rules after two years of divorce negotiations with the European Union, the first time the automaker has put an estimate on Brexit-related costs.



Speaking to lawmakers in the House of Commons in London Tuesday, Nissan Senior Vice President Colin Lawther said 10% tariffs on exports of the automaker's Qashqai SUV, built in Sunderland, northeast England, and 2.5% to 4.5% tariffs on parts, would be "pretty disastrous" as the company would have to absorb some of the impact. [Read Article](#)

### **Trump's Trade Agenda Looks Past WTO**

*NPR - Scott Horsley*

President Trump discussed trade and economic policies during his address to a joint session of Congress Tuesday night.

The Trump administration is promising an aggressive effort to pry open foreign markets for U.S. exports, even if that means sidestepping the World Trade Organization.



The president's trade policy agenda, made public late Wednesday, says the administration will "use all possible leverage" to open global markets to American goods and services, while cracking down on unfair trading practices by other countries.

The document says the U.S. will rely on strict enforcement of American trade laws and won't be bound by international settlement mechanisms like the WTO. [Read Article](#)

### **Trump's NAFTA Revamp Could Near Boiling Point at Mexico Vote**

*Bloomberg*

No matter how long NAFTA renegotiation talks take, the uncertainty of the trade agreement's fate will likely hang over the July 2018 presidential election in Mexico.



President Donald Trump's timetable to negotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement threatens to slip into an election year for Mexico, which could feel the economic impact of the uncertainty - especially if the agreement starts disintegrating.

U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said Wednesday that the trade

talks will probably begin in the latter part of 2017 and shouldn't last much longer than a year. "I would like the results tomorrow, but that is not the way the world works," Ross said. [Read Article](#)

### **China's Subsidies to High-tech Industries Skews Playing Field EU Says**

*IndustryWeek - Agence France-Presse*

The report said subsidies for industries including new-energy vehicles, information technology and robotics had "already created problems for both China's economy and European business."



China's Subsidies to High-tech Industries Skews Playing Field EU Says

The report said subsidies for industries including new-energy vehicles, information technology and robotics had "already created problems for both China's economy and European business."

Beijing's plans to use "staggering" subsidies to create national champions in high-tech industries would further skew China's business playing field and worsen trade frictions, a European lobby group warned on March 7.

[Read Article](#)

### **Global Economic Outlook, Q1 2017**

*Deloitte*

As 2017 begins, the global economic environment is characterized by new political realities. In the United States, there is a new president with new ideas and goals. In Europe, growth and inflation have begun to accelerate, yet unemployment remains stubbornly high. In Asia, growth is stabilizing, but risks are piling up in the form of higher debt and rising trade tensions. [Read Report](#)

### **EU-Philippines Trade Negotiations**

*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit - European Commission*

Negotiations for a region-to-region Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the EU and ASEAN



were launched in 2007 and paused in 2009 to give way to a bilateral format of negotiation. Bilateral FTA negotiations were launched with Singapore and Malaysia in 2010 and later with Vietnam in 2012, Thailand in 2013, the Philippines in 2015 and Indonesia in 2016. The aim is for bilateral FTAs with individual ASEAN countries to serve as building blocks towards a future region-to-region agreement. On 22 December 2015, the EU and the Philippines officially announced the launch of negotiations for an EU-Philippines Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Following the conclusion of trade talks with Singapore and Vietnam in 2014 and 2015, the aim would be to conclude an agreement of a similar level of ambition and coverage. [Read More](#)

### **Germany Presents its "Marshall Plan with Africa" to AfDB Experts**



*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit - International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development*

Gerd Müller, the German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, has presented last week the "Marshall Plan with Africa" developed by his government at the Africa Development Bank (AfDB) in Abidjan, gathering feedback and comments from the organisation's experts. [Read More](#)

### **'Eliminate the Trade Deficit' Resonates in Halls of Congress**

*EHSToday - Michele Nash-Hoff*

Congress should establish a national goal to eliminate the trade deficit by enacting a border adjustable consumption tax and taking other actions to establish fair trade.



"You were ahead of the curve on trade." This was the common refrain heard recently by members of the Coalition for a Prosperous America who attended our annual fly-in to Washington, D. C. We had eight teams of

members visiting Congressional Representatives and Senators on March 14th and 15th. As chair of our developing California chapter, it was my fifth year attending the CPA fly-in, and our simple message of eliminating the trade deficit resonated well in the halls of Congress. [Read Article](#)

## Education and Workforce Development News

### Pitching an Alternative Accreditation System

*Community College Daily*

U.S. Sens. Marco Rubio, R-Florida, and Michael Bennet, D-Colorado, this week reintroduced a bill

to create an alternative accreditation system that would set a pilot program allowing previously unaccredited institutions to tap federal student aid.



"America needs a 21st-century higher education system that embraces all the new ways people can learn and acquire skills without having to go the traditional four-year college degree track," Rubio said in a press release.

"To modernize our higher education system, we must end the status quo accreditation system, which stifles competition, fuels soaring tuition costs and limits opportunities for nontraditional students, such as working parents." [Read Article](#)

### The Robocalypse Shouldn't Give You Sleepless Nights

*IndustryWeek - Bloomberg View*

Good rule of thumb: The higher your pay, the lower your chances of being replaced in the workplace by a robot.



In the debate about the impact of automation and robotics on the future of work, there is often a reductive push toward a Robocalypse, in which machines take all of the jobs. While a total displacement of humans is unlikely, a number of different types of jobs do face an existential threat. This is typically low-skill, low-education, and low-income work that often includes significant manual labor and predictively repetitive tasks. [Read Article](#)

### How Does the US Compare?

*Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development*



The 2016 edition of *Society at a Glance* examines social well-being and its trends across the OECD. The number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) remains elevated in many countries since the crisis; the report therefore focuses on this group of young people examining the characteristics of those at risk of being NEET along with policies to help meet the challenge. This edition also includes many new youth-specific indicators on family formation, self-sufficiency, income and poverty, health and social cohesion. [Read Report](#)

### Trump Signs Government Reorganization Order

*Community College Daily News - Federal News Radio - Jason Miller*

President Donald Trump signed an executive order Monday calling for agencies to analyze their efforts in preparation for a major reorganization.



White House press secretary Sean Spicer said March 13 at the daily briefing that the order will ask agencies to identify where money is being wasted, how services can be improved and whether or not the services are benefiting the nation. "This is the beginning of a long overdue reorganization of the federal government and another significant step toward the President's often stated goal of making it more efficient, effective and accountable to the American people," Spicer said. [Read Article](#)

### The Retraining Paradox

*New York Times Magazine - Ruth Graham*

When Nathan Key graduated from Plymouth State University in New Hampshire a decade ago with a bachelor's degree in communications, he found himself with about \$10,000 in debt and few clear career options. He first found work as a door-to-door salesman ("a pyramid scheme," he recalls) and then in telemarketing. Finally he landed a job as an infrastructure specialist for Datamatic, a Texas-based water-meter-technology company. He was traveling across the country installing meters, making a decent salary. But he lost his job after the company restructured in 2012, he said, and soon he found that his skills weren't easily transferable to a new field; Datamatic's technology was proprietary, and his expertise in the company's installation program wasn't appealing to employers outside that particular industry. He tried going into business with a friend, but the relationship soured. By then he had a baby and a fiancée, and he felt stuck. [Read Article](#)

## Training and Organizational Development News

### Five Ways to Empower Employees for Higher Engagement

*IndustryWeek - Shawn Casmore, President and Founder, Casmore and Co. Inc.*

Empowerment is the ability of an employee to be directly involved in and have influence over their work. The organizations that typically have the highest level of employee engagement are the very same organizations in which employees are empowered.



Regardless of which statistic you find, the fact remains that employee engagement throughout North America remains low. In my experience, the reason there has been little improvement in this area over the past decade is because we've yet to come to grips with the idea that we need to let go in order to help employees to grow. [Read Article](#)

### Facing Skills Shortage, Frito-Lay Grows Its Own Maintenance Techs

*IndustryWeek - Laura Putre*

The Perry, Ga., plant requires a round-the-clock crew of 100 industrial maintenance technicians to keep the machines running—and those jobs, which require a specialized two-year degree, are hard to fill.



Ask a random person what an industrial maintenance technician does, and you'll probably get a blank stare, or a job description that mentions a mop and a bucket. Even Sabrina Phelps, who's in the business of vocational education, was stumped when she got a call three years ago from a Frito-Lay plant manager, asking whether the school offered any kind of maintenance tech training.

"We were like, 'You want what?'" recalls Phelps, principal of Houston County Career Academy in central Georgia. "I had no idea what that was." [Read Article](#)

### The 2017 IndustryWeek Salary Survey: Smooth Sailing on Pay as Skilled Jobs Go Unfilled

*IndustryWeek - Laura Putre*

It's that time of year again: we unmask the results of the annual IndustryWeek Manufacturing Salary Survey. This year, we analyzed data from 780 leaders in jobs from CEO to engineering management; vp of operations to EHS supervisor.



Manufacturing may no longer be dirty, dark and dangerous, but according to the survey demographics this year, its leadership still heavily skews white, male and over 50. Our prototypical respondent is a white, male corporate executive in his 50s working in the industrial machinery or automotive industry. He has a bachelor's degree, lives in the Midwest and has spent more than a quarter century working in manufacturing. Being in the C-Suite, he makes, on average, 180K per year. [Read Article](#)

## The Real Reasons Americans Are

### Unhappy at Work

*EHSToday - Sandy Smith*

Nearly half of us want to quit our jobs by the end of the year. Workplace expert Rex

Conner explains why in this exclusive Q&A. When it comes to work, Americans aren't happy. New numbers reveal more than half of employees want to quit their jobs by the end of the year, and most people cite their manager as the reason. But according to workplace expert Rex Conner, the true problem is neither the boss, nor the bossed. It is an unseen enemy.



"Subjectivity in the workplace is the root of all evil," says Conner, author of *What if Common Sense Was Common Practice in Business?* "Any time that another person can subjectively change my working conditions, there is potential conflict. Provide less opportunity for the boss and the bossed to disagree, and the ideal workplace emerges." [Read Article](#)

## Quality News

### The Great Push vs. Pull Diversion

*IndustryWeek - Edward S. Pound and Mark L. Spearman, Factory Physics, Inc.*

Understand that whether WIP is pulled or pushed is not the point and that too little WIP is as bad as too much WIP

Executives and managers in manufacturing have been subject to a great diversion ever since the advent of the Toyota Production System. In an effort to improve performance, many have wasted inordinate amounts of time and money in organizational struggles over push systems versus pull systems.

\* If you are discussing the benefits of push vs. pull in your organization, stop.

\* If you are implementing pull systems and focusing on achieving one-piece flow, know that you are in danger of leading your organization to decreased throughput performance, poor customer service performance, or both. [Read Article](#)

## Cyber Security and IT News

### Many Companies Taking a Pass on Buying Cyber Insurance

*CFO.com - Vincent Ryan*

Lack of a standard language, concern over potential coverage gaps, and uncertainty over the value of policies are making businesses wary.

# CFO

A September 2016 survey by the Risk and Insurance Management Society found that 80% of companies surveyed bought a stand-alone cybersecurity policy in 2016. The takeaway, according to RIMS, was that policies covering cyber exposures exclusively are now the norm for many large companies. In fact, the survey made it seem like buying cyber-insurance was a no-brainer.

But new research from the Deloitte Center for Financial Services throws cold water on that assessment of market conditions. [Read Article](#)

### U.S. Data Breaches Hit All-Time High

*CFO.Com - Sean Allocca*

Companies sustained more than 1,000 data breaches in 2016, an increase of 40% over 2015 data.

# CFO

The number of reported U.S. data breaches hit an all-time high in 2016, thanks in part to new CEO phishing hacks that send phony emails to employees requesting sensitive business data.

Researchers from the Identity Theft Resource Center and data-security provider CyberScout scoured federal and state government records from 2016 and estimated a total of 1,093 breaches occurred last year. The record-high represents a 40% hike in the number of incidents over the previous period. [Read Article](#)

## Honeywell on the Hook for UAW Benefits, Judge Rules

IndustryWeek - Laura Putre

The company contended that because a collective bargaining agreement had expired, Honeywell was no longer required to pay benefits.



A group of about 500 retirees from Honeywell International's plant in Greenville, Ohio, are entitled to their full pensions, a federal judge ruled on Tuesday.

In December 2015, Honeywell sent letters to UAW retirees from the plant, saying that their coverage would be terminated the following December. The company contended that because a collective bargaining agreement had expired, Honeywell was no longer required to pay benefits. The retirees filed a complaint against the decision last July. The plant is no longer operated by Honeywell. [Read Article](#)

## The Upside of Speaking Up

IndustryWeek - Chris Morgan, Founding Principal, Morgan Alexander

Fear of speaking the truth to co-workers and employees can have severe consequences. Here is advice on how honest, respectful feedback can leverage the threat response to make us better.



Delivering the kind of feedback that will bring about positive change requires business leaders and managers to pay attention to two dimensions: psychological safety and honesty.

I have nothing but admiration for my clients who go through a narrative 360 feedback with me. But I am often left wondering how the candid perspectives that their work colleagues share during my interviews so often come as a surprise. Why do otherwise friendly and supportive coworkers starve each other of the very information that will help them grow and succeed? Put another way, why are they complicit in their failure? [Read Article](#)

## Trump's Religious Freedom Order Could Wreak Havoc in the Workplace

IndustryWeek - Tom Spiggle

The four-page order, if it sees the light of day and the president signs it, would dramatically expand the rights of workers to refuse to carry out routine tasks that they feel conflict with their religious beliefs in any way.



In early February, several news outlets obtained a draft executive order with the innocent-sounding name "Establishing a Government-Wide Initiative to Respect Religious Freedom." The four-page order, if it sees the light of day and the president signs it, would dramatically expand the rights of workers to refuse to carry out routine tasks that they feel conflict with their religious beliefs in any way.

Note that this order is still a draft; the Trump Administration has not officially proposed it. Nevertheless, the thrust of the order is consistent with similar laws supported by social conservatives, including Vice President Mike Pence, who passed a "religious freedom" bill as governor of Indiana. [Read Article](#)

## Labor Relations 101: Why Telling Employees to 'Knock It Off' Isn't Enough

IndustryWeek - Mark F. Kluger and William H. Healey

Thorough reporting of workplace sexual harassment and discrimination claims can prevent costly court decisions.



When we conduct our training program for managers in sexual harassment prevention, there is always one uncomfortable point in the session. It is when we advise managers that any time they witness or stop inappropriate behavior, they must write down what happened and

who was involved, what they did in response, and then send the information to HR (or put it in an employee's file). This is our recommendation no matter how minor the infraction and even if doing so makes the supervisor feel like a jerk. We get it. But the problem is that liability may result if there is no record of the corrective action. [Read Article](#)

## Environmental, Health & Safety News

### Federal Agencies Tasked with Producing a List of Rules to Be Rescinded or Replaced

*EHSToday - Sandy Smith*

President Donald Trump acknowledges the crowd after he addressed the Conservative Political Action Conference at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center Feb. 24 in National Harbor, Md. Hosted by the American Conservative Union, CPAC is an annual gathering of conservative politicians, commentators and their supporters.



President Donald Trump on Feb. 24 signed the Enforcing the Regulatory Reform Agenda executive order, which gives all federal agencies 90 days to produce a list of regulations to be rescinded or replaced.

The executive order also creates a task force and requires agency heads to appoint a regulatory reform officer for each federal agency. The members of the task forces are responsible for identifying regulations to be targeted for repeal or revision. [Read Article](#)

### UK Study: Average Health and Safety Fines £75,000 Higher Than the Cost of Compliance

*EHSToday - Bryan Richards*

New research from the UK finds that the cost of EHS fines is 65 percent greater than the expenditure compliant companies spent to foster communication and a culture of safety.



UK businesses paid an average of £115,440 in fines for being found guilty of a health and safety breach in 2016. That's according to the latest prosecution data from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

In contrast, the cost of health and safety compliance for companies in 2016 ranged between £5,000 and £40,000. SMEs that invested in health and safety therefore potentially avoided a fine £75,000 higher than the cost of compliance. This is according to research done by Arinite health and safety consultants. [Read Article](#)

### Think Lean to Make Safety Simpler

*IndustryWeek - Peter Susca, Principal/Owner, OpX Safety*

Having spent most of my career in safety and operations leadership positions, it's clear to me that many organizations make safety more of a burden than necessary.



No leader wants employees to get injured at work, but sadly and quite often, the cost of safety (e.g., additional time and capital spent for material and equipment) gets in the way of making good decisions. When the cost of safety becomes a burden to the organization, the safety approach begins to suffer. [Read Article](#)

### Senate Votes to Eliminate Recordkeeping Update, President Supports Measure

*EHSToday - Sandy Smith*

A joint resolution nullifying the Department of Labor's recordkeeping rule, published on Dec. 19, 2016, which clarified an employer's "ongoing" obligation to make and maintain records of work-related injuries and illnesses, now goes to the president for his signature.



The legislation was authored by Congressman Bradley Byrne (R-AL), chairman of the House Workforce Protections Subcommittee, to block what he called "an unlawful regulation" from OSHA.

On March 22, the U.S. Senate voted along party lines (50-48) to approve House Joint Resolution 83: "Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to 'Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness.'" The U.S. House of Representatives already had passed the measure, so it now goes to the president for his signature. The White House already has issued a Statement of Administration policy announcing that the Trump administration "strongly supports" passage of the bill. [Read Article](#)

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