

# 2017 POLICY BRIEF



## SUPPORT WORKFORCE AND LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)

### QUICK FACTS

- Enacted in 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) reauthorizes federal employment and training programs, and provides the needed framework for a modernized demand driven workforce development system.
- Local officials play a pivotal role in the governance and administration of WIOA programs and funding.
- The chief elected official (CEO) of the local government is responsible for appointing the local Workforce Development Board (WDB), and setting policy for the local workforce development system.
- Counties are involved in 90 percent of the country's 550 WDBs.
- WIOA is a vital funding source for workforce development that helps counties tackle and overcome the challenges facing jobseekers and employers.



### ACTION NEEDED:

Urge your members of Congress to support level funding for the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I programs for FY 2018. Funded through the Labor, Health and Human Services (Labor-HHS) appropriations bill, WIOA programs provide important financial and other resources to support a demand driven workforce development system that meets the needs of business and jobseekers alike.

### BACKGROUND:

Enacted in 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is bipartisan legislation that reauthorizes federal employment, workforce and training programs and formula funding to states and localities. WIOA provides the needed framework for a modernized, demand driven workforce development system to meet the needs of business and jobseekers alike.

Administered at the federal level by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA), WIOA is the largest single source of federal funding for workforce development activities. WIOA is a vital funding source for workforce development that helps states and localities, including counties, tackle and overcome challenges facing jobseekers and employers.

The 2014 WIOA measure included several modernizations to help better match businesses with the skilled workers they need to grow. Several of these include:

- Maintaining local governance authority, while providing enhanced flexibility to meet the needs of business and jobseekers;
- Maintaining a business-led majority on the Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), while reducing the numbers of required members;
- Establishing a single set of common performance metrics across all core programs and adding a measure on the effectiveness of serving business;
- Eliminating the sequence of services requirement and integrating best practices such as industry partnerships and career pathways and
- Focusing youth services on out-of-school and disconnected youth between the ages of 16-24.

WIOA also establishes the one-stop center delivery system, which provides convenient access to job search assistance, workforce training and career services through various locations across the country.

WIOA recognizes the importance of local elected officials' role in the governance of workforce development activities and the critical role local elected officials and local WDBs play in workforce and economic development in local communities. It provides enhanced flexibilities to address local workforce challenges.

WIOA Title I focus on workforce development activities at the state and local level and establish funding for three key formula grants - Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth programs.

Over the last program year, WIOA employment and training programs have assisted 7.3 million individuals. In 2016, 64 percent of WIOA participants gained employment, including 77 percent of Adults and 82 percent of Dislocated Workers who received training services.

Workforce development funding has declined by twenty percent since 2001. President's Trump's FY 2018 budget proposal would reduce Title I formula grants by close to 40 percent. It would reduce WIOA current Adult funding from \$816 million to \$490 million; Dislocated Worker funding from \$1 billion to \$615 million and would reduce Youth grants from \$873 million to \$416 million. Any further spending cuts to WIOA will negatively impact counties' ability to adequately serve both jobseekers and businesses as intended by WIOA.

#### **KEY TALKING POINTS**

- Enacted in 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) reauthorizes the federal employment, workforce and training programs and formula funding to states and localities. WIOA provides the needed framework for a modernized, demand driven workforce development system to meet the needs of business and jobseekers alike.
- WIOA is a vital funding source for workforce development that helps counties tackle and overcome the challenges facing job seekers and employers.
- Local officials play a pivotal role in the governance and administration of WIOA programs and funding.
- Local governments partner with federal, state, other local governments and the private sector through Workforce Development Boards (WDBs).

- Counties are involved in 90 percent of the country's 550 local WDBs. Twenty-eight percent of WDBs are within a county department or function as a county government department.

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