

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

ACTION NEEDED:

Urge your members of Congress to support at least level or increased funding for Title I programs under the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) as Congress finalizes funding for FY 2022 and begins to consider funding for FY 2023. Funded through the Labor, Health and Human Services (Labor-HHS) appropriations bill, WIOA programs provide essential financial and other resources to support a demand-driven workforce development system.

BACKGROUND:

Enacted with bipartisan support in 2014, WIOA authorizes federal employment, workforce and training programs and formula funding to states and local governments. WIOA provides the needed framework for a modernized, demand-driven workforce development system to meet business and jobseekers' needs.

Administered at the federal level under the 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 counties tackle and overcome challenges facing job seekers and employers. The program is more important than ever as local communities continue to respond to and recover economically from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2014, Congress included several measures in WIOA to help better match businesses with the skilled workers they need to grow, including:

- Maintaining local governance authority while providing enhanced flexibility to meet the needs of businesses and job seekers;

ENACTED IN 2014, THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) AUTHORIZES 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. COUNTIES ARE INVOLVED IN 90 PERCENT OF THE COUNTRY'S 550 LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS (WDBs)

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- 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 businesses;
- 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.

In addition, 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 also provides enhanced flexibility to address local workforce challenges.

WIOA Title I focuses on workforce development activities at the state and local level and establishes funding for three key formula grants – Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth Programs.

While workforce development funding has declined since 2001, there was a \$3 million increase in FY 2021 over FY 2020 levels. Of the \$2.85 billion allocated to WIOA Title I Programs in FY 2021, \$862.6 million was included for Adults, \$921 million was included for Youth and \$1.06 billion was provided for Dislocated Workers

KEY TALKING POINTS:

- Enacted in 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) authorizes 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 businesses and jobseekers.
- 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. Counties are involved in 90 percent of the country's 550 local WDBs, through which we partner with federal, state, other local governments and the private sector. 28 percent of WDBs are within a county department, or function as a county department.
- Congress should provide at least level or increased funding for WIOA Title I programs in FY 2022 and FY 2023.

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