

Ron Danowski, Liaison
201 E. Washington Avenue, Rm. G100
P.O. Box 7972
Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7972
Telephone: (608) 266-3485
Fax: (608) 261-8506
Web site: <http://www.wi-cwi.org>



Jim Doyle
Governor

Tim Sullivan
Chair

Council on Workforce Investment

June 29, 2010

The Honorable Russell D. Feingold
United States Senate
506 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feingold:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Council on Workforce Investment, I want to share our position on issues that are important for Wisconsin related to the upcoming reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) expected this summer. Given the need for a responsive and an effective workforce system, changes in a renewed Act must include priority on training that matches state and regional industry needs, flexibility to best serve customers, and shared common performance measures among the Act's funding sources that ensures transparency and accountability.

In order to achieve the type of public workforce system that meets employer and job seeker needs, we would like to make the following recommendations on reauthorization:

Expand training opportunities and increase employer engagement

Currently, there are no requirements to invest in training under the Workforce Investment Act. When training is done under the Individual Training Account system, it is often done without strategic considerations for a state, regional or business impact. While a broad array of training programs exists, the training is not always coordinated to make the best of the funds available. Investing in training is critical to the economic vitality of our state and its economic regions. A new Act must provide for a broad range of training options related to skills identified by business driven industry partnerships in strategic economic sectors. In order to efficiently use the multitude of public training resources available, training strategies must encourage use of coordinated approaches. We recommend that the new WIA include provisions that address the following items:

- Eliminate the Individual Training Account requirement and make it easier to develop training strategies geared to customized class sized training programs.
- Require a percentage of formula funds be spent for training expenditures in order to ensure a sufficient amount of funding is used to train participants and develop skills needed to succeed in the labor market.
- Expand incumbent worker training opportunities to upgrade the skills of currently employed individuals.
- Encourage the use of career pathways and bridge programs to support the skills advancement of working adults as well as programs for workers and English language learners needing basic skills.
- Encourage the use of regional employer-driven industry sector strategies for service delivery and worker training that leads to efficiencies and industry innovation.
- Improve efficiency of the public workforce system and avoid providing unnecessary services in the enrollment process by eliminating the sequence of services requirement.

Create sustainable financial support for the One-Stop system infrastructure

To be successful, the one-stop delivery system must serve as a meeting place for employers and job seekers. A stable and equitable funding mechanism to maintain the operating costs of the One-Stop system is critical to its success. In order to achieve this stability, the new act should embrace the following principals:

- Require a fair share contribution for the infrastructure among the required One-Stop partners, or set aside a specific amount of funding to provide for the cost of the One-stop infrastructure.
- Promote the use of technology that leads to improved services particularly for rural areas and individuals with disabilities.
- Encourage and financially support funding for essential specialized services at the certified One-Stops including Disability Navigators and Benefits Specialists.

Invest in Youth

Many of our youth leave high school unprepared for the world of work. Many of our most disadvantaged youth are never exposed to the workplace and will remain mired in unemployment and dead end jobs for their whole lives. A renewed Workforce Investment Act should focus on preparing youth for the world of work, even if they have passed the typical age of graduation from the K-12 system. To that end, we recommend that a new Workforce Investment Act:

- Provide sufficient funding for a permanent Summer Youth Employment and Training Program.
- Emphasize services to high-risk youth and basic skill deficient youth to prepare them for additional training and employment opportunities.
- Eliminate the youth "in-school/out-of-school" requirements.

Improve Governance and Administration

Today, our state and local workforce boards are made up of many, often competing, interests that are too large and cumbersome to provide the type of strategic leadership needed to have a flexible and responsive public workforce system. A new Workforce Investment Act should address this by establishing boards that ensure thorough oversight and quality strategic direction.

- Require smaller employer-led local and state workforce boards with a majority of members from the business community.
- Reduce the required representation of public agencies with a stake in the funding administered by the board.
- Maintain the private sector Chairperson requirement.
- Clearly state, and define that, the role of both State and Local boards is strategic and spans programs beyond WIA.
- Clearly define the role of the boards at it relates to performance oversight and its role in taking corrective action where necessary.

Establish an accountability system that focuses on transparency and outcomes across programs

In business and government, outcomes are driven by what is measured. Under the current WIA performance measurement system, states and local boards are driven by a complex set of program measures that do not encourage providing services to the most needy people seeking services. Some measures focus on interim achievements without regard to the overall need to move people

into employment. The multitude of existing programs have different outcomes that inhibit the use of funding in a complementary way among different programs that serve the same target groups. A new Workforce Investment Act must align accountability across related workforce programs with common measures that focus on the obtainment and retention of employment, and increases in income upon completion of the program. To accomplish this goal, we recommend:

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Tim Sullivan, Chair
Council on Workforce Investment

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Jim Doyle
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Council on Workforce Investment

June 29, 2010

The Honorable Herb Kohl
United States Senate
330 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kohl:

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Tim Sullivan, Chair
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Jim Doyle
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Council on Workforce Investment

June 29, 2010

The Honorable Paul Ryan
United States House of Representatives
1113 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515-4901

Dear Representative Ryan:

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Tim Sullivan, Chair
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Jim Doyle
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Council on Workforce Investment

June 29, 2010

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States House of Representatives
2446 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515-4902

Dear Representative Baldwin:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Council on Workforce Investment, I want to share our position on issues that are important for Wisconsin related to the upcoming reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) expected this summer. Given the need for a responsive and an effective workforce system, changes in a renewed Act must include priority on training that matches state and regional industry needs, flexibility to best serve customers, and shared common performance measures among the Act's funding sources that ensures transparency and accountability.

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Tim Sullivan, Chair
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Jim Doyle
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Council on Workforce Investment

June 29, 2010

The Honorable Ron Kind
United States House of Representatives
1406 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515-4903

Dear Representative Kind:

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- Eliminate the Individual Training Account requirement and make it easier to develop training strategies geared to customized class sized training programs.
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To be successful, the one-stop delivery system must serve as a meeting place for employers and job seekers. A stable and equitable funding mechanism to maintain the operating costs of the One-Stop system is critical to its success. In order to achieve this stability, the new act should embrace the following principals:

- Require a fair share contribution for the infrastructure among the required One-Stop partners, or set aside a specific amount of funding to provide for the cost of the One-stop infrastructure.
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Tim Sullivan, Chair
Council on Workforce Investment

Ron Danowski, Liaison
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Fax: (608) 261-8506
Web site: <http://www.wi-cwi.org>



Jim Doyle
Governor

Tim Sullivan
Chair

Council on Workforce Investment

June 29, 2010

The Honorable F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.
United States House of Representatives
2449 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515-4905

Dear Representative Sensenbrenner:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Council on Workforce Investment, I want to share our position on issues that are important for Wisconsin related to the upcoming reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) expected this summer. Given the need for a responsive and an effective workforce system, changes in a renewed Act must include priority on training that matches state and regional industry needs, flexibility to best serve customers, and shared common performance measures among the Act's funding sources that ensures transparency and accountability.

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Tim Sullivan, Chair
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Web site: <http://www.wi-cwi.org>



Jim Doyle
Governor

Tim Sullivan
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Council on Workforce Investment

June 29, 2010

The Honorable Thomas E. Petri
United States House of Representatives
2462 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515-4906

Dear Representative Petri:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Council on Workforce Investment, I want to share our position on issues that are important for Wisconsin related to the upcoming reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) expected this summer. Given the need for a responsive and an effective workforce system, changes in a renewed Act must include priority on training that matches state and regional industry needs, flexibility to best serve customers, and shared common performance measures among the Act's funding sources that ensures transparency and accountability.

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Jim Doyle
Governor

Tim Sullivan
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Council on Workforce Investment

June 29, 2010

The Honorable David R. Obey
United States House of Representatives
2314 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515-4907

Dear Representative Obey:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Council on Workforce Investment, I want to share our position on issues that are important for Wisconsin related to the upcoming reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) expected this summer. Given the need for a responsive and an effective workforce system, changes in a renewed Act must include priority on training that matches state and regional industry needs, flexibility to best serve customers, and shared common performance measures among the Act's funding sources that ensures transparency and accountability.

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June 29, 2010

The Honorable Steve Kagen
United States House of Representatives
1232 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515-4908

Dear Representative Kagen:

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