



2010 WIA Reauthorization Recommendations

The Wisconsin Workforce Development Association (WWDA), a consortium of eleven Workforce Boards working to address economic and workforce development on a statewide basis, strongly encourage the U.S. Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions to take steps to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 this year. By strengthening the public workforce system through reauthorization of WIA, they can help our nation develop the skilled workforce it needs and provide its citizens with the career opportunities they deserve.

A System that is Business-Driven and Defined by Local Needs

A system that is guided by local institutions will allow for the development of programs that are informed by in-depth knowledge of the local business community.

How to accomplish:

- Appointment of local Boards by local elected officials
- The majority of the Board membership should be business members that a) use the local workforce development system and/or b) represent a high growth, demand sector for the local and/ or regional area
- Incorporate business-focused metrics (See section on 'Appropriate Measures')
- Training aligned with employment demands
- Encourage regional planning, partnerships and actions where they make sense for regional economies and provide flexibility that will allow local Boards to partner with other Boards on regional activities within states and across state lines.

Train More Workers for the 21st Century Economy

Congress must not only substantially increase its investment in workforce funding, but it must ensure that funding supports programming that is designed to successfully prepare and train existing and new workers.

How to accomplish:

- Be funded at an appropriate level of \$8.35 billion for FY10.
- Provide the flexibility to move funds between Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth funding streams.
- Allow for flexibility to fund customized training in areas such as basic skills/soft skills/job readiness.
- Support the current definition for administrative costs in WIA
- Support the "Strengthening Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success (SECTORS) Act" (S777/HR 1855)

Improve the Stability and Efficiency of the Infrastructure

One-Stop Centers, created through the original WIA legislation, should remain as this service delivery mechanism under new legislation.

How to accomplish:

- WIA should eliminate the "sequence of services

- Separate Funding Streams for One-Stops and Training
- Clarification that One-Stop Career Centers are open to all customers, but some customers will be best served through categorical programs (like Voc Rehab or those for Veterans) that are available only in a limited number of One-Stops
- Allow local/regional determination of measures
- Remove disincentives for serving the disadvantaged by using approaches like tiered performance measures, regression models, etc.

Accounting and Reporting Structure to Accurately Reflect Spending

Confusion about “unspent carryover” resulted in the rescission of funds by DOL and caused a situation whereby states had to use subsequent year funds to pay for obligations entered into in the prior years, which limited the services they could provide in those subsequent years. A situation like this one could be prevented.

How to accomplish:

- Requires that all states use the accrual method of accounting, as defined by GAAP, for costs in their reporting to the federal government
- The definition of reportable obligations be changed to include merely the legal financial commitment or exposure of contracts and purchases agreed to.

Youth Career Development

Only a significant reinvestment in all youth, but most especially those young people with low educational attainment and poor connections to work, will generate enough skilled, technologically savvy, and educated, U.S. workers to keep our nation competitive in the global economy.

How to accomplish:

- An enhanced summer employment initiative
- WIA should continue to focus services on those youth most in need---young people living in low-income families and youth who face significant barriers to employment.
- Allow WIBs to use a variety of eligibility tools to determine eligibility. Such as attendance in schools with more than 70% of the population receiving free/reduced lunch; living in families that receive TANF or Food Stamps; foster care youth; being out of school and out of work.