



June 10, 2013

The Honorable Tom Harkin, Chair
Committee on Health, Education,
Labor and Pensions
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Robert Casey, Chair
Subcommittee on Employment and
Workplace Safety
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lamar Alexander,
Ranking Member
Committee on Health, Education,
Labor and Pensions
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Johnny Isakson,
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Employment and
Workplace Safety
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray, Chair
Committee on the Budget
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Harkin, Alexander, Casey, Isakson, and Murray:

On behalf of the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM), the National Association of Counties (NACo), the National League of Cities (NLC), the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB), the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) and our respective national memberships of local elected officials, business leaders, workforce investment boards, and regional and development organization leaders, we want to thank you for your continued leadership as you work to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998.

We firmly believe that WIA is long overdue for reauthorization. We need a strong and modernized workforce system, and we strongly support efforts to increase investments in quality services, resources and training.

As you know, workforce development programs have had a 50 year history of bipartisan support. Democrats and Republicans have worked with stakeholders to forge legislation that is responsive to the needs of businesses and workers, reflects the perspectives of the varied constituency groups that workforce programs serve, and draws upon the strengths of each level of government to ensure that the

program is effective, efficient and successful. We urge you to continue to work together as you craft Senate legislation to reauthorize WIA.

Please consider and accept the following key principles as you move forward drafting legislation to reauthorize WIA.

1. Streamline the state and local governance process to ensure that job training and employment services are delivered rapidly and effectively, and meet the needs of employers and workers by ensuring that workers are trained to meet the 21st century workplace.
2. Retain the local delivery system that is based on regional economies and local labor markets, and is led by county and city elected officials and local business leaders who are most familiar with their local economies and the ways in which they can be supported and improved.
3. Thoughtfully and carefully consolidate existing workforce programs that are administered by different federal agencies so that program services are more effectively and efficiently delivered to those in need of job skills training and job placement assistance.
4. Establish common performance measures to accurately reflect local and regional service strategies, economies, and business-led metrics that are used across all WIA programs.
5. Include a significant reinvestment in youth, dedicated to young people with low educational attainment and poor connections to work– to establish a youth recovery and reengagement system that creates multiple pathways and greatly expands work experience -- including support for secondary school completion strategies, well-organized summer jobs programs, alternative education, occupational training, supportive services, adult mentoring for young workers, and comprehensive guidance and counseling to address the current youth employment crisis.
6. Allow training flexibility to provide for customization of training needs. A successful 21st century workforce system must be nimble enough not to impede the connection of eager jobseekers with employers who need to hire them.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide you with an overview of our overarching principles and concerns. We look forward to working with you to craft legislation that truly modernizes our nation's workforce development system and addresses some of the gaps in the current workforce system.

We urge the Committee to continue its bipartisan efforts to reauthorize WIA to ensure that the nation's workers have the necessary skills to get and keep their jobs, and employers have access to the skilled workforce they need to compete in the global economy. We stand ready to work with you and the Senate to ensure this outcome.

Sincerely yours,



Michael Nutter
Mayor of Philadelphia
President, The U.S. Conference of
Mayors (USCM)



Chris Rodgers
Commissioner
Douglas County, Nebraska
President, National Association of Counties
(NACo)



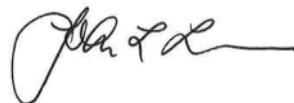
Marie Lopez Rogers
Mayor of Avondale, AZ
President, National League of Cities (NLC)



Laurie Moran
President, Danville-Pittsylvania Chamber of
Commerce, Danville, Virginia
Board Chair, National Association of
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David F. Shafer
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John Leonard
Executive Director
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President, National Association of Development
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