

June 19, 2017

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Labor, HHS, Education
Appropriations Subcommittee
2467 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Labor, HHS, Education
Appropriations Subcommittee
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Senate Labor, HHS, Education
Appropriations Subcommittee
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Labor, HHS, Education
Appropriations Subcommittee
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chairman Blunt, and Ranking Member Murray:

The undersigned organizations work together as the United States Workforce Association (USWA) representing local workforce boards, businesses, and other organizations involved in workforce and economic development activities across the country. The bipartisan passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in 2014 was a critical moment for the U.S. workforce system and the law has driven successful changes for local workforce boards to better serve businesses and employers.

As your subcommittees consider the Fiscal Year 2018 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you fully fund the Title I and Title II accounts at the level authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The 40% cuts to workforce training and nearly 20% cuts to Adult Education proposed in President Trump's FY2018 budget would decimate the federal workforce system. Workforce Development Boards, serving businesses in communities across the country, would be forced to eliminate critical services, disproportionately impacting small to medium sized firms desperate for a skilled workforce.

We understand the political context of the President's budget proposal but cuts of any magnitude to the WIOA programs at this point of implementation will erase the strides already made. There is a bipartisan focus on economic growth and that can only be realized with a skilled and trained workforce to fill the jobs of today and the future.

WIOA funding is invested through direct consultation with private sector needs in local areas. Whether it's developing a short-term training program for programmers, identifying in-demand skills, working with employers to hire credential/certificate program graduates, workforce development boards play a critical role in the promised economic growth under this Administration. The proposed cuts in the President's budget would severely undercut the progress made under WIOA and limit the potential for businesses to grow and individuals to find a path to economic sustainability.

The funding levels we are requesting in the FY2018 Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill are listed below:

Title I – Department of Labor

- \$861.1 million for Adult Employment and Training Services,
- \$922.2 million for the Youth Activities, and
- \$1.37 billion for Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Services

Title II – Department of Education

- \$649.287 million for Adult Education

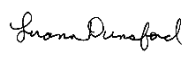

Access to these services through the federal workforce system allows our businesses to focus on innovation and expansion while working with state and local workforce partners to continually find the talent needed to sustain that growth. Increasingly, individuals seeking employment do not have the necessary education and training to fulfill the minimum requirements for open positions. The workforce boards convene the stakeholders across the private and public sector to make the necessary connections to close that noted 'skills gap.'

This training, support and business partnership is vital to our continued success in the future. We urge you to fund the Department of Labor Title I Accounts and Title II at the Department of Education at the levels authorized by WIOA in the Fiscal Year 2018 Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations bill.


Sincerely,

Bob Lanter
Executive Director
California Workforce Association

Luann Dunsford
Chief Executive Officer
Michigan Works! Association



John Trotter
President
Ohio Workforce Association

Joe Barela, President
Rocky Mountain Workforce
Development Association

Anne Kilzer
Director
Minnesota Workforce Council
Association

Linda Blake
Executive Director
PA Workforce Development
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Melinda Mulawka Mack
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Don Gillis
Executive Director
Mass Workforce Board Association





Kirkland J. Murray, President & CEO
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Oregon Workforce Partnership