

March 20th, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, the U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, the U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Republican Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of the national workforce system, the more than five hundred workforce development boards, and the 2500+ American Jobs Centers, the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) is reaching out during this time of crisis.

The COVID-19 public health emergency has impacted Americans in every state, region, and locality. The economic impacts of this crisis are unfolding in real time as jobless claims are at a two year high across the nation and expected to climb. During these unprecedented times, as the nation struggles with the COVID-19 outbreak and its effect on our economy, health, and everyday lives, Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) and other stakeholders in the workforce development system are rising to the challenge as “first responders” for workers and business. Between lay-offs, job insecurity, illness related absences, and healthcare workforce shortages it is critical that Congress ensures local WDBs can remain agile and operate at peak capacity to help the U.S. labor either retain employment or reduce their period of unemployment, at the same time, providing business with the skilled labor force it needs.

To ensure that Americans can speedily return to work, address unemployment and return economic strength, NAWB urges Congress to act immediately as part of this Phase 3 package:

Appropriate an additional \$5.47 billion for WIOA funding.

- With extensive consultation of local workforce development boards and consideration of the “The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act” passed during the financial crisis of 2008, NAWB recommends an additional \$5.47 billion to be appropriated through WIOA formula funds for use through 6/30/23 to be added to current appropriated WIOA formula funds as follows:
 - \$1.2 billion for adult services, including paid work experience up to the average of the hours worked per week in the last quarter increase from 20% to 40% from support of incumbent workers, and supportive services; including assistance to non-employer attached workers;
 - \$1.5 billion for youth services including summer and paid experience for youth to age 24 consistent with WIOA regulations, and reducing the percent for out-of-school youth services from 75% to 50% provided the increase in funds for in-school youth are used to support the establishment of partnerships between local WDBs and public schools to provide enhanced career guidance, including the allowance of career services delivery in schools by WIOA funded staff;
 - \$2 billion for dislocated worker employment and training;
 - \$500 million for national emergency grants;

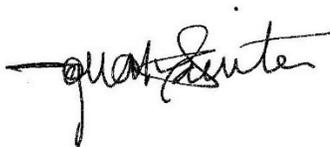
- \$50 million for YouthBuild;
- \$120 million for Community Service Employment for Older Americans;
- \$50 million for reemployment services through Wagner-Peyser programming.
- \$50 million the purpose of providing competitive grants for reemployment programs targeting long-term unemployed workers.

Ensure local WDBs can move swiftly to maximize impact.

- To ensure maximum flexibility and effectiveness for every local area NAWB requests legislative language to address the following;
 - The elimination of time requirements for workers to classify as “dislocated”;
 - The relaxation of competitive grant procurement requirements, specifically for the build out of technology solutions for providing virtual services; which in part could be accomplished by raising the allowable administrative costs from 10% to 20%, as this where the majority of technology upgrades are charged
 - Making expansion of virtual platforms and virtual service delivery allowable program costs; and
 - Authority for WDBs to expand the Employment Training Provider List (ETPL) to include on-line and alternative providers of education and training during the crisis, with assurance that providers’ performance is vetted by local WDBs
 - Implement Presumptive Eligibility
 - Presume everyone that contacts our system to be eligible for WIOA Title I services (Basic, Individualized, and Training) and Title III (Wagner Peyser), helping increase throughput of our system and breakdown administrative barriers to access and service,
 - Waive document collection requirements allowing phone/self-attestation for program.

Thankfully, the infrastructure for the U.S. labor force to recover from this unprecedented crisis is already in place, the workforce development system. It is now up to Congress to bolster this system and provide it with the support necessary to ensure a rapid response to the millions of Americans effected by COVID-19 and the related economic fallout.

Sincerely,



Ronald D. Painter
President & CEO
National Association of Workforce Boards

cc:

The Honorable Lamar Alexander, Chairman, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
The Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chairwoman, House Subcommittee on Appropriations for Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
The Honorable Roy Blunt, Chairman, Senate Subcommittee on Appropriations for Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
The Honorable Bobby Scott, Chairman, House Committee on Education and Labor
The Honorable Virginia Foxx, Ranking Member, House Committee on Education and Labor
Members, United States Senate
Members, United States House of Representatives