



June 25, 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

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the 28 local workforce development boards in Texas, which are comprised of more than 700 business and community leaders, the Texas Association of Workforce Boards (TAWB) requests your assistance for the growing pandemic emergency. These workforce boards are directly involved in the implementation of the bipartisan Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, effecting the successful execution of the legislation to serve businesses, employers, and job seekers.

As we anticipate future stimulus packages that respond to our current crisis and its recovery, workers and businesses desperately need Congress to include in them vital investments in skills needed to fill in-demand jobs today to enable those displaced to return to the workforce as quickly as possible as our economy re-opens. With the country facing unprecedented demand for unemployment insurance and economic recession as a result of the pandemic, the employer-led, local workforce development system must have the federal resources necessary to provide businesses with talent to commence and continue the recovery and individuals the opportunity to reconnect to jobs. Significant federal investment would ensure the nation's system is better positioned to address these increasing needs.

Specifically, we urge Congress to immediately invest as part of the next stimulus package at least \$15.6 billion in our nation's workforce development system to ensure that we can respond quickly to current and projected demands for new workers in key industries, while helping those who have lost their jobs as a result of this crisis to transition to new family-supporting jobs. These investments include programs already authorized under WIOA that are designed to serve adults, dislocated workers and opportunity youth, as well as Wagner-Peyser and Adult Education and Family Literacy, and the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.

Funding of this level will be necessary to allow for services directed to assisting the millions of Americans who will need help navigating the new unemployment and reemployment process in this time of crisis and businesses working to reskill and upskill workers. It will help workers identify careers in in-demand industries and occupations, obtain the education and training needed for these careers, and access support like childcare and transportation that remove obstacles and barriers to success in education and training programs and in new jobs. It will permit businesses to inform the training provided in in-demand occupations and empower states and local areas to support access to and analysis of labor market information necessary for rapid response to regional needs.

Thankfully, the existing public workforce development system is an effective service delivery infrastructure that is already in place to help the U.S. worker and economy recover from this crisis, whether those recovery efforts are needed today, tomorrow, or years down the line. It is up to Congress

to bolster this system and provide it with the support necessary to ensure a rapid, thorough response to the millions of Americans affected by the economic fallout from COVID-19.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions as we stand ready to assist as future stimulus legislation makes its way through Congress.

Sincerely,



Candy Van Sant
Chair, Board of Directors



Greg Vaughn
Executive Director