

## **Workforce Florida**

### **Workforce Investment Act of 1998**

### **2010 Reauthorization Priorities**

Reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) presents a historic opportunity to modernize the workforce system and provide states and regions with needed flexibility to respond to changing economic and labor market conditions. The workforce system must be a job generating and talent creation system or it will risk falling back into its historical role as part of the welfare system. A modernized workforce system should reward innovation and success in talent development, which will lead to a more globally competitive workforce. As Congress considers WIA reauthorization, it must take into account the vital role of governors, with input from state and regional workforce boards, in providing a strategic policy framework that ensures the needs of workers and employers are met.

#### **Sufficient Funding for the Workforce System**

Workforce funding should be sufficient to meet one-stop infrastructure and service costs while also providing incentives to move towards electronic and alternate service delivery systems.

#### **Strong State Business-led Policy, Oversight, and Service Delivery**

Florida supports a continued strong business-led workforce policy, oversight and service delivery with the collaboration of regional workforce boards and the private sector. As the workforce system continually evolves, it will remain critical to preserve the philosophy of all players at the table, particularly private sector providers that offer competitive forces for improvement and access to the resources of all players.

#### **Simplify Training Provider Provisions**

Governors should be provided with the authority to determine what standards, information, and data will be required for the eligible training providers in their states. Additionally, Governors should be required to set minimum standards for all providers in a manner that would ensure quality choice and accountability to the federal government. Florida supports an emphasis on training workers for jobs that provide sustained self-sufficiency, simplified training reporting requirements, and providing for regional input when defining occupational areas to be targeted.

#### **Governor's Flexibility in Designing the State Workforce System**

- **\*Florida supports streamlined funding that allows for greater pass-through of funds and authority to local Boards and One-Stop Providers.** *(It was suggested that this language be modified).*
- State flexibility is needed in the decision to use merit staff to perform the Wagner-Peyser program function. The Workforce Investment Act should allow local boards the flexibility to determine the most appropriate staffing design in order to maximize funds and minimize administrative overhead; staffing decisions should be customer support driven.
- **\*Florida supports the elimination of the prohibition against workforce investment boards operating programs.** *(This would be a major policy shift – need to discuss as a Council further).*
- **\*Workforce Investment Boards should be given the authority to provide Incumbent Worker Training, as determined by the Governor.** *(It was suggested that we clarify State Workforce Investment Boards and/or Regional Workforce Boards).*
- **\*Florida supports the requirement that the state workforce board membership include the director of the state Vocational Rehabilitation Program.**

### **Sequence of Service Requirement**

Reform the sequence of service requirement so that individuals have the opportunity to receive services most appropriate to their unique needs, to include the completion of educational programs - world class talent has proper credentials. Both employed and unemployed workers must have training opportunities throughout the span of their careers to stay competitive. WIA reauthorization must focus on up-skilling workers by eliminating prescribed sequence of services and rigid program eligibility criteria to provide every worker access to training, education, and lifelong learning opportunities.

### **Expenditures**

Hold states and local Boards accountable for system expenditures based upon accrued expenditures for all reporting and management purposes.

### **Business Services**

Encourage innovative services and strategies for serving employers and ensure the relevance of the WIA system to the business community in order to secure business' partnership in assisting the labor force, thus continuing the two-customer approach.

### **Youth**

Florida supports a continuation of the current youth funding structure, for both in school and out of school youth, which offers a great deal of flexibility to local Boards. (\*There was discussion about possibly merging this recommendation with the Summer Youth Program Funding recommendation below).

#### **\*\*New Recommendations:**

##### **Summer Youth Program Funding**

Due to funding provided by the ARRA, Florida's 2009 summer youth employment program provided valuable work experience for over 14,000 young adults and resulted in a significant impact to Florida's economy. WIA Reauthorization should include the creation of a dedicated funding source for summer youth employment programs. Without sufficient funding, Florida may not be able to operate another summer youth employment program.

##### **Retain the ability for the USDOL Secretary to waive core measure of performance**

Florida currently uses six common measures to evaluate the performance of the Workforce Investment Act and other workforce programs due to a waiver granted by the USDOL. Without this waiver, Florida would be required to use the 17 core measures established in section 136(b) of the Workforce Investment Act. Florida's ability to continue using the six common measures allows the state to align accountability across all workforce programs.

###### WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker

- Entered Employment
- Employment Retention
- Average Earnings

###### WIA Youth

- Placement in Employment or Education
- Attainment of a Degree or Certificate
- Literacy and Numeracy Gains

\* Council members had questions on whether or not these recommendations should be included in the final WIA Reauthorization document. These will need to be discussed in subsequent conference calls.

\*\* New WIA Reauthorization recommendations proposed by AWI