

**Workforce Florida, Inc.**  
**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. First and foremost, such a system must be designed to promote economic productivity and competitiveness, or we risk regressing to a welfare mindset that serves neither individuals nor society well. Thus, a modernized workforce system should reward innovation and success in skill development as a means of incenting the learning and adoption of tools needed by workers and businesses to be globally competitive.

Based on these principles, Workforce Florida, Inc. recommends the following:

**Business-driven Policy and Service Delivery**

Business, not government, must continue to be the primary driver of workforce policy and service delivery. However, as the workforce system continually evolves, it will remain critical to strengthen public-private collaboration and the philosophy of “all players at the table,” as a means of building consensus and maximizing access to available resources.

**Optimal Funding**

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

Comment [SEP1]: What about training \$ ?

**Strong Accountability**

From a fiscal perspective, state and regional workforce boards should be held accountable for system expenditures based upon accrued expenditures. Additionally, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor should **retain the ability to waive core measures of performance**. Due to a U.S. Department of Labor waiver, Florida currently uses the following six common measures to evaluate its implementation of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and other workforce programs:

Comment [SEP2]: Status quo?

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

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 optimally align accountability across all workforce programs.

**Devolution of Authority**

Governors should be empowered to establish, in consultation with their state and regional workforce boards, a strategic policy framework that ensures the needs of their states’ workers and employers are met. Further, governors should be provided with the authority to determine what standards, information, and data will be required for eligible training providers in their states and, subject to rigorous federal accountability measures, should be required to set minimum standards for all providers. Florida supports an emphasis on training workers for jobs that provide sustained self-sufficiency and

simplified training reporting requirements. ~~In addition, and providing for~~ regional input [should be sought](#) when defining occupational areas to be targeted.

- 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.
- **\*Workforce Investment Boards should be given the authority to provide Incumbent Worker Training, as determined by the Governor**
- **\*Florida supports the requirement that the state workforce board membership include the director of the state Vocational Rehabilitation Program.**

**Comment [SEP3]:** This deserves earnest policy discussion

### Service Customization

Congress should reform the sequence of service requirement so that an individual can receive training and educational services tailored to their unique needs. **Such skill-development opportunities should be lifelong in nature.** [This kind of reform promotes flexibility in educational opportunities and training in emerging areas, i.e., “green” job development.](#)

### 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.

**Comment [SEP4]:** Redundant

### Enhanced Focus on Youth Services

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).**

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.

**\* 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**