

ATTACHMENT A

Questions for Workforce Investment Act/Wagner-Peyser Act State Plan Modifications

Florida's Response

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Overview

Florida's has earned a national reputation as a state with a top-notch workforce system that is demand-driven and guided by core principles that include a shared vision among workforce partners, business-led decision-making, innovation, a bias toward action and strategic partnerships. The emphasis is on collaboration, performance and accountability. These principles continue to serve us as we assist the thousands of Floridians and Florida businesses survive and begin the road to recovery from the worst global recession since the Great Depression. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, holds the promise with the infusion of federal dollars to help our state -- with its unemployment rate at a 16 year high -- put Floridians back to work while investing in building world-class talent that will keep businesses competitive in the global economy.

Governor's Strategic Vision for Florida:

The Governor's strategic vision is detailed in response in other sections of this plan and includes the following key strategic and investment priorities:

- Strategic priorities:
 1. Build World-Class Talent (Pre-K Education, Workforce Education, and Universities)
 2. Ensure Business Climate Competitiveness
 3. Promote Sustainable Development to ensure Florida's Superior Quality of Life
 4. Invest in Florida's Innovation Economy
 5. Establish Florida as a Pre-eminent Global Hub
 6. Accelerate Florida's Economic Diversification

- Investment Priorities:
 1. Partner with Business to Employ a Demand Driven Workforce System
 2. Support Training and Development of Florida's Talent Pipeline
 3. Leverage Technology to Enhance Florida's Workforce Development System
 4. Strengthen Florida's Rural Workforce System
 5. Strengthen Partnership with Florida Department of Education, Workforce Education
 6. Marketing: Strengthen Awareness, Education and Image of Florida's Workforce System
 7. Strengthen and Coordinate Economic Development Partnerships
 8. Identify Entrepreneurial Opportunities to Deliver Flexible Earned Income Streams

In support of the Governor's priorities, Belinda Keiser, Chair of Workforce Florida, Inc., has issued several challenges to the workforce system.

1. Expanded business use of Florida's Workforce System
2. Improved use of Employ Florida Marketplace (Florida's comprehensive job bank and services delivery support system)
3. Increased emphasis on services to Veterans and their families
4. Increased support for Florida's rural communities
5. Strengthen partnerships and resist working in silos

Florida's Workforce System:

Florida has sought to realize much of the vision of the current federal and state workforce law and embraced the vision stated in ETA Final Rules/WIA/August 11, 2000: "States and localities have increased flexibility, with significant authority reserved for the Governor and chief elected officials, to build on existing reforms in order to implement innovative and comprehensive workforce investment systems tailored to meet the particular needs of local and regional labor markets."

Florida's workforce system has evolved into an increasingly mature and collaborative partnership providing state guidance and oversight, while embracing collaborative policy and process development to help ensure both local flexibility and state alignment.

Workforce Florida, Inc., (WFI) is the principal workforce policy organization for the state. Its purpose is to develop the state business climate by designing and implementing strategies that help Floridians enter, remain and advance in the workforce, becoming more highly skilled and successful, benefiting Florida businesses and the entire state. WFI is a not-for-profit corporation and is governed by a board of directors, which includes public and private members.

The Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) is the Governor's agency for workforce programs and is the administrative entity created by Chapter 445, F.S. for this purpose. The agency receives and accounts for federal funds on behalf of the workforce system, is responsible for financial and performance reports which are provided to the U.S. Department of Labor and other federal organizations, distributes workforce guidance and policy initiatives, provides training and technical assistance to the Regional Workforce Boards, monitors its sub-recipients and provides other administrative duties. The Agency also operates Florida unemployment insurance program and labor market information office as well as a number of other programs and initiatives.

Regional Workforce Boards: Florida has chartered 24 Regional Workforce Boards whose service delivery areas are closely aligned with the state's community college system. The Regional Workforce Boards provide a coordinated and comprehensive delivery of local workforce services under the watchful eye of their business-led boards of directors. The regional boards focus on strategic planning, policy development and oversight of the local workforce investment system. Business and labor have an immediate and direct stake in the quality of the workforce system. Their active involvement is critical to the provision of essential data on what skills are in demand, what jobs are available, what career fields are expanding, and the identification and development of programs that best meet local employer and jobseeker needs.

Implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA):

▪ Florida's Comprehensive Response:

Florida Governor Charlie Crist immediately embraced the opportunity to utilize the ARRA to benefit Florida's economy and its citizens. Upon the enactment of the ARRA in February of this year, Governor Charlie Crist launched his website, www.flarecovery.com. On the home page, he wrote "Florida's economy is being tested in ways we haven't seen in decades, and during these challenging times, I am grateful for the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009." The Governor went on to say, "Of course, our number one priority is to direct these dollars toward projects that will create jobs and stimulate Florida's economy."

In his 2009 State of the State Address given in early March 2009, Governor Charlie Crist recognized that "the strength of our state and national economies are being tested in ways not seen in decades...and

“our people are struggling, as a state and as a nation. He went on to say that “And like never before, we have an obligation to serve them well.

The Governor expressed gratitude for Florida’s share of the stimulus funding provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and stated that “These funds will serve as a bridge to better economic times.” In his Address, the Governor further recognized that, “The ingenuity of Floridians is no better represented than in the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of our state’s business community. He proclaimed that, “We must reward – not penalize or stifle – innovation and productivity in the business community. Our goal is to create a business environment where productivity and growth flourish – and to create quality, high-paying jobs.”

Governor's Stimulus Working Group The Governor heads his “Stimulus Working Group. This group consists of state agencies and others and meets bi-weekly to update the Governor on ARRA implementation and report on successes and challenges. It offers a public forum so that Floridians can learn more about Florida’s progress.

Office of Economic Recovery: An Office of Economic Recovery was established within the Governor’s Office and includes representation from the Agency for Workforce Innovation and Workforce Florida, as well as other directly affected state agencies, the Governor’s Office of Policy and Budget, Florida’s Washington Office, local government, and other stakeholders.

Florida is one of 16 states that the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) will closely monitor for the use and outcomes of federal stimulus funds. Florida's total share of ARRA funding is \$13.4 billion. To better coordinate with other areas and align with the state's overall ARRA efforts, in particular those that support job creation and retention, Workforce Florida, Inc., and the Agency for Workforce Innovation participate in weekly Implementation Team teleconferences led by Don Winstead, a Workforce Florida Board designee.

▪ **The Workforce System Response:**

The Governor immediately challenged the three components of his workforce development system; Workforce Florida, Inc., the Agency for Workforce Innovation and the 24 Regional Boards to implement the ARRA and to collectively achieve its objectives.

The Agency for Workforce Innovation, in full collaboration with Workforce Florida, took the immediate lead after enactment of the ARRA to engage all of the workforce partners in discussion relative to the implementation of the Recovery Act. Among the actions taken were:

Conference Calls and Discussions: A series of conference calls were held on a regular basis to make sure that all affected workforce partners had the benefit of the most recent information and a forum to identify and discuss implementation issues. Conference calls continue to be a feature of implementation.

Funding Awards: The Agency moved very quickly to coordinate with the Governor’s Office of Policy and Budget to ensure that sufficient budget authority was available so that the Regional Workforce Boards could immediately begin to use the additional resources from the Recovery Act to meet the increased level of customer demand on the workforce system. Indeed, in collaboration with Workforce Florida, Inc., and its Executive Committee, funds were made available to the local delivery system within three days of receipt of funding notification from the US Department of Labor

Workforce Recovery Website: In addition to the regular conference calls, the Agency designed and established a dedicated Recovery Act website to inform the public and workforce professionals about the state's implementation of the stimulus funding. The website became a primary means for the state to communicate policy issues that had been identified in the conference calls and provide a forum to post policy and program questions and get answers to help guide the system. Information on the website, in addition to the Q & As includes funding information, program summaries, Agency reports and plans, press releases and media reports, and links to other Recovery Act related websites.

ARRA Updates: To this day, weekly (and sometimes daily) ARRA updates are shared broadly with the entire workforce system. These updates include information from the USDOL but also a wide range of stakeholders and national associations to help ensure system professionals are informed of ARRA activities and best practices across the nation.

Collaborative Workgroups: A total of 14 workgroups/teams were established to address specific subject areas such as Summer Youth, Reemployment Services, Adult and Dislocated Worker issues, Trade Act, etc. Six of the workgroups/teams include representation from Workforce Florida, Inc., the Agency and the state's Regional Workforce Boards. From these workgroups/teams policy guidance was developed and vetted. For example, guidance on the use of wages and stipends in summer youth programs and the state's reemployment services strategy were the result of these dedicated teams. The workgroups/teams all have developed an implementation plan of action that includes benchmarks and timetables. The workgroups/teams continue today.

Workforce Florida Board of Directors – ARRA Actions: The clear message from the Governor's Workforce Florida Board of Directors: Florida's investment of these stimulus dollars will remain true to our system's mission and values. While we will deploy these resources as quickly as possible, our board also expects enhanced performance from our system as we seek to maximize both the value and scope of this investment to ensure long-term outcomes consistent with our Governor's plans for growing and sustaining a robust economy.

Section I. Context, Vision, and Strategy

Economic and Labor Market Context

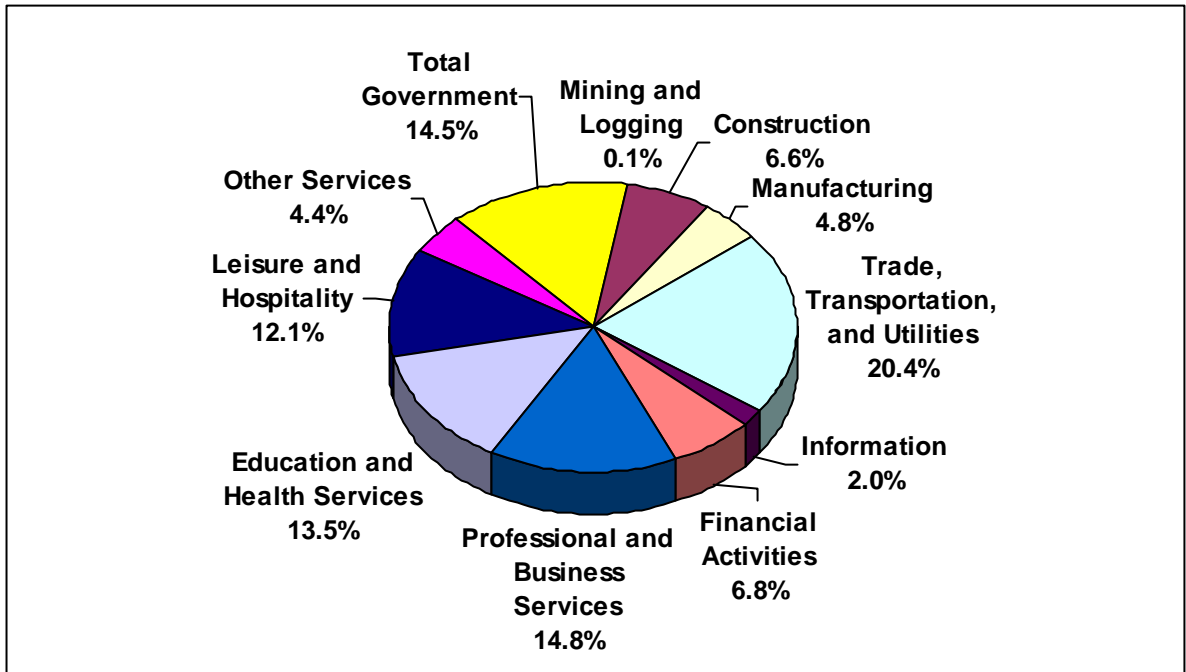
Question IV in PY 2009 Stand-Alone Planning Guidance: Provide a detailed analysis of the state's economy, the labor pool, and the labor market context. (Sections 112(b)(4).)

In responding to this question, the state should update its analysis to indicate how the economic downturn has impacted the state's economy and the labor market context. This analysis should include current and anticipated impacts on employment by sector, current and projected demographics of the available labor pool including income levels as appropriate, and describe any skills gaps the state faces, based on the skills held by current and expected dislocated workers, and the skills demanded by industries and occupations expected to grow through economic recovery.

Makeup of State's Economic Base

Florida's industrial composition is predominately based on a service-providing economy, with more than 88 percent of the state's jobs included in this sector. Goods-producing industries, which include *mining and logging; construction; and manufacturing*, comprise almost 12 percent of Florida's jobs, compared to a 16 percent share of the nation's economy.

More than three-fourths of the state's nonagricultural jobs are in five major industry sectors: *trade, transportation, and utilities* (20.4 percent); *professional and business services* (14.8 percent); *government* (14.5 percent); *education and health services* (13.5 percent); and *leisure and hospitality* (12.1 percent). *Construction* (6.6 percent) and *manufacturing* (4.8 percent) jobs make up a smaller share of the state's total than they have in recent years due to the collapse of the housing market and slower population growth.



Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics Center, Current Employment Statistics Program, 2008 annual averages

Short Term and Long Term Industry Growth and Decline

Florida's current recessionary conditions are due to declines in housing construction and the banking crisis, in addition to high gas prices in early 2008. The current annual rate of decline in jobs (-5.4 percent) is worse than the last three recessions and is the slowest since 1975. Florida's total nonagricultural employment in March 2009 was 7,447,000, representing a job loss of 424,300 (-5.4 percent) compared to March 2008. This is steeper than the national rate of decline for March which was -3.5 percent. The March 2009 job loss continues the trend of over-the-year declines that began in August 2007.

The downturn started with declines in *construction* jobs, but has now spread to almost all other major industries with the exception of *private education and health services*. The industries with the largest declines are: *professional and business services* (-117,100 jobs); *construction* (-112,300 jobs); and *trade, transportation, and utilities* (-84,700 jobs). In March 2009, Florida had the 2nd highest number of job losses in the nation behind California. Annual average job growth was 0.2 percent in 2007 (+15,200 jobs) and fell to -3.2 percent in 2008 (-257,500 jobs).

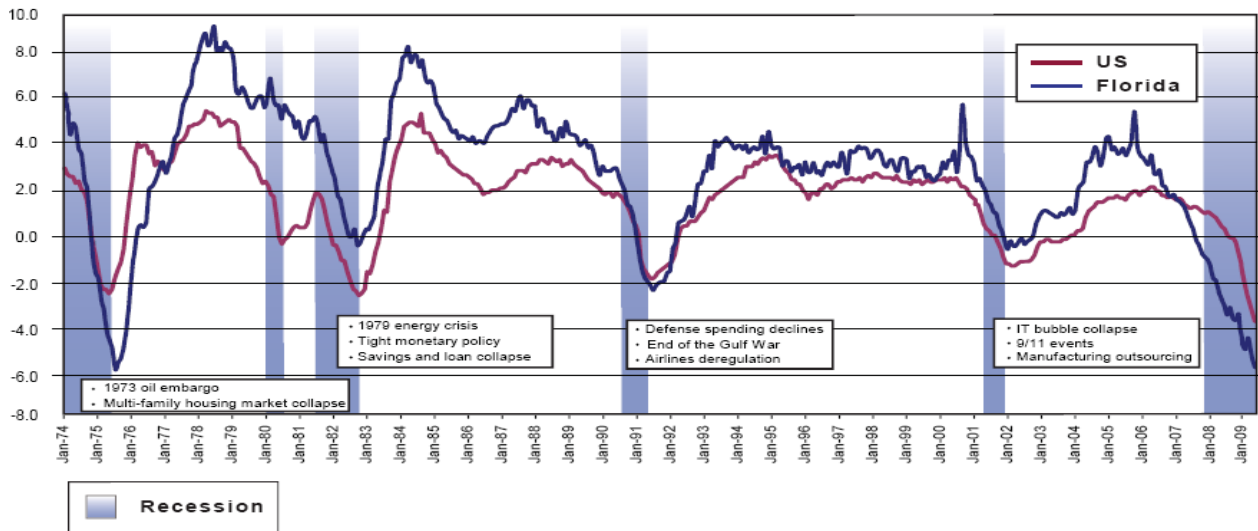
Florida foreclosures numbered 47,131 in March 2009, up by 45 percent compared to the same month a year ago and 460 percent since the low point in December 2006 (8,321 foreclosures). Florida housing starts were 1,948 in February 2009, down almost 50 percent compared to the same month a year ago and more than 90 percent since their peak month in August 2005 (20,044 units).

There were 115,294 initial claims for unemployment compensation in March 2009, an increase of 93.0 percent from the same month a year ago and up 254.9 percent from the low of 32,489 in February 2006. Based on the Florida Economic Estimating Conference held March 2, 2009, Florida's job

market is expected to remain in a downturn during 2009 and to start improving in the second quarter of 2010 with slower than average growth for the year.

Total Nonagricultural Employment Annual Job Growth Rates January 1974 to March 2009

Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics Center, Current Employment Statistics Program Prepared April 2009 (not seasonally adjusted)



Private Education and Health Services was the only sector gaining jobs among Florida's major industries in March 2009. Employment in this industry grew by 1.9 percent (19,700 jobs) from March 2008 to March 2009 and showed steady positive growth throughout 2007 and began slowing in 2008. The largest subsector contributing to growth in *private education and health services* employment was *health care and social assistance*. The subsectors that were driving the over-the-year growth in March 2009 were *hospitals* (+6,500 jobs, 2.6 percent) and *nursing and residential care facilities* (+6,000 jobs, 3.6 percent). Some metro areas in the state were experiencing job declines in this industry. Five of the 21 metro areas were losing jobs over the year in March 2009. Nationally, the March 2009 over-the-year growth rate in *private education and health services* was 2.4 percent, stronger than the Florida rate of 1.9 percent.

Professional and business services employment declined by 10.0 percent (-117,100 jobs) from March 2008 to March 2009. Employment growth was more rapid in 2006 and gradually decreased throughout 2007 to current. Annual growth went from 5.3 percent in March 2006, to 3.0 percent in March 2007, to -4.9 percent in March 2008, and finally to -10.0 percent in March 2009. The subsector that was losing the most jobs over-the-year in March 2009 was *employment services* (-45,200 jobs, -19.7 percent). Of the 21 metro areas in the state, all were experiencing over-the-year declines in this industry employment except for one. Nationally, the March 2009 over-the-year rate of decline in the *professional and business services* industry was -5.9 percent.

Construction, reacting to continued declines in the housing market, lost 112,300 jobs over the year (-20.6 percent) in March 2009. *Construction* grew rapidly throughout much of 2005 and 2006, mostly in response to hurricane recovery activities and the housing boom but started a downward spiral

downward in 2007. *Construction* employment peaked in June of 2006 with 686,300 jobs, but fell soon after into a period of slower growth stretching from July to December of 2006 and in 2007 began losing jobs over the year. In March 2009 there were 432,100 construction jobs in the state, a decline of 254,200 jobs (-37.0 percent) from the peak. Annual growth went from 11.8 percent in March 2006, to -4.4 percent in March 2007, to -16.2 percent in March 2008, and finally to -20.6 percent in March 2009. The subsector that is losing the most jobs over-the-year in March 2009 was *specialty trade contractors* (-80,900 jobs, -22.3 percent). Of the 21 metro areas in the state all are experiencing over-the-year declines in employment in the *construction* industry. Nationally, the March 2009 over-the-year rate of decline in the *construction* industry was -12.5 percent.

Florida's population growth over the next decade will be weak in terms of the numbers of new citizens added to the state, and will grow at a much slower rate than the previous ten years. Over the next decade, a considerably slower growing, but still aging population will continue to result in increased demands for health, education, and social services, such as elder day care and child care services, as the two large age cohorts of population, baby boomers (born 1946-64) and echo boomers (born 1982-95), rise in age.

The collapse of the housing market and the lingering effects of the worst economic crisis since the 1930s are resulting in a slowing of the net migration to Florida. This is the primary reason for the population growth to be projected at much lower levels over the next decade. However, slower population growth combined with shifts in the demographic characteristics of the population will still cause industries such as *ambulatory health care services, nursing and residential care facilities, individual and family social services, insurance carriers and related activities, and private and public education services* to experience strong employment gains over the next decade. Also, as the U.S. and Florida economies become more technically advanced and expand into a more complex and competitive business environment, the need for *administrative and support services, and professional, scientific, and technical services*, will increase over the next decade in order to assist businesses with budgets, staffing, marketing, technology, and changes in legislation.

As Florida tries to recover from the current economic downturn, and spending from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus bill starts, Florida in the long-term should start to see some recapturing of previous job losses, as dollars are targeted for infrastructure projects, renewable energy development, "green jobs", and new and emerging industries, such as biotechnology and digital media. Therefore, jobs in construction and construction-related manufacturing, information technology, health care-related manufacturing, and energy will all be in greater demand during the next decade

Florida's tourist trade during the next decade will grow slower than in the past, as, *food services and drinking places, accommodations, amusement and recreation services, and water transportation* (cruise lines) are almost all projected to grow at or below the average growth rate for all industries in Florida.

Global competition, moving jobs to foreign countries and the impacts of technology will be the primary reasons for slow growth of Florida's manufacturing sector and will also be the cause for declines in employment for the agriculture and mining industries, both in the short term and over the next decade. Construction-related manufacturing, such as *wood products, architectural and structural metals manufacturing, and the health care and biotech related industries, such as pharmaceutical and medicine manufacturing, and medical equipment and supplies manufacturing* will have the strongest employment growth amongst Florida's weak manufacturing industries.

Occupations projected to be in greatest demand both in the short term and over the next decade will be a direct result of the industry sectors that are forecasted to have the most growth over these time periods.

As a result of the current economic downturn, the immediate term outlook has most industries, except health services, declining. Therefore, occupations such as *home health aides, registered nurses, medical assistants, and nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants*, will be in greatest demand in Florida in the short term.

Over the long term, employment in health care, information technology, education, and construction occupations related to energy and infrastructure will experience the fastest growth in Florida. Changes in demographics, advances in technology, and changes in lifestyles and buying habits will be the driving forces for the strong demand for these career fields. Occupations such as *network systems and data communications analysts, pharmacy technicians, computer software engineers, applications, physician assistants and health specialties teachers, postsecondary*, are all projected to have high rates of grow over the next decade. Greater demand for construction occupations over the long term will primarily be a result of the recapturing of jobs lost during the 2007-09 economic downturn as the construction industry rebounds and the credit market stabilizes.

In terms of absolute job growth, Florida's sizable service economy will continue to experience large job gains, both in the short term and over the decade. Many of the occupations expected to have large employment gains will include both full and part-time workers, as well as seasonal and temporary jobs. Many of these jobs will offer easy entrance into the labor market in terms of training requirements. Occupations such as *retail salespersons, customer service representatives, food preparation workers, and office clerks* are all forecasted to have large gains in employment in the coming year and over the next decade. *Registered nurses* are expected to have the third greatest number new jobs of all occupations and will be one of the few jobs with large employment gains that will need advanced training for employment.

Florida is also expected to have other career fields that are currently small and in their infancy, but should experience fast growth as a result of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus bill, efforts made by economic development organizations, and from the efforts put forth by society to be a more environmentally friendly economy. Green jobs, such as energy auditors and hybrid and fuel cell automotive technicians, alternative energy occupations, such as solar energy systems installers, and biomass plant operators, and other new and emerging occupations, such as biomedical engineers, and multi-media artists and animators are all expected to grow fast over the next decade. These jobs and their growing demand for workers will be an issue the workforce system will have to address in terms of the training needs for these small, but fast-growing occupations.

Industry and Demand for Skilled Workers and Available Jobs

Many of the major industry sectors that are projected to grow fast in Florida will also be the industries that have the strongest demand for skilled workers who require some form of postsecondary training. Careers in education, health care, the professional and technical fields, government, and the construction trades will all have the highest demands for skilled workers in Florida. The projected annual job growth of these industries and their share of the occupations in their industry that requires postsecondary training are as follows: *education services (4,186 / 86.7%); health care (23,959 / 82.8%); government (13,989 / 83.6%); professional and technical services (13,033 / 82.5%); and construction (12,540 / 74.4%)*.

Florida annually holds a Workforce Estimating Conference (WEC) to identify occupations that are high growth, high skill, and high wage for the purpose of targeting public training dollars intended for workforce development. Because almost 60 percent of the job openings expected to occur over the next decade in Florida requires training beyond high school, Florida has identified 116 job categories that require postsecondary vocational or community college training to target its job training efforts on.

Focusing workforce efforts on these 116 job categories are considered critical for Florida because they represent a high percentage of the jobs that are needed to maintain a healthy economy. Examples of occupations targeted by Florida's workforce system that demand skilled workers and their expected number of annual openings are as follows: *registered nurses (6,613); accountants and auditors (3,233); automotive service technicians and mechanics (1,887); and network systems and data communications analysts (1,650)*. Having the workforce system target these higher skilled, higher wage occupations will result in a more productive workforce that better meets the needs of the business community.

State's Critical Jobs/Occupations

The jobs that are most critical to Florida's economy are those occupations that support our state's economic and population growth. Critical occupations include those that help better diversify the Florida economy and are targeted by the state's economic development community. These occupations are in the areas of life sciences, information technology, aerospace, financial and professional services, manufacturing, clean energy, and emerging technologies. Also important are occupations in the STEM occupational group; Science, Technology Engineering, and Mathematics.

However, occupations which currently have few openings, but have the potential for strong demand in the future, such as "green jobs" and new and emerging occupations related to health care, science, and new technologies will also be critical if Florida wants to continue to have strong job growth and continue to expand its economic base.

Occupations dealing with health care, education, the construction trades, and the hospitality career fields are critical to the state because they support Florida's current economic base. However, with the need to better diversify the state's economy and to create jobs with better earnings potential, occupations dealing with information technology, biotech, aerospace, the professional services, alternative energy, and new and emerging occupations will be the most critical career fields for Florida's workforce system.

Skill Needs for Available, Critical and Projected Jobs

The new global and information-based economy that emerged after the 1990-1991 recession and continued after other more recent recessions placed an increased emphasis on skills. These skills include higher levels of literacy and better communication skills, critical and logical thinking skills to better solve complex problems, and skills in using computers and technology as problem-solving tools.

Jobs in demand in today's labor market will need workers who can learn to use computer-based technology to increase productivity and to communicate more efficiently with others. The ability to work as a team to develop and achieve mutual goals and to better serve clients and customers is also very critical. Employees who know how and are willing to learn new skills related to a job and are capable of expanding their knowledge of the products and services of an organization will have better success in the workplace. The ability to demonstrate flexibility by coping with work situations or tasks that change frequently in order to solve problems is also a very critical skill needed by employers. The conventional wisdom holds that as the Florida economy shifts toward high-skill industries based on information and knowledge, individuals with limited formal education and skill will increasingly fail to find jobs that pay an adequate wage—or may not be able to secure employment at all.

Another feature of the new economy and the competitive requirements for those who work in it is the need for multiple skills. The new economy requires that workers possess multiple skills sets, crossing

over to literacy and communication skills and technical/computer skills. The occupations in Florida that are projected to grow the fastest and have better earnings also require multiple skills.

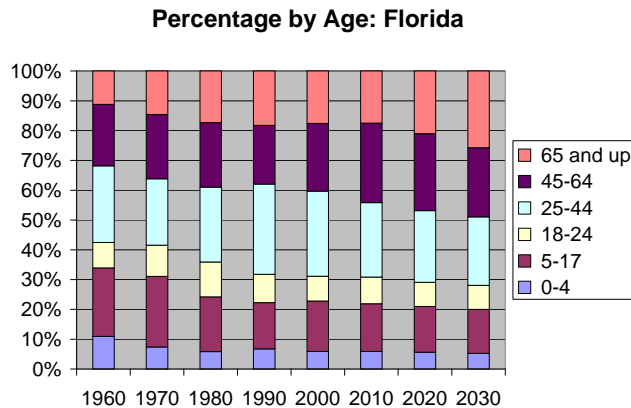
Most of Florida’s high skill high wage occupations are found in the information, finance, professional and business services, healthcare, or government sectors. Skills are the key to higher wages and salaries for Florida’s workers and skills are the key to remaining competitive in the national and global economies. A skilled workforce is the key to attracting higher wage and higher growth industries to Florida. Current skills for demand occupations in Florida include: active listening, reading comprehension, critical thinking, instructing speaking, social perceptiveness, monitoring, active learning, problem solving, coordination, installation, troubleshooting, and equipment selection.

Current and Projected Demographics of Available Labor Pool

Florida’s labor pool will reflect a smaller share of young people and a much greater portion of middle age and older people. Minorities and immigrants will also constitute a larger share of the Florida work force in the next decade than they do today.

With the aging of the baby boomer population, Florida’s population base also will continue to age, with the percentage of those residents aged 65 and over accounting for a larger share of the population base (17.6 percent in 2000, 17.5 percent in 2010, 21 percent in 2020, and 25.8 percent in 2030). The prime working age population (aged 25-44) accounted for 28.6 percent of the total residents in 2000, and will shrink to 24.9 percent of the population by 2010. The older worker age group (55 and over) will expand from 27.3 percent in 2000 to 29.8 percent in 2010, before increasing to 37.6 percent by 2030.

Mature workers will play a major role in addressing projected labor shortages. Due to the expected decline in available employees, it will become vitally important for employers to recruit mature workers and to initiate programs that provide incentives for them to remain in the workforce.



Source: Florida Demographic Estimating Conference, February 2008 and the Florida Demographic Database, August 2008.

Based on the 2000 Census, Florida’s population was 82.2 percent white, 15.4 percent black, and 2.4 percent other. The racial mix will stay relatively stable through 2010, with blacks accounting for 16.8 percent and whites representing 80.3 percent of the resident population. Hispanics are expected to increase from 16.8 percent of the population to 21.5 percent over this 10-year horizon.

In Migration/Out Migration of Available Workers

Florida's population growth plummeted in 2007-2008 with the declines in the housing markets, the financial crisis, and the consequent declines in the number of jobs. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Florida's net migration from other states actually declined by 9,286 in 2007-2008. International net migration accounted for 77,427 resulting in a total population increase of 128,814. Florida still ranked 6th in population growth compared to other states from 2007 to 2008.

Florida is dependent on in migration to the state, as 87.5 percent of the estimated population growth between 2000 and 2007 was due to net migration (in minus out migration). The largest gains in net migration between 1995 and 2000 (Census 2000), was in the 55-64 age group (pre-retiree); representing 27 percent of total net migration over this time horizon.

The prime working age population (ages 25-44) accounted for 23 percent of the net migration to the state between 1995 and 2000. These 138,546 residents made up just less than one percent of the state's total population in 2000 (15,982,824).

Looking at data over the past three decades, foreign in migration to the state continues to increase, in all age cohorts. Foreign immigrants are typically younger than their domestic counterparts. Those aged 15-34 accounted for 48 percent of the total foreign in migrants between 1995 and 2000; whereas, this age group represented 35 percent of the domestic in migrants during this same time period.

Due to the recession, Florida population growth now equals levels seen in 1975-1977, when growth was under 130,000. Average annual population growth 1970-2010 was 316,000. Population growth will resume in 2011 and 2012 with the recovery of the state economy. In the near term, population growth will not equal the average levels seen between 1970 and 2010.

State's Skill Gaps

To compete in the national and global economies workers will need **basic skills** like reading, writing, math, speaking, listening. **Thinking skills** such as creativity, logical reasoning, decision-making, problem-solving and visualization will need to be part of the curriculum in all levels of the education system. Workers who help Florida compete in the global and national economies will also need **personal skills and attributes** such as responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, integrity, and initiative. These skills combined with technical and computer skills for those workers who need them, will assure Florida's ability to compete in the global economy. Florida employers have indicated that basic interpersonal and critical thinking skills are the biggest gaps in the current workforce.

State Vision and Priorities

Question I.C. What is the Governor's vision for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce? (Section 112(a) and (b)(4).)

In responding to this question, the state should review ETA's vision for implementing the Recovery Act in Section 4 of this TEGF, and describe the Governor's new vision since the economic downturn. The description should include the Governor's vision for economic recovery, touching on the Act's principles and the Governor's view of how the Recovery Act funds can be integrated into transformational efforts to achieve an invigorated, more innovative public workforce system capable of helping enable future economic growth and advancing shared prosperity for all Americans.

In response to the recession conditions that affect both Florida and the nation today, the Governor is focusing the efforts of the state workforce system to address the economic downturn, help Floridians get back to work, and simultaneously keep a strong focus on enabling future economic growth. Florida will apply the Recovery Act investment to preserve and create jobs, to promote economic recovery, to assist those most impacted by the recession, to assist workers to retool their skills and reestablish themselves and target services to meet the needs of workers and businesses.

Florida will place a strong emphasis on lifelong learning and investing in the upgrade and adaptation of skills that are relevant for viable 21st Century jobs. This investment will be carried out through Florida's twenty-four Regional Workforce Boards and through partnerships across geographic boundaries to address the workforce solutions in the state.

After evaluating the many priorities for Florida's future success, it is clear that talent is the greatest resource. This realization has been reiterated time and again in a variety of settings, including the Workforce forums held in 2007 all across the state where we had a wide array of people, youth, young professionals, businesses from all key targeted sectors, from our Workforce family, and from education providers all providing input into the system.

When polled about what they considered to be Florida's top competitive asset, the overwhelming first choice at every forum was location. Florida's geographical position as a commerce gateway to the Americas was an obvious choice. *Next, participants were asked to rank what they think should be the state's most competitive asset in today's global economy. Again, they responded in every location with the same top pick: talent.*

During the forums, stakeholder participants discussed the history and legacy of Florida's modern workforce system; changing markets; the engagement of private-sector leaders; the gathering of vital business intelligence; and opportunities for the future. Florida's workforce system drew strong consensus pertaining to its historical and sustaining values, which, as identified during the forums, include: business-focused and business-informed; regional and local leadership and controls; accountability; promoting innovation and flexibility; and passionate and informed leadership. There was a clear expectation that these values must be preserved and re-enforced during the next decade, and strong agreement and support for Workforce Florida, Inc., as the state's key public-private partnership responsible for the development and implementation of the Governor's workforce system policies and strategies. Having expressed general support for Workforce Florida and the strengths of the public-private movement, at both the state and local board levels, stakeholders focused on a number of overarching interests.

Some important strategies that Florida is employing include:

- Seamless Articulation: A key point for Florida's focus on education and training is seamless articulation; although not directly a workforce system responsibility, it is a key component of workforce success. And through things like the curricula frameworks update, through the Banner Centers, through our CAPE academies, Florida is making progress in seamless articulation between secondary, co-secondary, and even university curriculum. It is essential that our education system in Florida supports mobility, so if an individual begins their education in Northwest Florida and then takes a job in Miami but wants to continue their education, they shouldn't have to start over again. In creating an environment for lifelong learning, we make it possible to keep up our skills because of changes in the economy and in any part of the state of Florida.
- Strengthening Youth Partnerships and Career and Technical Education: In the area of education and training that supports a skilled workforce, through the Strengthening Youth Partnerships,

Workforce Florida, Inc., is replicating the nationally recognized model of Choice Career Academies, now codified in Florida statute through CAPE, the Career and Professional Education Act, providing a model of rigor and relevance and skill attainment at the secondary level, where industry recognized certifications perhaps are more valued even than a high school diploma.

- Florida's Banner Centers: Through the partnership of Florida's Department of Education, the Agency for Workforce Innovation, Workforce Florida, and Florida's industry recognized Banner Centers we are updating our curricula frameworks. This will ensure that at the basic level, the secondary level, the needs, the skill sets, and the changes in the market are actually embodied in curricula through Department of Education's efforts. Our Banner Centers are also going through a reiteration to ensure that they are indeed market driven, that they do indeed have a statewide reach, and are a vital nexus point between economic development, workforce development and education.
- Florida's Quick Response Training (QRT), and Incumbent Worker Training (IWT). These two initiatives serve as the flagship tools at Workforce Florida; are market relevant; providing just in time training driven by industry's needs and industry choice in training providers. QRT and IWT serve as powerful tools for workforce investment in leveraging public workforce system dollars against private sector investment.

The QRT and IWT programs have an outstanding track record of return on investment as it relates to wage income, and if there is any single economic indicator that really measures how effective a regional or even a state economy is, that measure is per capita income. Both of these programs drive up per capita income training wages, even though we do not mandate wage increases with usage in either of these programs. Per capita income wage increases actually occur to the extent that they're absolutely enormous. Quick Response Training has a 116% increase in wages pre-training to post-training and Incumbent Worker Training pre-training to post-training had a 44% wage increase.

- Employed Worker Training: Employed Worker Training programs locally deployed by Florida's Regional Workforce Boards have also proven to be very powerful. The best programs are those that are really nimble, with a short application process, quick turnaround on what they require, and providing 50-50 or even 75% of training funding in some cases. It is essential that businesses have a mutual investment to ensure that their employees that benefit from this training follow through with the training.
- Economic Development Partnership: Through our partnership with economic development we are improving our focus on business retention, preserving jobs in Florida, emphasizing talent retention, and supporting the Governor's efforts to inform Floridians about how best to access resources and services. Our economic development partner, Enterprise Florida, has identified these key challenges for Florida's future:
 - Quality of economic growth – high wage, high skill, high productivity
 - Leadership in an increasingly knowledge-based economy – Innovation Economy
 - High Performance Clusters and Talent as engines of innovation – Clusters are dynamic with emerging technologies– Strategic intelligence for the long view
- Promoting Entrepreneurship: We are also working to support and foster an environment for entrepreneurship. In economic times such as the recession conditions Florida is seeing today, we see a lot of individuals turning to creating their own jobs, their own products or services, which is a unique characteristic of Florida's business climate and one that we need to foster effectively and

consistently. Florida has always been a hotbed of entrepreneurial activities which is supported by the U.S. Department of Commerce and from the Small Business Administration.

Economic Gardening: With the Governor's support, Florida has implemented an "Economic Gardening" proposal bringing \$10 million in investment to support entrepreneurship and business development in Florida. To the extent that we can focus on turning the spotlight not on recruitment from other areas, but retention and even growing our own businesses and workers, it helps to ensure that Florida's economy is more resilient and self-sufficient. Florida's workforce system supports this entrepreneurship focus through job training and other strategies.

- Aerospace Workforce Training: Another key focus for the Governor is Florida's aerospace workforce. This remains an area of concern probably for the last three years, especially since the announcement that the Space Shuttle program was going to be phased out and transitioned to the Constellation. Brevard County is actively working through their Aerospace Career Development Center to determine how best to transition the skills of the aerospace workers, a vital talent retention effort. For 50-plus years Florida has been known for its aerospace industry. The Lieutenant Governor serves as chairman of Space Florida, and has been particularly vocal about doing all that can be done to bolster that legacy industry in Florida. We want to retain the program's very highly skilled technicians in Florida, perhaps in other sectors of interest, energy but one, modeling and simulation training another, things where these highly skilled technicians might be re-purposed in another vein.
- Alternative Energy and Healthcare – Workforce Training: Florida's Governor has a strong and serious interest in alternative energy and green jobs. Additionally, the Governor is very interested in health care. And with real investment coming from the Recovery Act and stimulus dollars, Florida is poised to lead the nation in the creation of jobs in these fields. This is a key consideration with re-employment as a cornerstone of the state's workforce strategy and efforts for the foreseeable future.

Healthcare: In support of the Governor's vision, Florida has developed the Employ Florida Healthcare initiative, targeted to support the needs of Florida's health care providers and develop a base of talent in one of the few current growth fields in Florida. Working with private sector businesses and educational institutions, the Employ Florida Healthcare initiative will help Florida is both an immediate and long-term employment and training collaboration.

- Training in Targeted Sectors: Finally, Florida will continue to make targeted investments in the skills of its current and future workforce in line with the State Strategic Plan (Roadmap for Florida's Future) and the following identified targeted sectors:
 - Life Sciences
 - Aviation/aerospace/space
 - Homeland security/defense
 - Information Technology
 - Financial and Professional Services
 - Clean Energy
 - Strategic Challenges: R&D, corporate HQ, manufacturing
- Targeted Training in Growth Occupations and Sectors: Workforce Florida is currently engaged in a strategic planning effort entitled: Florida's workforce system is currently engaged in "Creating the Strategy for Today's Needs and Tomorrow's Talent." The following three examples are provided

as current illustrations of Florida's workforce efforts to refocus partnerships and resources on the jobs and careers that will be relevant in post-recession Florida and which will, in collaborate with education and training partners, develop a continuum of education and training opportunities. They are:

Green Jobs: Transforming Florida into a green economy is a massive and defining challenge for our time. It involves cross-agency collaboration and coordination, and the work of thousands of Floridians performing the jobs needed to build the green economy. Involved parties include subject matter experts ranging from the Executive Office of the Governor, governmental agencies, organized labor, business and non-profit industry associations. With input from the experts, as well as recommendations from the public, Workforce Florida's Sustainability/Infrastructure Committee has determined that the green Florida economy is based on efficient energy use, reducing polluting emissions and protecting our natural resources with a focus on using renewable power sources.

A green economy uses these investments to create new opportunities and good jobs, and is based on many occupations that already exist in today's marketplace. In the absence of any federal or state-level definition, a primary goal is to bring more certainty to Florida's training and workforce development efforts that support skilled talent development, advance future economic development opportunities and result in cost-efficient and non-duplicative training activities.

- Banner Centers: Employ Florida Banner Centers are one example of the strong partnership between workforce, education and industry. Banner Centers are designed to serve as a statewide, go-to resource for cutting-edge training for entry-level and experienced workers who need to upgrade their skills in high-value sectors such as biotechnology, aviation/aerospace, health sciences, logistics and distribution, construction, energy, alternative energy, digital media and manufacturing. Each Banner Center is led by a Florida community college or university, using existing infrastructure to serve as its home base, designed to become new industry focused business units within the college.

Banner Centers partner with industry in targeted sectors to identify training needs and, among other things, create new curricula. A key objective is to create timely and relevant training that can be shared across multiple educational institutions for access by businesses in other areas of the state, thus reducing duplication. In other words, you can create it in one place and use it in another without another institution having to start from the beginning to address identical industry training needs in its community. Currently, there are 12 Banner Centers involving more than 20 statewide educational partners.

- STEM Council Workforce Florida and Enterprise Florida have created a statewide council to strengthen the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills of Florida's students as a way to address the increasing demand for jobs requiring strong foundations in these areas. The Florida STEM Council will connect education, workforce, business and economic development leaders to identify opportunities to build and measure the state's supply of workers with skills and knowledge in these fields to support innovation in existing and emerging industries.

Industries that already have been identified as targets for the STEM Council include life sciences, aerospace, energy, manufacturing, information technology and homeland security and defense, among others. The STEM Council seeks to create a stronger and more dynamic workforce that will drive productivity in such industries, creating high skill, high-wage employment opportunities for Floridians.

Question I.E. What is the Governor’s vision for ensuring that every youth has the opportunity for developing and achieving career goals through education and workforce training, including the youth most in need of assistance, such as out-of-school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth in aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farmworker youth, youth with disabilities and other youth at risk? (Section 112(b)(18)(A.))

In responding to this question, the state should review ETA’s vision for implementing the Recovery Act in Section 16 of this TEGF to reconnect disconnected youth through multiple pathways to education and training that enable them to enter and advance in the workforce. The state should describe its strategy for serving youth with funds from the Recovery Act, as well as how its strategies will be adjusted to respond to the economic downturn. What activities will the state focus on (i.e., primarily focus on summer employment opportunities, the full range of WIA youth services, or a combination)? Describe how plans for the Recovery Act youth activities will complement the state’s overall vision for serving youth under WIA.

The Governor and Florida Legislature have provided the leadership and support to create an integrated workforce system to better meet the needs of all customers in Florida. There are 24 Regional Workforce Boards that oversee the delivery of the integrated services to Floridians through the workforce development’s One-Stop delivery system. The following programs have been integrated to provide more efficient services to all customers: WIA, TANF, Food Stamp Employment and Training, Veterans Services, Wagner-Peyser services, and resources for filing unemployment claims. Regional Workforce Boards also work very closely with local state agency offices, school districts, community-based programs, and faith-based organizations serving the youth population. The integration of programs and services has facilitated services being provided to the youth most in need, as a full array of services is available in the One-Stop centers and ancillary services are provided on a referral basis through collaborative agreements.

As noted in Workforce Florida, Inc’s., updated Roadmap priorities, there are continuing concerns about the inadequacies of the Florida K-20 education system especially as it relates to the workforce-relevance of college academic credentials as well as the needs for a greater emphasis on work readiness and basic skills that are required to be productive in today’s workplace.

Governor Crist, as well as the former state leadership, has made the creation of a world-class educational system that will improve the lives of all youth in Florida a top priority since taking office. Increased funding for K-12 education is providing additional support for the students most at-risk of not being successful in school. Data confirms that youth who are not successful in school are much more likely to develop risk behaviors that prohibit them from transitioning to self sufficient adults.

Three foundational issues that continue to be highlighted include increasing literacy, support for Florida’s families, and diversifying Florida’s economy. State’s funding for programs that impact these issues directly improve services to the neediest and most at-risk youth. These youth have been identified as: out of school youth and those at risk of dropping out, youth in and aging out of foster care, youth offenders and those at risk of court involvement, homeless and runaway youth, children of incarcerated parents, migrant youth, Indian and Native American youth, and youth with disabilities.

With the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Florida through its Regional Workforce Boards, will use as much of these funds as possible to operate expanded summer youth employment opportunities during the summer of 2009, and provide as many youth as possible with summer employment opportunities and work experiences throughout the year, while ensuring that these summer employment opportunities and work experiences are of the highest quality. Work

readiness will be the only indicator to assess the effectiveness of summer employment. Florida's Ready to Work credential is a tool that enhances the workplace skills of Florida's students to better prepare them for successful entry-level employment in specific occupations. Ready to Work helps jobseekers prepare for the jobs they want and provides a credential, signed by the Governor, showing employers that they are ready for work. The State's Regional Workforce Boards are not required to use a specific assessment instrument to determine pre- and post-work readiness skills.

Summer employment services are delivered through the state's network of One-Stop Career Centers operated by the state's 24 Regional Workforce Boards. The funds are allocated to the Regional Workforce Boards.

Florida will put a special emphasis on developing work experiences and other activities that expose youth to opportunities in "green" educational and career pathways. Florida will serve both younger youth "in-school" and older "out-of-school" youth populations with these funds as well as encourage its Regional Workforce Boards to target those 22-24 year old youth who are now eligible for the WIA Youth funds provided under the Recovery Act.

A new Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) youth target group was added under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009: disconnected youth. A disconnected youth is an individual between the age of 16 but not yet 25 on the hiring date; not regularly attending any secondary, technical, or postsecondary school during the 6-month period preceding the hiring date; and not readily employable by reason of lacking a sufficient number of skills. Employers can receive a tax credit when they hire one of these eligible youth.

Florida, through its Regional Workforce Boards, will develop both public and private sector work experiences for summer youth employment. The State of Florida will receive and approve summer employment plans from each regional workforce board as well as conduct monitor visits to each RWB and a sample of summer employment worksites.

The State of Florida allows its 24 Regional Workforce Boards full flexibility in determining the scope in which they will operate their summer youth programs. By doing so, each Regional Workforce Board has the ability to react to the specific needs of their local area as determined by their local workforce board. This flexibility includes local policies and strategies for determining that summer employment opportunities are connected to academic and/or occupational learning and the types of connections that will be utilized as well as any policies or strategies regarding activities that support out-of-school youth during summer and/or non-summer months, such as supportive services, needs-based payments, or day-care. Local areas also have the flexibility to determine which of the ten Workforce Investment Act (WIA) youth program elements they provide during the summer program.

The State of Florida expects to serve between approximately 15,000 youth in the summer of 2009. Per the request of the Governor's Office, details on Summer Youth programs for each of Florida's 24 Regional Workforce Boards was made available to job seekers and employers. This information can be found on the Governor's Florida Office of Economic Recovery website at: <http://flarecovery.com/>.

Governor Charlie Crist demonstrated his commitment to improve the opportunities of Florida's youth by creating the Children and Youth Cabinet. The Cabinet, created in 2007, consists of 20 members and coordinates state agencies and programs that deliver children's services. The Cabinet's vision is that all children in Florida grow up safe, healthy, educated and prepared to meet their full potential. Its mission is to ensure that the public policy of Florida relating to children and youth promotes interdepartmental collaboration and program implementation in order for services designed for children and youth to be planned, managed and delivered in a holistic and integrated manner to improve the self-sufficiency,

safety, economic stability, health and quality of life of all children and youth in Florida. The Children and Youth Cabinet's 2008 annual report was released in January 2009. The report can be viewed at: <http://www.flgov.com/pdfs/ChildAdvocacy/finalcycannualreport2008.pdf>

With the introduction of the Recovery Act, Florida, through its 24 Regional Workforce Boards (RWBs), will ensure that disconnected youth are able to reconnect through multiple pathways to education and training which will enable them to enter and advance in the workforce. With an aggressive 2009 Summer Youth Employment Program, Florida's 24 RWBs will provide WIA youth, including at-risk youth, with expanded summer employment opportunities.

These at-risk youth have been identified as: out of school youth and those at risk of dropping out, youth in and aging out of foster care, youth offenders and those at risk of court involvement, homelessness and runaway youth, children of incarcerated parents, migrant youth, Indian and Native American youth, and youth with disabilities.

Building on work which began in 2003, Florida's Strengthening Youth Partnership (SYP) initiative focuses attention on ensuring that every young person in Florida is ready and able to pursue a meaningful job path upon exiting secondary education. SYP has become the vehicle for Florida's response and participation in the federal Shared Youth Vision initiative. The partnership is built on an interagency model of collaborative planning, execution, and evaluation, and currently includes representatives of those agencies aligned at the federal level.

ARRA Youth Strategies and Initiatives Linked to the Governor's Vision

Through Florida's twenty four Regional Workforce Boards, the ARRA funds will immediately help youth with the implementation of the Summer Youth Program. Florida anticipates serving approximately 15,000 youth in the summer of 2009 by offering summer employment opportunities consisting of subsidized employment opportunities, on-the-job training, mentoring, case management, apprenticeships, career exploration, basic work-readiness skills, and supportive services such as incentives and training stipends. Each local area in Florida has the flexibility, within federal and state guidelines, to craft a summer program that meets the specific needs of the community. This is what makes Florida's model so effective and innovative. For example, in a rural area of Florida where unemployment is at an all time high, the perception of youth taking real jobs away from competing adults was a concern and therefore the summer employment included on-site work readiness training using only public and non-profit organizations. This differs from a more urban area of Florida in which all summer employment opportunities consisted of private for-profit employers. Employers have responded favorably to the summer employment initiative and new relationships have been built while existing partnerships have been strengthened. Some real innovative strategies have been developed at the local level such as partnerships with the Department of Community Affairs, Elder Affairs, and the workforce system where stimulus funding from the Department of Community Affairs purchased weatherization materials and summer youth were training on weatherizing the homes of the elderly population. The introduction of youth into green technologies using a "green kit" which trains them on the basics of solar power, wind, and hydro power is also a strategy that exists in Florida. By allowing our Regional Workforce Boards maximum flexibility to develop their youth programs, Florida has seen amazing innovative ideas and strengthened partnerships which can be shared and duplicated in other areas of Florida.

Florida's strategy consists of communicating the Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 14-08 via Communiqué AWI 09-03 to its RWBs on March 18, 2009. As allowed in the TEGE, Florida's RWBs will develop expanded local youth programs using Recovery Act funds which will provide paid summer jobs and work experiences for youth, enhancing the year round WIA component and thereby

increasing the numbers of targeted low-income youth served. Florida established a Summer Youth Workgroup made up of key locals and State staff to address strategies and answer questions related to the quick implementation of the Summer Youth programs. A Summer Youth Planning workshop was also held in Orlando, with Florida's Chief Operating Officers sharing best practices and reviewing questions and answers raised in reviewing TEGL. Florida quickly developed a webpage entitled "American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009" and a separate ARRA related questions and answers web page. Additionally, Florida was also the host State for USDOL's region 3's "Summer Youth Employment Program 2009 Forum" held in Orlando on April 23-24, 2009 and Florida presented on its strategy to quickly implement the Summer Youth program as defined by TEGL 14-08. Florida's Youth Opportunities Committee also approved an additional 15K funding allocation to the smaller more rural RWBs who had expended most of their WIA youth funding, in order to assist in the preparation needed to implement and deliver an effective summer program while awaiting the ARRA funding from USDOL.

Florida's strategy as it relates to activities is to focus primarily on summer employment opportunities via subsidized work experiences i.e. summer jobs. Additionally, since all WIA youth activities are allowable under ARRA, the State has allowed each RWB the flexibility in TEGL 14-08 to combine any of the allowable activities with the summer employment opportunity/work experience activities. The implementation of the ARRA Summer Youth funding provides the vehicle necessary to develop and implement a substantial Summer Youth program above and beyond the WIA year-round youth model outlined in WIA and already being afforded to eligible youth across Florida.

The targeted groups outlined in the TEGL 14-08 were clearly communicated in the TEGL and subsequently the State Communiqué AWI 09-03, which mirrored the existing priority established in TEGL 28-05 and State Communiqué AWI 06-06 and subsequently the which were sent to the Regional Workforce Boards. The encouragement of targeting of these populations was thoroughly discussed in the Summer Youth Workgroup meetings, both the workshop and training forums held in Orlando, as well as postings to the ARRA website. One example of how a local area implemented this priority was in the Miami area, the largest area of Florida, where they targeted youth offenders and foster care youth by reaching out to enroll them first prior to allowing other WIA eligible youth to apply via their online application system. Because of the speedy implementation of the summer youth programs and the requirement to conduct oversight and monitoring, Florida asked its RWBs to develop interim summer youth plans (instructions) while modifying local comprehensive workforce service plans. This afforded the State the ability to effectively start reviewing local summer programs from the start heading off any confusion.

Question II. Identify the Governor's key workforce investment system priorities for the state's workforce investment system and how each will lead to actualizing the Governor's vision for workforce and economic development. (§§111(d) and 112(a).)

In responding to this question, states should reflect on shifting priorities necessitated by the economic downturn and areas of focus for economic recovery. States should identify the Governor's key workforce investment priorities for the use of the Recovery Act funds infused into the state's workforce investment system and how each will lead to actualizing the Governor's new vision.

Governor Crist: "Florida's economy is being tested in ways we haven't seen in decades, and during these challenging times, I am grateful for the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. During three budget years, up to \$13.4 billion in federal stimulus dollars will be pumped into Florida's economy. These dollars will help our state avoid deep cuts and prevent tax increases that would further burden Florida's families and businesses." In addition to much needed tax relief, the federal recovery package will provide immediate assistance in education, transportation, unemployment

compensation, renewable energy and other aid. Per Governor Crist, Florida's number-one priority is to direct these dollars toward projects that will create jobs and stimulate Florida's economy.

To that end, Governor Crist has worked with Florida's Legislature to quickly take the action necessary to ensure these dollars come to Florida and are allocated to the state and local entities that can support economic recovery and job creation activities and projects.

Governor's Strategic Vision for Florida:

The Governor's strategic vision is established both by his statements of priorities and through the mechanisms established in Florida law for state economic development planning as well as workforce planning. The Governor's guiding principles are:

- *Partnerships: Broadening of Economic Development with Stronger Linkages:* Economic development is dynamic. To enhance Florida's competitiveness, linkages between education, workforce, infrastructure, cultural foundations and diverse engines of economic development must be seamless.
- *The Importance of Regionalism:* Florida should celebrate statewide unity as well as regional diversity without the inefficiencies of local fragmentation through a unified regional approach. Florida's regions are defined in various ways, according to legacy and function. As Florida looks ahead, an effort should be made to align the various definitions of regions for maximum coordination and effectiveness

In conjunction with these two guiding principles, there are six strategic priorities:

1. Build World-Class Talent (Pre-K Education, Workforce Education, Universities)
 - Ensure the educational foundation for tomorrow's economy;
 - Ensure the workforce education is industry-driven, regionally focused, and vertically integrated; and
 - Invest in universities as the foundation for Florida's intellectual infrastructure.
2. Ensure Business Climate Competitiveness (Insurance, Affordable Workforce Housing, Business Incentives)
 - Study and address the insurance issue;
 - Address the affordable workforce housing issue at state and local levels; and
 - Strengthen Florida's competitive business climate for the Innovation Economy.
3. Promote Sustainable Development to Ensure Florida's Superior Quality of Life (Growth management, land use planning, multimodal infrastructure transportation system)
 - Increase balance, flexibility, and business focus of growth management/land use planning efforts; and
 - Improve Florida's multimodal infrastructure to meet current and future growth challenges.
4. Invest in Florida's Innovation Economy (Florida Universities, World Class Research Institutes and Facilities, Innovation Economy Legislation, Entrepreneurship)
 - Invest in a stimulus strategy for Research and Development to boost Florida's innovation capacity;

- Invest in technology commercialization “gap funding” to realize the economic development promise of new innovations;
 - Address the need for early-stage seed and venture capital in Florida;
 - Establish Florida as an innovation leader by strategically capitalizing on emerging technology opportunities; and
 - Aggressively brand Florida as an “Innovation Hub.”
5. Establish Florida as a Pre-eminent Global Hub (International Trade, Free Trade Agreements, Foreign Direct Investment, International Tourism)
- Upgrade Florida’s status from trade gateway to commercial global hub.
6. Accelerate Florida’s Economic Diversification (Agriculture – Biofuels, Aviation/Aerospace, Financial Services, Information Technology, Life Sciences, Manufacturing, Marine, Military/Defense, Space, Tourism)
- Emphasize value-added growth with customized cluster strategies; and
 - Emphasize customized regional strategies.

Key Workforce Investment Priorities

As outlined in the State Plan, Florida’s key workforce investment priorities, exemplified as eight strategic imperatives in Workforce Florida’s 2005-2010 Strategic Plan, which was developed through regional forums, enabled the actualization of the Governor’s vision for workforce, education and economic development. They include:

1. Partner with Business to Employ a Demand Driven Workforce System
 - Customer Segmentation
 - Proactive, Value Added Business Partnerships
 - Increase Business Penetration and Workforce System Usage
 - Alignment of Workforce System Performance Metrics with Business Focus
2. Support Training and Development of Florida’s Talent Pipeline
 - Educated, Skilled, Diverse and Available Workforce
 - Current and Emerging Labor Market Needs
 - Workforce Florida/Regional Workforce Board Council Objectives and Strategies
 - Increase Job Seeker Workforce System Usage and Satisfaction Level
3. Leverage Technology to Enhance Florida’s Workforce Development System
 - Internet Access to Workforce Services
 - Online Workforce Directories and Resource Links
 - Workforce Distance Learning Programs
 - Labor Market Exchange
4. Strengthen Florida’s Rural Workforce System
 - Equal Access to Quality Workforce Services
 - Rural Regional Workforce Board Workforce Consortium
 - Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern Planning
 - Rural Small Business Economic Development Tool Kit
5. Strengthen Partnership with Florida Department of Education, Workforce Education
 - Facilitate business and education linkages

- Non-Traditional learning environments: Develop Workforce Education Cluster Centers
 - Increased Career Exposure to Youth
 - Enhance Image of Technical/Vocational Careers
6. Marketing: Strengthen Awareness, Education and Image of Florida’s Workforce System
- System wide Communication Alignment
 - Strengthen Employ Florida Affiliate Brand
 - Integrated Marketing Communication/Public Relations Plan
 - Stimulate Workforce System Usage
7. Strengthen and Coordinate Economic Development Partnerships
- Mutually Beneficial Partnerships
 - Coordinated Approach to Local Market Partnering
 - Leverage Respective Expertise and Resources
 - Increased Joint Economic Development Organization/Workforce System Initiatives— State, Regional and Local
8. Identify Entrepreneurial Opportunities to Deliver Flexible Earned Income Streams
- Build Organizational Capacity
 - Align workforce System Assets with Unmet Market Needs
 - Generate Income Versus Revenue
 - Support Business Development Team Framework

As Florida responds to the current economic downturn, the Governor has made creating jobs and returning Floridians to work as top priorities. In support of the Governor’s Priorities, his appointed Workforce Florida Board of Directors, Chair Belinda Keiser recently shared her vision for how Florida’s workforce system will meet and exceed the Governor’s charge.

Priority one remains getting unemployed Floridians back to work. With an emphasis on jobs, innovation, partnership and accountability, Chair Keiser issued several challenges. Among them, she called on Regional Workforce Boards to expand business use of Florida’s workforce system. One way is to improve business awareness and use of the Employ Florida Marketplace (Florida’s comprehensive job bank and services delivery support system) at EmployFlorida.com as well as the many other workforce-system services and resources available at the local level to support Florida companies.

She also highlighted her increased emphasis on services for military veterans and their families as well as support for Florida’s rural communities to create new opportunities for economic growth. She urged state and local workforce partners to strengthen partnerships and to resist working in silos.

Chair Keiser also underscored the need for continuing innovation in the workforce system and strong alignment with economic development and education. Finally, she called on the board and workforce system partners to join her in making Florida’s nationally recognized workforce system even more accountable, transparent and responsive.

[Overarching State Strategies](#)

Question V.B. What strategies are in place to address the national strategic direction discussed in [Section 4] of this guidance, the Governor’s priorities, and the workforce development issues identified through the analysis of the State’s economy and labor market? (Section 112(b)(4)(D) and 112(a).)

The state's response to this question should describe the state's key, actionable strategies it is deploying to achieve the Governor's vision for the use of Recovery Act and regular formula funds. ETA is interested in how the state is connecting and integrating recovery activities to on-going workforce investments. The responses should provide actionable direction to local areas.

- *How workforce investment system resources, both stimulus and regular formula funds, can be deployed to serve increased numbers of workers in need.*
- *How adults and dislocated workers, including low-income adults, who need to acquire new skills will have increased access to education and training opportunities.*
- *How the state will address a dual-customer approach, meeting the skill needs of existing and emerging employers and high-growth occupations as well as the needs of under-skilled adults.*
- *How workforce activities (e.g., adult education, job training, postsecondary education, registered apprenticeship, career advancement, needs based payments, and supportive service activities) will be aligned in career pathways both now in implementing the Recovery Act and in the transformed workforce system of the future.*
- *How the state will partner to develop workforce solutions with community colleges, business and labor organizations, registered apprenticeship program sponsors, civic groups, and community organizations to align workforce development strategies and align workforce strategies with strategies for regional development and shared prosperity.*

Florida's economy is being tested in ways we haven't seen in decades, and during these challenging times, the Governor is very supportive of the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. During three budget years, up to \$13.4 billion in federal stimulus dollars will be pumped into Florida's economy, potentially helping Florida to avoid deep cuts and prevent tax increases that would further burden Florida's families and businesses.

In addition to much needed tax relief, the federal recovery package will provide immediate assistance in education, transportation, unemployment compensation, renewable energy and other aid. The Governor's administration looks forward to working with the Florida Legislature and cities and counties throughout the state to use these dollars as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Based on the Florida Economic Estimating Conference, the official state forecast:

- Unemployment rates will continue in double digits in 2009. Unemployment will stay above 10 percent for most of 2010, before beginning a very slow decline from its peak.
- Only one industry sector, Education and Health Services (2.9 percent), is forecasted to grow in the short term (2009-2010).
- Florida's housing construction sector finally bottoms out deeper than many expected in the fourth quarter of 2009, falling to just 16,100 housing starts.
- Real Per Capita Income will decline by 4.0 percent in the third quarter of 2009 and continue to drop until second quarter 2010 when it will post a slight increase of 0.5 percent.

More than \$1.5 billion in federal stimulus funds are flowing into our state to assist unemployed Floridians. These funds are providing enhanced unemployment compensation benefits and expanding job placement and job training programs to help bolster the economic recovery of Florida's families.

Florida's workforce system is benefiting from \$165 million in federal economic stimulus funds that the state and Regional Workforce Boards are using to provide training for unemployed Floridians and help businesses improve their workers' skills. Those funds include \$43 million for youth services, including summer jobs for several thousand young people statewide ages 14-24.

Work experiences being made available to unemployed young people through federal stimulus funds include opportunities to learn about "green" educational and career pathways, such as the retrofitting of public buildings, the construction of energy-efficient affordable public housing, solar panel installation, reclaiming of public park areas and the recycling of computers.

The Agency also has available nearly \$1.4 billion in federal stimulus funds for Florida's unemployment compensation program including increased benefits for unemployment compensation recipients. Payments of an additional \$25 weekly in Federal Additional Compensation were initiated on March 19, 2009. To date, \$55 million in Federal Additional Compensation has been paid to Florida's recipients. For more information about Florida's use of the federal recovery dollars made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, please visit www.FlaRecovery.com.

Floridians are encouraged to utilize the Employ Florida Marketplace, the state's powerful online labor exchange tool that provides employers, job seekers, students, training providers and workforce professionals with comprehensive and convenient workforce services at no cost. Employers can post job openings and job seekers can post resumes at www.employflorida.com. The Employ Florida Marketplace currently lists more than 176,000 job opportunities in Florida.

Florida's workforce system provides critical programs and services to job seekers and businesses alike. Such services offered throughout the state include:

- One-Stop Career Centers – Florida's nearly 90 One-Stop Career Centers, locally operated by Regional Workforce Boards, provide local access to job placement services, local workforce information and job training opportunities.
- Employ Florida Marketplace – The Employ Florida Marketplace Online Job Bank provides 24/7 access to a wide variety of local, state and national job openings. Follow this link to access the Employ Florida Marketplace. (<http://www.employflorida.com>)
- Mobile One-Stop Career Centers – Florida's Mobile One-Stop Career Centers allow citizens in rural areas, at job fairs and during emergency situations to access critical workforce information and services.
- Labor Market Information – The Agency for Workforce Innovation's Labor Market Statistics Center produces data such as employment, unemployment and wage information that assist workforce/economic development, education, employers and job seekers. These statistics assist with economic analysis, business recruitment, career counseling and other critical business decision-making. This information can also be accessed through the Employ Florida Marketplace at <http://www.employflorida.com>.
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit – The Work Opportunity Tax Credit offers a financial incentive to private, for-profit employers to hire individuals from certain targeted groups who experience

high rates of unemployment due to a variety of employment barriers. Follow this link for information about the Work Opportunity Tax Credit <http://www.floridajobs.org/workforce/wotc.html>.

Transitioning Floridians into employment is absolutely key. Success is predicated not only on effective training but also doing a better job of accessing the skill sets that are resident in existing Floridians today, those with college degrees, post-secondary degrees or certifications. With Florida's economy going through so much transformation, the workforce system will need to find ways to re-purpose those skill sets, aptitudes, and abilities into new jobs. For example, a professional with a college degree in the financial sector has lost their job, but through some short term training could find a new career opportunity in the health care sector.

Beginning with the Governor, there is significant focus in the state of Florida on renewable and alternative energy, as well as some concern about what it will take in the long term to sustain our homes, our businesses, and our commercial enterprises. Babcock Ranch (near Fort Myers) is going to be the first totally solar-powered residential area in Florida in partnership with Florida Power & Light (FPL). FPL is an emerging leader in alternative energy development, and certainly solar is something that the Governor is interested in pursuing for Florida. As it relates to job skills and energy, there is a lot of correlation between energy and construction skills, particularly skills/trades. So when we look to green jobs, what we're really finding out is that many of these are existing occupations that maybe have a short term overlay of green technology.

There are new opportunities in advanced manufacturing in areas that we are working to develop, something that the Florida legislature is looking at and the Solar Energy Consortium is looking at, as well. We see a lot of opportunities for the construction sector in energy, not only from alternative energy, renewable energy, sustainable energy as far as energy-related projects, but in the whole area of energy efficiency and weatherization. If you look at any industry sector where Florida jobs have been most severely impact, it is in construction and residential construction. So there would be a lot of opportunity to make a marriage between our unemployed construction workers with these weatherization or energy-efficiency projects.

The Governor's Energy Office is in discussions with Workforce Florida, the Florida Homebuilders Association, and the Department of Community Affairs to see how, with all of this influx of recovery money in the area of weatherization and the energy efficiency, we can broker relationships that get these unemployed Floridians, particularly in construction back in areas that really are going to help our economy overall. There is a wide, huge opportunity here.

Another energy-related field is in automotive technology; through Florida's community colleges and the National Association for Manufacturers, we are looking at alternative power production in cars and motor vehicles. This has the potential to create significant opportunities for training for skills, training particularly for a traditional automotive technician into these newer technologies.

Health care is the one field in Florida that is still growing jobs and shows promise for continued investment even in this economic downturn. Workforce Florida launched the Employ Florida Health Care Workforce Initiative in cooperation with HCA, the fifth largest employer in Florida, to begin looking at critical health care occupations, a different approach to looking at critical health care needs in that sector than in the past. This market-driven initiative looks at critical health care occupations, such as nurses and technician-level occupations that hospitals need to urgently fill now. By looking for opportunities to upgrade the skills of their existing workforce, we can back-fill them with our new freshly minted trainees that would be hired.

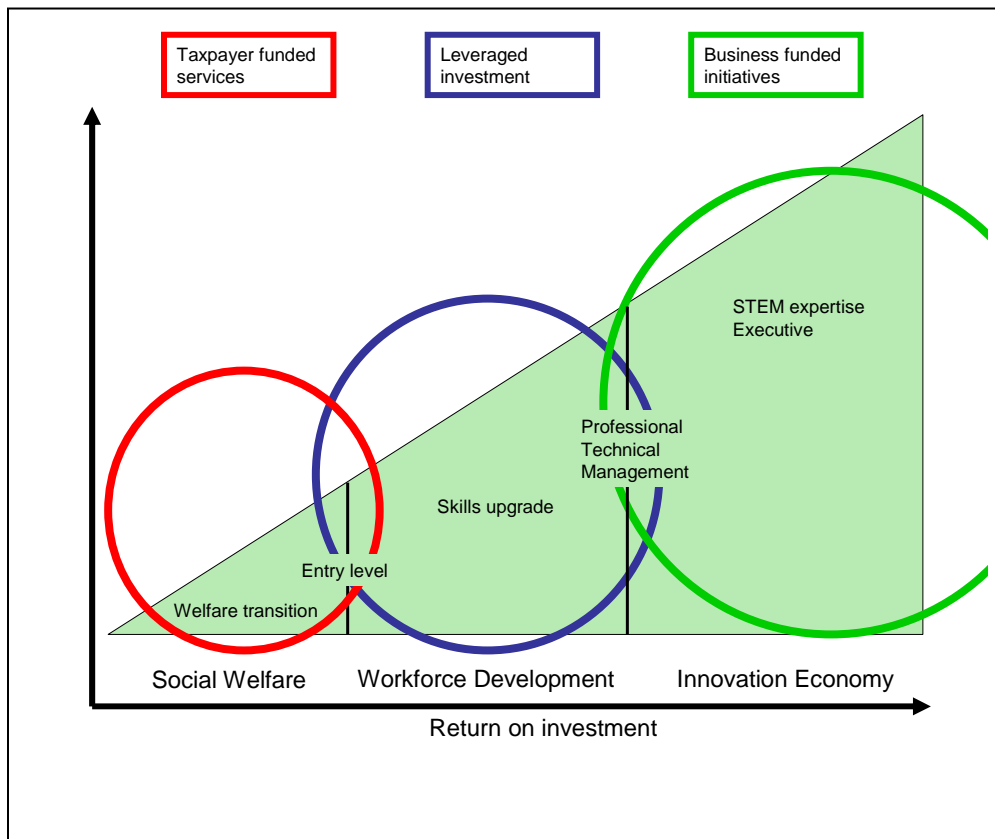
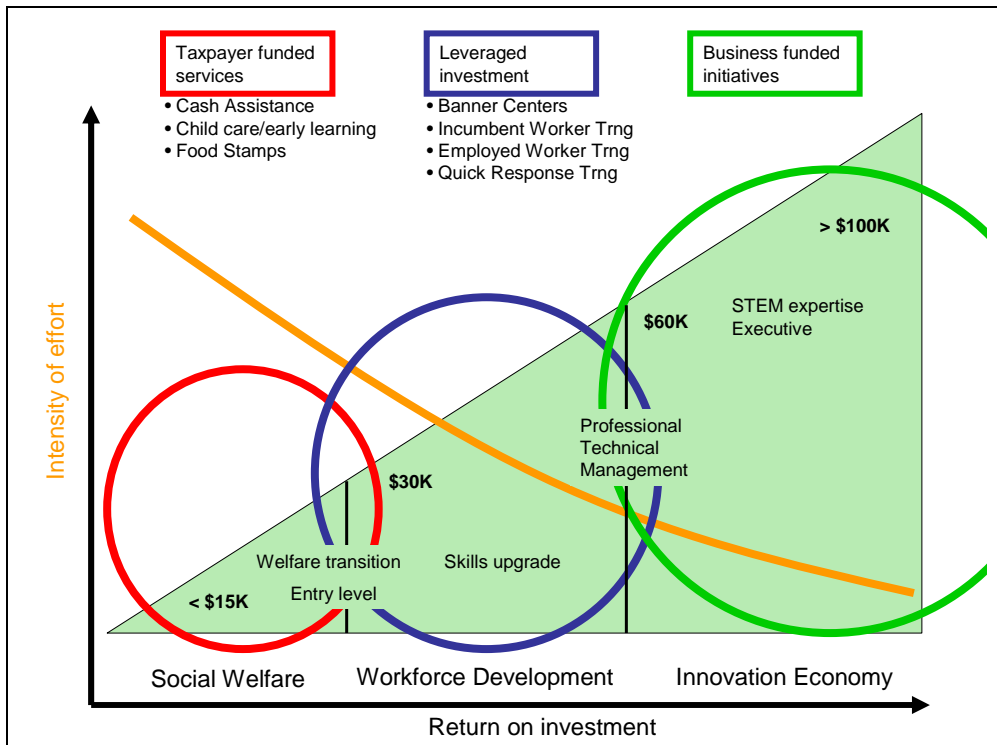
A subset of health care, and a major focus under ARRA, is health care information technology encompassing medical records, lab orders by computer, and tests by computer. This investment may also bring some standardization and reduction of health care costs overall through marrying information technology with health care. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced the creation of the Office of Recovery Act Coordination to help ensure the timely, organized and transparent distribution of economic stimulus funds managed by HHS. Among those funds is \$19 billion for healthcare information technology. Of the total, \$2 billion will go to the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) for Healthcare IT to be distributed for various projects that support information technology. ARRA is “game changing” for Health Care IT. Over the next 10 years, \$19.2 billion worth of incentives will be distributed to hospitals and healthcare professionals who implement qualified electronic health records and utilize them in a meaningful way. With ARRA’s grants, loans and technical assistance bringing \$300 million to regional and local Health Information Exchange (HIE) entities, the time is ideal to bridge healthcare IT and quality. One interpretation of the meaningful use of a certified Electronic Health Records (EHR) professional would be to exchange health information and report on quality measures. Relative to funding for this sector, there is some discretionary funding that can be brought to the state. Additionally, our Regional Workforce Boards are looking at this area, and in fact, the Business Competitiveness Council of the Workforce Florida Board of Directors is planning to fund a health information technology program with a pilot region in Florida, focusing on the application of health care information technology.

If we consider the issue of sustainability for Florida, water is a vital area of focus right now and post-recession. Florida continues to grow, and on the workforce side we’re looking at all of the issues related to new EPA requirements for technician skill level training and those kinds of things. We just recently awarded a Banner Center for Water Resources contract to St. Petersburg College in partnership with the Patel Center at University of South Florida and other institutions, again focusing on these most critical technician level training areas.

One final area of focus is that of international trade. The Global Trade Training Pilot Program is being coordinated between Workforce Florida and its economic development partner, Enterprise Florida. The goal of Global Trade Training is to support the partners - Broward County, the Regional Minority Business Council (Miami Shores), The Grimes Companies (Jacksonville), ICS Logistics (Jacksonville), Martin County and Sarasota County - in their efforts to advise and prepare companies to grow their operations in foreign markets or improve global business success rates. Three overarching focal areas of business needs were identified for the grants - export logistics, exporting for the marine industry and exporting to designated foreign markets.

Global Trade Training is a win-win for Florida businesses, workers, local and state economies for so many reasons, but if you were looking for just one, consider that the U.S. Department of Commerce says global companies, on average, grow faster, pay 15 percent higher wages and are more profitable than non-exporting businesses.

We will use this period of transformation and transition in Florida’s economy to stabilize, reinvest and focus on those skills and industries that will define Florida’s success in the future. Florida will balance its workforce investments to help those most impacted by the recession, while continuing to make targeted investments for the future demand driven talent needs. The following narrative describes the state’s three-tiered investment strategy.



Red Circle: Social Welfare

Florida was an early leader in the welfare-to-work initiatives of the late 1990's and has continued to build on the social welfare programs that help people stay gainfully employed with nominal financial support while working diligently to prevent regression to the entitlement/welfare system. Services in the "red circle" are stewarded by Florida's Agency for Workforce Innovation and other state agency partners, and include such taxpayer funded services as food stamps, cash assistance and case managed support.

From an economic standpoint, the taxpayer investment in these services is highest while the direct economic return on investment to the Florida economy is lowest. It is an essential part of the state's role in providing a social "safety net" and to actively assist Florida's citizens in their efforts to improve their skills and employability and to help them become self-sustaining.

Blue Circle: Workforce Development

The next level of investment in Florida's workforce is focused on the talent development from entry level onward, instilling a sense of commitment to lifelong learning and continual skills upgrade to meet the rapidly changing needs of Florida's economy. This is where the "demand driven" side of the workforce system is most visible, as we begin to see the leveraged private investment (corporate training funds, etc.) that is contributing to training and development in targeted industries and critical jobs, such as health sciences, energy, infrastructure, and technology. It is in this area where Workforce Florida, through its Board of Directors and the advantages of a public-private partnership, takes the lead on workforce development initiatives and the creation and implementation of programs that contribute to the continual development of talent that meets the current and future needs of the global economy.

In this "circle" of investment, the state's responsibility is to provide a baseline of funding and to develop partnerships with the education and training providers (e.g., community colleges, universities) with a clear tie to private industry needs. The return on investment is significant because workers are improving their economic value as well as their productivity through skills upgrade, benefiting the business where they apply their skills and improving upon Florida's talent base.

Green Circle: Innovation Economy and World-Class Talent

At the upper end of the workforce development spectrum, Florida achieves its world-class talent aspiration and takes a global leadership position in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) disciplines, a critical focus area that is under-represented in the current workforce and which will ultimately shape Florida's standing as a global player in the innovation economy.

The workforce that is being developed in this "green circle" includes executives, senior management, world class scholars, experts and entrepreneurs that create wealth through application of knowledge and the development of intellectual property, innovation, and additional job creation through research, commercialization and discovery.

"Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields have become increasingly central to U.S. economic competitiveness and growth. Long-term strategies to maintain and increase living standards and promote opportunity will require coordinated efforts among public, private, and not-for-profit entities to promote innovation and to prepare an adequate supply of qualified workers for employment in STEM fields."

- The STEM Workforce Challenge: the Role of the Public Workforce System in a National Solution for a Competitive Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Workforce US DOL ETA, April 2007.

The Workforce Florida Board has allocated funding to each of its Councils for projects that will provide training and employment in targeted areas, thereby increasing statewide the number of individuals served.

Banner Centers:

For example over \$3.8 million has been invested in Employ Florida Banner Centers. The Banner Center initiative is an innovative approach that focuses on creating and providing up-to-date training for workers in industries that are critical to sustaining and growing Florida's diverse economy. The Banner Centers bring together representatives from educational institutions, businesses, workforce, and economic development, among other partners, to identify the job skills needed for Florida's high skill, high wage and high demand jobs to ensure Florida has a globally competitive workforce. The Banner Centers also: serve as clearinghouses for companies needing training, create new curricula for entry-level and advanced workers who need to upgrade their skills, and ensure training and education offered in Florida meets industry standards. Currently, there are twelve (12) Banner Centers in the areas of Agriscience, Alternative Energy, Aviation/Aerospace, Biotechnology, Secondary Academies, Construction, Digital Media, Energy, Homeland Security and Defense, Logistics and Distribution, Manufacturing, and Water Resources.

Special Initiatives/Projects:

Approximately \$6 million has been allocated to different Councils within the WFI Board for projects which include:

- Serving low-income, displaced and under-skilled adults and disconnected Youth as well as those needing special assistance (e.g., ex-felons, the disabled and military veterans);
- Providing reemployment services, helping unemployed workers quickly find work;
- Green Jobs to include renewable energy infrastructure, energy-efficiency home retrofitting, biofuel development, and advanced drive train/vehicle development and manufacturing; and
- Connecting to other Federal Recovery Act Investments, recognizing the jobs and opportunities for unemployed workers in areas such as electronic medical records and health information technology, school renovations and constructions, Veterans Affairs hospital and medical facility construction, repair and restoration of public facilities, parks and Department of Defense facilities, construction of highways, public transportation and air and rail transportation infrastructure.

This funding will be targeted to special project initiatives, many of which are competitively solicited. Some examples of projects to date include:

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Council: WFI has provided funding to create and manage a Florida STEM Council intended to be a collaborative public-private partnership that will provide one business voice for Florida's science and technology education and to serve as a platform to coordinate and leverage diverse and disparate STEM programs, to facilitate easy access by Florida businesses, to advocate for STEM education (in traditional, virtual, and experiential settings) and to imbue STEM precepts from elementary through graduate-level education. Florida's increasingly knowledge-based economy is driven by innovation—the foundation of which lies in a dynamic and well-educated workforce equipped with STEM skills. Going forward, more and more jobs will require at least a basic understanding of scientific and mathematical principles, a working knowledge of

computer hardware and software, and problem solving skills developed and refined through coursework.

Employ Florida Healthcare Workforce Initiative: Funding provided for projects in four (4) Regional Workforce Boards which are partnering with health care organizations to provide training for both unemployed and incumbent workers in health care occupations such as RN's LPN's, CNA's, Medical Assistants, Home Health Aides, and Pharmacy Technicians.

Aerospace Transition

Aerospace Workforce Transition Program is an initiative to promote lifelong learning and career preparation resources to aerospace workers who will be affected by the retirement of the Space Shuttle Program to train and transition them in the skills sets required by the new Constellation program.

Rural Project: Funding has also been allocated for projects for which competitive solicitations are been planned in the areas of broadband and healthcare initiatives.

Business Incubation/Entrepreneurship; and Green Jobs: Competitive solicitations are planned for projects involving creative pilots for business incubation/entrepreneurship and green jobs.

Microportals for Targeted Jobseekers: Microportals are planned to support Veterans and Green Jobs – much like Florida has already implemented for older workers – it's Silver Edition microportal that provides numerous resources and workforce information for the targeted groups.

Labor Market Information: The implementation of TORQ and Help Wanted On-Line tools to assist the regions by providing them with a reliable gauge of labor demand with job openings by local area (Help Wanted On Line), and a transferable skills analysis tool that provides transitioning job seekers with alternate career pathways – and enhancement of the O'NET skills capabilities.

Military Spouse Program: Funding to continue to support employment and training of military spouses.

Florida Energy Sector Partnership: Additionally, WFI has established the Florida Energy Sector Partnership ensure alignment with the Governor's vision and relevant national and Florida energy policies and the WIA and Wagner Peyser plan and to manage the overall planning, implementation, oversight and technical assistance of the FESP plan operations which includes managing four sub state regional teams. These teams will identify, assess and refer candidates for training and connect and place workers with employers that have existing jobs. The regional teams will develop and implement comprehensive projects that include among others, the provision of high-quality training that leads to a degree, certificate or industry recognized credential. The SESP partnership includes members from the State Energy Office, energy efficiency and renewable energy businesses, state apprenticeship agencies, community and faith based organizations, education and training community, state and local veterans' agencies, state economic development organizations, Commission for the Transportation of Disadvantaged, Agency for Persons with Disabilities, Volunteer Florida and others.

Youth Opportunities: Approximately \$4M has been allocated to youth initiatives. Special projects are being awarded to individual Regional Workforce Boards, via a competitive solicitation. These special projects will target children of incarcerated parents, court-involved youth, youth at risk of court involvement, homeless and runaway youth, Indian and Native American youth, Migrant youth, out of school youth, youth most at risk of dropping out, youth in or aging out of foster care, youth with disabilities, improvement in literacy and numeracy rates, alternative education opportunities, training leading to receipt of industry recognized credentials, if available in high growth sectors such as emerging technologies, green jobs, and STEM and Rural Career Academy Development.

Serving Increased Populations

Since the enactment of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Florida has experienced drastic increases within its workforce system, in both the number of participants served and the services delivered to those participants. Within the Workforce Investment Act program, there has been an increase of 82% in the number of participants served, with a corresponding increase of 218% for the number of activities provided to these participants. For Wagner-Peyser, while not as dramatic, participation has increased 45%, with an increase in services of 58%.

Funding has been utilized to employ additional staff to serve additional customers. Due to the current economic situation, Regional Workforce Boards are engaged in a variety of outreach efforts to make the general public aware of opportunities associated with ARRA. The Governor and the Agency for Workforce Innovation's ARRA websites refer jobseekers to the One-Stop Career Centers for workforce services. Two-hundred eleven additional merit staff have been hired to facilitate the provision of these services to the increased number of participants (This number does not reflect staff hired by private service providers under WIA ARRA). Staff were hired to provide Reemployment Services, resource room assistance, case management (WIA, TAA), as well as summer youth coordination. These additional staff and initiatives will increase the state's capacity to serve the increasing numbers of individuals seeking services at local One-Stop Career Centers. The State Workforce Board (WFI), through its awarding of contracts and initiation of special projects, provides direction regarding coordination with Regional Workforce Boards and workforce partners.

How adults and dislocated workers, including low-income adults, who need to acquire new skills will have increased access to education and training opportunities.

Priority of service is given to low income individuals and veterans when conducting local outreach and marketing. Individuals are assessed in the One-Stops to determine levels of assistance needed. Based on these assessments, adults and dislocated workers are provided training and supportive services leading to the acquisition of new skills.

The State has also allocated funds to initiate special projects that target low income individuals. Examples are noted above.

Additionally, the state has taken the approach of broadly marketing the workforce services available as a result of the Recovery Act through the establishment of dedicated web sites and links to other Recovery related web sites that provide the general public with information on the services available and the targeting of those services to particular groups such as low-income adults. Targeted questions and answers are included on the Agency's web site that inform potential participants of services available and who is eligible for what services. Also included are direct links to the state's Regional Workforce Boards and their local one-stop career centers. The dedicated websites also include questions and answers directed to workforce professionals to guide them in the implementation of the Recovery Act. The questions and answers clarify that the Regional Workforce Boards must use their locally developed procedures for providing priority of service to low-income adults.

In the state's instructions and guidance to the Regional Workforce Boards for the updating of their local job training plans there is the requirement that the regional boards identify and describe how the additional recovery act funding will be used to increase the number of workers in need. The instructions ask how adults and dislocated workers, including low-income adults, who need to acquire new skills, will have increased access to education and training opportunities.

Florida has also submitted a request to extend its current waiver that allows 100% transfer of funds between the adult and dislocated worker program. This waiver allows the regional boards the flexibility to transfer, if needed, additional funding to service more low-income adults.

How workforce activities will be aligned in career pathways both now in implementing the Recovery Act and in the transformed workforce system of the future.

The State provides guidance to the local workforce boards to ensure that services are aligned locally and delivered state-wide.

Florida has developed methods to provide more individualized and directed career search activities to link the interests, skills, and work importance attributes of jobseekers to occupations, training programs, and training vendors. The tools to accomplish this are already in the state's Career Information Delivery System, CHOICES, which is available on-line (within the Employ Florida Marketplace – (EFM) to every One-Stop Career Center in the state. Additionally, EFM includes a link to the Labor Market Information area that provides a number of additional resources for the local regions to utilize in assisting participants relative to career opportunities alternatives. These include tools such as:

- a. a “transferable skills analysis tool”,
- b. An Interest and Ability Profiler;
- c. Aptitude Test; and
- d. Skills Checklist.

Regions are provided this information and encouraged to use these tools via AWI staff training and other informational material distributed to the local workforce boards.

Assessing jobseekers before placement will allow more targeted job search, matching the needs of the individual to the 300,000 job openings currently available in Employ Florida.

The State Board has just approved funding for the purchase of several career assessment tools (which the State is in the process of purchasing) and this information has been communicated to the regions as it will become the framework to assist the regions in assessing participants relative to skills analysis, training and career opportunities and alternatives.

These tools will also support the local regions' workforce activities in the areas of reemployment strategies. The State plans to acquire Help Wanted Online (HWOL) and the Transferable Occupation Relationship Quotient (TORQ) software. The HWOL software will provide the workforce system with a reliable gauge of labor demand with job openings by local area and will help to guide training and reemployment resources toward demand occupations. The TORQ transferable skills analysis tool will provide transitioning job seekers with alternate career pathways by analyzing occupations at the skills level, providing job seekers with career transition information based on the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities of a large sampling of occupations. This tool, in particular, enhances the capabilities of the O*NET skills database within EFM. These tools will provide local regions assistance in their efforts to assess the needs of, and to counsel with clients to assess whether they need adult education, job training, postsecondary education, registered apprenticeship, career advancement, needs based payments, and supportive service activities.

Also, if additional data is needed to complement statistics from HWOL, the State plans to develop a job vacancy/hiring needs survey to collect information on current vacancies/hiring needs by industry and workforce region. This information will assist with reemployment analysis and jobs training needs by

providing the regions with critical data to assist them in their efforts to help participants with alternative career pathway. (Funding for this survey was also recently approved by the State Board.)

The state has also developed a Targeted Occupation List (TOL) which is published annually. The TOL governs the provision of training programs being offered to individuals needing training assistance within the workforce system in compliance with federal law. Using the Statewide Demand Occupations List that Florida's Workforce Estimating Conference (WEC) adopts and publishes annually, WFI's TOL Committee reviews, discusses and adopts final occupational wage criteria for the development of regional targeted lists. Regions are provided an opportunity to review and submit any modifications to the draft lists to more appropriately reflect the current demands within their respective regions which may not be reflected in the initial state-demand list. These requests for changes to the preliminary TOLs are submitted by the Regional Workforce Boards through a web-based application. Regional requests are reviewed by WFI and AWI staff for compliance with the regional wage and demand criteria. Final staff recommendations (based on statistical analysis of local occupation data) are submitted to the TOL Committee for approval. AWI staff prepare Final Regional Targeted Occupations Lists which are posted on WFI's and AWI's websites for use by the Regional Workforce Boards and other workforce partners. (Note: The TOL Committee is comprised of WFI Board members and a regional workforce board member. The Workforce Estimating Conference is comprised of representatives of the Florida House of Representatives, the House State Universities and Private Colleges Appropriations Committee, Florida Senate Education Appropriations Committee, Legislative Economic and Demographic Research Committee and the Executive Office of the Governor.)

[Service Delivery Strategies, Support for Training](#)

Question IX.G. Describe innovative service delivery strategies the state has or is planning to undertake to maximize resources, increase service levels, improve service quality, achieve better integration or meet with other key state goals. (Section 112(b)(17)(A).)

In answering this question, the state should describe innovative state strategies to accomplish the state's vision and achieve the goals of the Recovery Act, including how the state will:

- *Increase services to workers in need.*
- *Support the full range of One-Stop Career Center customers in acquiring the skills needed to attain jobs in high-growth, high wage industries and occupations, including such supports as needs-based payments, basic skills remediation, English as a second language, and supportive services.*
- *Ensure education and training delivered through the workforce system results in education and workforce skills of demonstrated value, and focus assessments and certifications towards the next level of education and employment.*
- *Strategically use youth, dislocated worker and adult statewide funds to quickly deliver innovative services.*
- *Provide targeted work experiences in order to prepare individuals for job opportunities in new industries or occupations, particularly using registered apprenticeship and on-the-job training for all jobseekers, and summer work experience for youth.*
- *Align workforce activities with education strategies and economic and community development strategies to meet skill needs of jobs and industries important to the local and regional economies and meet the needs of under-skilled adults.*

The services provided by the required and optional One-Stop partners are coordinated and made available through the One-Stop system through local contacts, collaboration and Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), typically worked out at staff level but sometimes addressed as planning/policy

issues by the RWB Board of Directors, that include representation by the required and optional partners. The MOUs are facilitated by state-level Partnership Agreements between WFI, AWI and a number of state agencies, programs and organizations including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Corrections, Governor's Council on Indian Affairs, Division of Blind Services, Able Trust, and the Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities.

Using youth formula funds, the critical task at the local level is to fulfill the mandate of providing universal services through the network of One-Stop Career Centers. But providing services to youth ages 14 – 24 goes beyond the doors of the One-Stop Career Centers through partnerships with schools, adult education centers, post-secondary education providers, juvenile justice providers, community youth centers, health departments, and referrals from a host of other organizations that provide workforce development related services.

The State of Florida is committed to serving all workers in need. The State will focus on those skill gaps identified by the needs of its employers and this will continue to be a high priority. Under existing legislation, the Regional Workforce Boards have the policy and service design authority for all local services including services to employers and as such, they take the lead in working with the local employer community including determination of the needs of this community. To increase services, surveys and focus groups will be conducted with employers who do use the One-Stop Delivery System services to continually improve services, and with employers who do not use the One-Stop Delivery System services in order to identify needed services. Local input from chambers of commerce, economic development councils, and other organizations will continue to shape the level and quality of services provided to employers.

Workforce Florida, Inc., will continue to encourage that an aggressive, coordinated outreach program be used to deliver services to employers. Strategies to be encouraged include the formation of marketing teams knowledgeable of all services/programs offered in the One-Stop Career Centers and proactive approaches to assist employers in filling their job vacancies. Workforce Florida, Inc., will work with the Regional Workforce Boards by providing guidance to them for establishing procedures to inform employers of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and establishing how this employer oriented program will be provided and managed in the One-Stop Career Centers. WFI will consult with the Agency for Workforce Innovation on the method for streamlining the administration of this program in the One-Stop Career Centers with the goal being to increase employer participation. The Regional Workforce Boards are required to include this local administrative procedure in their plan of service. Mass recruiting agreements, job fairs, and new business developments are strategies that may be used. Further, increased use of the Internet, and particularly the Employ Florida Marketplace, Florida's dedicated job board and "virtual One-Stop" are also encouraged to enhance service delivery to both the employer and applicants.

To compete in the national and global economies, workers will need basic skills like reading, writing, math, speaking, and listening. Critical thinking skills, logical reasoning, decision-making, problem-solving, creativity and visualization will need to be part of the curriculum in all levels of the education system. Workers who help Florida compete in the global and national economies will also need personal skills and attributes such as responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, integrity, and initiative. These skills combined with technical and computer skills for those workers who need them, will assure Florida's ability to compete in the global economy. Florida employers have indicated that basic skills, interpersonal skills, and critical thinking skills are the biggest gaps in the skills of the current workforce. Additionally, services will be provided to meet the sustainability need of individuals, including services such as needs-based payments, basic skills remediation, English as a second language, and supportive services.

The Governor's vision in Florida for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals consists of a state policy requiring that a minimum of fifty (50) percent of the funds for adults and dislocated workers be allocated to Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) unless the local board obtains a waiver from WFI. Within this broad framework, local boards will determine the local mix of WIA services. Costs that qualify under the 50 percent rule will include all customer service costs associated with the ITA program such as tuition, fees and materials, ITA performance payments, and the costs of assessment, career planning, and case management. Also, the cost of all forms of basic literacy training will be included, as well as the value of Pell Grants coordinated with ITAs. The total value of such Pell awards will be added to the local board's adult and dislocated worker allocations in the computation of compliance with the 50 percent rule. Upon request by Regional Workforce Boards, WFI will consider waivers to permit the inclusion of costs associated with other locally developed programs, including such supports as needs-based payments, basic skills remediation, English as a second language, and supportive services, as appropriate. Additionally, there is a co-enrollment policy for trade-affected workers who qualify for training to be enrolled in WIA. This policy allows participants to be tracked in a common system for reporting purposes and increases benefits provided by other partner programs that are not offered under the Trade Adjustment Assistance program.

As with other workforce-related programs specified in WIA and mandatory partners, State law and WFI policy require integration with the One-Stop network. Collaborative partnerships will continue to be made with schools, employers, businesses and other labor and community organizations to maximize existing partnerships. Further collaboration/coordination with apprenticeship programs are assured by the State law which requires that the WFI Board include five (5) representatives of organized labor appointed by the Governor. Both those representatives and the organized labor representatives serving on the 24 Regional Workforce Boards have frequently been directly involved in State and local apprenticeship programs, and thereby serve as linkages, information and policy sources for such program. Further the apprenticeship program certification function and State Apprenticeship Advisory Board are housed in the State Department of Education and the Commissioner of Education serves on the WFI Board allowing for compatible policy development where needed.

The state will make a concerted effort to encourage the expansion of Wagner Peysner and WIA activities to include current apprenticeship programs at the local level and in the summer youth programs. Additionally, the state will be mindful of the opportunity to leverage funding to aid in the development of demand occupation pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs. The State will encourage the establishment of "green" job pre-apprenticeship training as a component of the summer youth program and the development of apprenticeship programs that support renewable energy construction and operation.

The State has eliminated the Job Corps state coordination function and recruitment activities formerly performed by One-Stop Career Center staff are now performed by private companies. Job Corps continues to be a required activity in the One-Stop Career Center as stated in the One-Stop Career Center credentialing guidance. Many centers have Job Corps recruiters who come on-site at scheduled times or the staff provides referrals to the recruiters, and centers usually have a link on the resource room computers to Job Corps. Where Job Corps Training Centers are located in the geographic boundaries of a Regional Workforce Board, the Regional Workforce Boards often have Job Corps representation on their local Boards, or other strong liaison and contacts.

The coordination of workforce training programs with economic development strategies as envisioned by the Florida workforce legislation begins at the Regional Workforce Board level and is coordinated at the State level by the WFI Board functioning as the state's Human Resource Investment Council (HRIC). One of three principle tenets of Florida's workforce strategy is the promotion of successful entry into the workforce through education and workplace experience that leads to self-sufficiency and

career advancement. Additionally, these collaborative efforts will result in job opportunities in new industries or occupations, particularly using registered apprenticeship and on-the-job training for all jobseekers, and summer work experiences for youth.

With Florida's service provider selection process having been fully presented in another section of the plan, the 24 Regional Workforce Boards are prepared or have already implemented their local service provider selection procedures to begin the procurement process to select service providers initially for the Summer Youth Program and subsequently for adult, dislocated worker and other workforce programs. The array of workforce activities and services will include paid and unpaid work experiences that prepare individuals for job opportunities in new/demand industries or occupations, particularly using registered apprenticeship and on-the-job training for all jobseekers, and summer work experience for youth. These workforce activities are based on education strategies and economic and community development strategies to meet needed skills required for jobs and industries that are important to the local and regional economies and to meet the needs of under-skilled adults.

State Strategies in supporting the full range of One-Stop Career Center customers in acquiring the skills needed to attain jobs in high-growth, high wage industries and occupations such as needs related payments.

The State provided guidance and planning instructions to Regional Workforce Boards to ensure that the expenditure of ARRA funds is focused on priority of service to low-income individuals and veterans. The Regional Workforce Boards are updating their local plans based on guidance from the State. The instructions are designed to elicit the following information:

- Detailed descriptions about local outreach and marketing strategies to inform the general public that ARRA funded programs are available to low-income individuals and veterans.
- The local Supportive Service operating policy that will detail guidelines for providing supportive services, such as gas cards, bus passes, repair of cars, other modes of transportation, child care, clothing allowance, etc. These services will enable enrollees to participate in the WIA program.

The State will require in its request for proposals to fund state-wide innovative programs that the funded service providers submit proposals designed to target low-income individuals and veterans.

Needs Related Payments

The issue and need for the use of Needs Related Payments (NRPs) has been discussed in numerous conference calls held with the state's Regional Workforce Boards during the first few months of the ARRA implementation. Historically, the low levels of funding within the workforce system have not allowed the use of NRPs. The additional funding provided by the Recovery Act provides the opportunity to readdress the use of NRPs as an effective strategy to ensure that participants are supported while they participate in training. On the Agency's ARRA web site, an entire series of questions and answers are devoted to the use of NRPs. The State has also submitted a request for a waiver to allow the use of NRPs while a UC claimant is still receiving benefits as a further encouragement for Regional Workforce Boards to provide NRPs.

State Strategies to ensure education and training delivered through the workforce system results in education and workforce skills of demonstrated value, and focus assessments and certifications towards the next level of education and employment.

The State requires the Regional Workforce Boards' local plans to include local operating procedures that describe their processes for assessing adults and youth including veterans to determine an individual's service strategy for participation in workforce programs. All regions are required to only fund training in areas that are included on the demand occupation list that result in industry recognized certifications and/or credentials.

Florida has a demonstrated record supporting specific strategies that ensure education and training delivered through the workforce system results in education and workforce skills of demonstrated value, and focus assessment and certifications toward the next level of education and employment. For example, the "Florida Ready to Work" initiative is an innovative workforce education and economic development program that provides job seekers with a credential that can be used by job applicants to show that they are truly "ready to work". The initiative, based on the ACT Work Keys assessment tool, establishes key levels of competency and certifies that the jobseeker has the fundamental job skills necessary to succeed in today's rapidly changing and competitive economy. The program is administered by the Florida Department of Education in partnership with the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation. Regional Workforce Boards, community colleges, high schools and other workforce development/education partners statewide are partners in implementing this program. The credential has become the tool of choice to better prepare Florida's jobseekers for successful entry-level employment in numerous occupations.

Another targeted initiative is the Florida Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Act enacted by the Florida Legislature in 2007. This legislation ensures that Career and Technical Education programs are academically rigorous and relevant to the workplace. It provides a statutory bond between Career and Technical Education and the workforce development system. The law requires that workforce education programs meet the current and future needs of Florida's economy. Every student who completes a CAPE program is required to graduate from high school with one or more industry recognized certifications, and will be prepared to enter the workforce and able to proceed to higher education. State law now requires that each of the sixty seven school districts in Florida have established at least one career academy by the beginning of school in 2008. Florida's Workforce System (Workforce Florida, Inc., the Agency for Workforce Innovation, and Regional Workforce Boards) are engaged in a number of activities with the Florida Department of Education (DOE) to implement the Career and Professional Academies Program. Workforce Florida recently published the 2009-2010 Final Comprehensive Industry Certification List with a total of 383 certifications now approved for the program.

Additionally, Florida applied for and has received a workforce incentive grant in which Workforce Florida, Inc., is partnering with the Florida Department of Education (DOE) to collaborate on projects that will facilitate innovative workforce and education practices within the state. DOE plans to award nine demonstration projects (using a competitive RFP approach) wherein each project will develop a system of strategies to promote and sustain postsecondary transition among Adult General Education students. A subsequent Task Force will review the systems developed and advise DOE on statewide implementation. The projects, based on innovative practices, will promote the following outcomes:

- Improved program completion rates
- Increased percentage of adult education students who obtain a GED or high school equivalency credential.

To meet these outcomes, Florida will

- Increase the percentage of adult education students who demonstrate college readiness;

- Increase the percentage of adult education students who successfully transition to postsecondary education;
- Increase the percentage of adult education students who persist and attain postsecondary degrees and certificates;
- Decrease the need for remediation at the postsecondary level;
- Increase entry into employment and further education; and
- Enhance collaboration among the Florida Department of Education, WFI, and One-Stop Centers in collecting and sharing data related to cross-referrals of clients.

The projects will be based on various models such as Career Pathways, Advising, College Preparation, GED Plus, ESOL, etc., which are being implemented in the U.S., and that focus on supporting adult education learners' transitions to postsecondary education and which have resulted in positive outcomes. Best practices that support transitions such as dual enrollment in adult education and technical certificate programs, transitional activities, career academies, College Placement Test preparation workshops, College Success Courses, and accelerated GED among others will be included as potential ways to enhance transition programs.

Also, in partnership with DOE and the Florida Chamber Foundation, under the guidance of Workforce Florida, Inc., a portion of the grant funds will be used to develop a Talent Supply Chain Model to link it to business-driven key performance indicators. This will include a technology backbone using the State's Employ Florida Marketplace as a talent inventory that provides dynamic perspectives on the available talent in Florida's targeted sectors and industries and ultimately will provide a real time supply and demand model that will allow for rapid calibration of talent development strategies and investments in specific areas.

Potential key performance indicators (linked to the Chamber's dashboard) will include:

- Reduced training costs due to effective skills training in the workforce pipeline,
- Reduced turnover due to effective assessment tools and job fit.
- Increased productivity as measured by profitability per employee
- Reduced cycle time for hiring qualified employees due to improved access to talent in the "talent supply chain."

State Strategies to provide targeted work experiences in order to prepare individuals for job opportunities in new industries or occupations, particularly using registered apprenticeship and on-the-job-training for all jobseekers, and summer work experience for youth.

Florida's workforce regions and their local partners recognize the importance of implementing exemplary local programs that expand apprenticeship opportunities. For example, the Suncoast Workforce Board (serving Manatee and Sarasota counties) has a unique and growing partnership among the construction industry and the School Boards' of Manatee and Sarasota Counties. Construction Technology Careers (CTC) enhances and promotes a construction technology career program path utilizing the pre-apprentice programs and facilities of Manatee and Sarasota High Schools. The goal is to increase future resources and opportunities for CTC youth, while building the regional construction industry workforce. CTC was honored with the Theodore Small Award from the National Association of Workforce Boards for developing this innovative business-driven partnership and pre-apprentice program.

The WorkNet Pinellas Workforce Board (serving Pinellas county) has implemented the Pinellas Technical Careers Pre-Apprenticeship Program that offers students a pathway to start exploring careers in construction (i.e. electrical, masonry, HVAC, plumbing, welding, or carpentry) and enables local

businesses to make a difference in the future of their workforce. The local workforce system in Pinellas County has partnered with the Florida Masonry Apprentice and Educational Foundation, Inc., and hundreds of employers to address the need to recruit and train new masons for Florida's industry.

The State of Florida is committed to enhancing the economic self-sufficiency of low skilled workers through programs and services geared toward workforce education, apprenticeships, job-specific skills and career development leading to a globally competitive workforce. Now in its 62nd year of registered apprenticeship, the State of Florida continues its unwavering support for workforce training and education. Florida's challenge is to modernize and expand Florida's registered apprenticeship system through the new framework introduced in the revision of Title 29 CFR Part 29.

Building on the existing working relationship between the education and workforce system will help to meet this demand. The Department of Education (DOE) serves as the registration agency for apprenticeship programs in Florida on behalf of the United States Department of Labor. DOE has recently obtained a hundred thousand dollar grant to promote apprenticeship programs and to sponsor educational sessions around the state to encourage participation in apprenticeship programs.

There is a keen awareness that in order for this effort to be successful the workforce system should be a major player. Promoting the program as yet another workforce option for employers is the goal. Engaging employers in new and emerging industries (i.e. solar power) targeted under the new stimulus program is an example of opportunities for education and workforce to collaborate. The Department of Education, Workforce Florida Inc., and the Agency for Workforce Innovation have organized a state apprenticeship workgroup to include representation from Florida's Regional Workforce Boards. The establishment of this working group will promote the expansion of Florida's already strong apprenticeship system. Partnership expansion starts with statewide apprenticeship outreach and education for Florida's One-Stop Career Centers and other agencies impacting dislocated workers. Workshops and statewide seminars will be conducted to focus new partners on green technology training opportunities in apprenticeship. One final strategy is to enhance management information system upgrades that will build a sharable pre-apprenticeship and employer database and integrate the current searchable apprenticeship database with the workforce system.

State Strategies to align workforce activities with education strategies and economic and community development strategies to meet skill needs of jobs and industries important to the local and regional economies and meet the needs of under-skilled adults.

The STEM Council and Florida Energy Sector Partnership (discussed above) are good examples of ongoing partnerships and activities that are aligned with ARRA workforce activities. Florida's workforce system has principals at the table with Enterprise Florida (the State's Economic Development leader) and is highly engaged with education and community leaders to identify areas of need and then partnering to address those needs. Additionally, education, economic development and various community representatives all have membership on the WFI Board. WFI consistently ensures outreach to all partners to ensure successful implementation of ARRA and all workforce initiatives.

Section II. Service Delivery

State Governance and Collaboration

Question III.A.2. Describe how the agencies involved in the workforce investment system interrelate on workforce, economic development, and education issues and the respective lines of authority. (Section 112(b)(8)(A).)

In responding to this question, the state should describe how the Governor is ensuring cross-agency collaboration so that workforce investments are fully tied to other investments funded by the Recovery Act outside of workforce development.

Specifically to guide Florida's response to the current economic conditions and to ensure effective collaboration across all state agencies and entities, Governor Crist created the Florida Office for Economic Recovery, led by Workforce Florida Board member Don Winstead. This Office provides oversight and coordination for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, focused on these key goals and purposes:

- (1) To preserve and create jobs and promote economic recovery.
- (2) To assist those most impacted by the recession.
- (3) To provide investments needed to increase economic efficiency by spurring technological advances in science and health.
- (4) To invest in transportation, environmental protection, and other infrastructure that will provide long-term economic benefits.
- (5) To stabilize State and local government budgets, in order to minimize and avoid reductions in essential services and counterproductive State and local tax increases.

Florida has made real progress in strengthening partnerships across workforce, economic development and education since the inception of Workforce Florida in 2000 when the Florida workforce system was created in its current iteration and even prior to that time. The Governor launched the "Accelerate Florida" initiative in 2008, breaking down the silos of government and challenging agencies throughout government to embrace economic development. This partnership is further enhanced in the current Florida Office for Economic Recovery framework, formed by the Governor to manage the state's efforts and investments in response to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Strengthening youth partnerships is an ongoing effort to ensure a deliberate and continuous investment in next generation talent from non-traditional and diverse sources. This makes it possible for an effective transition from foster youth and juvenile justice programs into adulthood with an emphasis on skills, readiness and economic self-sufficiency so program participants will be able to contribute to the Florida economy.

In the areas of energy, and especially clean energy, outside of the workforce system there is an active dialogue and relationship with the Governor's Energy Office. Partnerships exist with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Governor's Energy Commission, the Florida Energy Workforce Consortium made up of all of the state investor-owned utilities, the municipalities associations that have to do with energy in Florida today, the Florida Homebuilders Association, and again the Florida Department of Education. This partnership represents an outstanding economic opportunity not only for Florida, but for the country as well, so Florida is looking at ways to better

understand and align respective missions across all of these various organizations with a specific workforce focus on talent development.

The State is also evaluating ways to improve the partnership with Florida's Department of Community Affairs; with such a focus on energy efficiency and weatherization and stimulus dollars that go along with these investments as there is an obvious opportunity for workforce training and re-deployment.

There are opportunities for connection with the Department of Environmental Protection, which we are doing with our water associations in Florida and nationwide. No one else in the country has a single Center (Florida's Banner Center on Water Resources) focused on developing water, wastewater, turning saltwater into fresh water technician-related skills like we have now in Florida. This is critical as water infrastructure projects represent an immediate and long-term investment opportunity.

From a workforce perspective, we are looking closely at potential infrastructure projects: roadways, bridges, and other improvement projects. As part of the "Accelerate Florida" initiative, the Governor emphasized that maintaining, constructing and expanding Florida's transportation system contributes to the economic security. These types of projects can be labor intensive and we are working to ensure that we have a ready supply of workers available to support the projects as the funding becomes available.

Workforce and economic development, education and business have a partnership network that is facilitated in part by the Florida Economic Development Council, a grassroots economic development organization and collaborator. And, the Florida now has a Workforce Professional of the Year recognition and award on a par with the Economic Development Professional of the Year, recognizing leadership in these closely related fields.

The Florida Chamber Foundation's Innovation Caucus is a horizon post-recession look at how to keep Florida at the top in innovation. Talent is a huge key and bringing together all the critical partners will keep us focused on what the State needs to do now to address those issues required for continued success in the future. Workforce Florida's chair is a member of Enterprise Florida's Board, and Workforce Florida is actively engaged at the stakeholder level to ensure that all of the tools and resources required from the workforce system are embedded in those economic development priorities.

State's workforce partnership with the apprenticeship program

The State of Florida is committed to enhancing the economic self-sufficiency of low skilled workers through programs and services geared toward workforce education, apprenticeships, job-specific skills and career development, all leading to a globally competitive workforce. Now in its 62nd year of registered apprenticeship, the State of Florida continues its unwavering support for workforce training and education. Florida's challenge is to modernize and expand its registered apprenticeship system through the new framework introduced in the revision of Title 29 CFR Part 29. Building on the existing working relationship between the education and workforce system will help to meet this demand.

The Department of Education (DOE) serves as the registration agency for apprenticeship programs in Florida on behalf of the United States Department of Labor. DOE has recently obtained a hundred thousand dollar grant to promote apprenticeship programs and to sponsor educational sessions around the State to encourage participation in apprenticeship programs. There is a keen awareness that in order for this effort to be successful the workforce system has to be a major player. Promoting the program as yet another workforce option for employers is the goal. Engaging employers in new and emerging industries (i.e. solar power) targeted under the new stimulus program is an example of opportunities for education and workforce to collaborate.

The Department of Education, Workforce Florida Inc., and the Agency for Workforce Innovation have organized a state apprenticeship workgroup to include representation from Florida's Regional Workforce Boards. The establishment of this working group will promote the expansion of Florida's already strong apprenticeship system. Partnership expansion starts with statewide apprenticeship outreach and education for Florida's One-Stop Career Centers and other agencies impacting dislocated workers. Workshops and statewide seminars will be conducted to focus new partners on green technology training opportunities in apprenticeship. Another strategy is to enhance management information system upgrades that will build a sharable pre-apprenticeship and employer database and integrate the current searchable apprenticeship database with the workforce system.

Question III.C.1. Describe the steps the state will take to improve operational collaboration of the workforce investment activities and other related activities and programs outlined in section 112(b)(8)(A) of WIA, at both the state and local level (e.g., joint activities, memoranda of understanding, planned mergers, coordinated policies, etc.). How will the WFI Board and agencies eliminate any existing state-level barriers to coordination? (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(8)(A).)

In responding to this question, states should describe how collaboration will be supported and sustained between state agencies, particularly between the organizational entities responsible for WIA, Wagner-Peyser Act, Unemployment Insurance, Trade Act services, and Registered Apprenticeship.

The primary means of collaborative interaction among key agencies and workforce entities is through the structures and committee work of the Workforce Florida, Inc. Board of Directors. Further ongoing communication/collaboration is achieved through regular publications such as the "Workforce Weekly Updates," "President's Report" and other WFI publications distributed to a wide list of state and local partners and then posted on the WFI website at <http://www.workforceflorida.com/news/index.htm>.

WFI Board members and staff also are represented and actively participate on a number of cross-cutting interagency committees, workgroups and other planning bodies, including the State School Readiness Coalition, the Enterprise Florida Board of Directors, the State Homelessness Council, the Enterprise Florida Manufacturers Advisory Council, the National Entrepreneurial Center Board, the Governor's Faith-Based and Community Liaisons Group, the Department of Education Study Group on Workforce Education, the VETS Roundtable, the State Workforce Estimating Conference and multiple other state, local and national inter-program working groups. WFI and the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) have also entered into state-level Partnership Agreements with agencies such as the Florida Departments of Corrections, Community Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation, Blind Services, the Able Trust, Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, and the federal Department of Veterans Affairs. Key representatives of relevant state agencies/programs serve on WFI Councils, such as the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Education (Youth Development Council) where youth workforce policy is developed.

Collaboration, interaction, and communications are maintained with our Regional Workforce Boards, One-Stop Career Center providers and other local partners through inclusion in the activities, described above and at the state level, including regular attendance and involvement at WFI Board meetings, WFI council/workgroup participation, WFI and AWI staff and planning meetings, and a host of other interrelated meetings and workgroups. Further operational collaboration has occurred with internal and external partners to better coordinate the activities and performance requirements of the ARRA. WFI also hosts quarterly "Workforce Partners Meetings" on the day preceding each WFI Board of Directors meeting, at which time all items on the WFI Board agenda are first discussed with

the partners. Many of the identified barriers to further collaboration are addressed and resolved at the state level if within the policy authority of applicable state bodies, including the WFI Board, Agency for Workforce Innovation, or other state entities. Where barriers are identified as having federal origin, waivers are requested.

Going beyond WIA and USDOL programs, the state has consistently partnered with public and private programs and entities to collaboratively leverage assets and jointly pursue additional resources to improve services to shared customers such as the homeless, veterans, individuals with disabilities, youth aging out of foster care, youth in the juvenile justice system, children of incarcerated parents, migrant youth, native American youth, youth with disabilities, small and start-up business, industry sectors, among others.

Coordination of services available at local One-Stop Career Centers is documented through the local memoranda of understanding. Each required and optional partner is party to the local agreement and specifies the services that will be available including the method to share costs of operating the system. The Agency for Workforce Innovation, as the state's administrative entity, is responsible for the unemployment compensation and public employment service programs. The employment services, funded by Wagner-Peyser and the unemployment compensation program, are combined at the local level in the One-Stop Delivery System sites. These activities and services are coordinated through the state agency with oversight by WFI.

Reemployment Services and Wagner-Peyser Act Services

Question IX.C.4.b. Describe the reemployment services the state provides to Unemployment Compensation Insurance claimants and the worker profiling services provided to claimants identified as most likely to exhaust their Unemployment Insurance benefits in accordance with section 3(c)(3) of the Wagner-Peyser Act. (112(b)(17)(A)(iv).)

In responding to this question, states should describe:

- *The Governor's vision for Reemployment services (RES), including how they differ from Wagner-Peyser core services.*
- *How RES will be coordinated with other services provided at the One-Stop Career Center under WIA.*
- *How UI claimants will be identified quickly and RES provided as early as possible following initial receipt of UI benefits or referrals through UI profiling systems.*
- *The services that will be provided under RES, including in-Depth services such as skill assessment, career guidance, individual service plans, and labor market information.*
- *The specific population among UI claimants (e.g., those most likely to exhaust benefits) that the state intends to target with Recovery Act funds for RES.*
- *How the state intends to integrate information technology into its RES program to better identify and serve UI claimants, including the percentage of funds that will be used for integrating ES and UI technology requirements to identify and serve the needs of UI claimants.*
- *Any labor market information tools that will be funded and integrated into RES.*

Reemployment services in Florida are fully integrated into our One-Stop Career Centers along with all Wagner-Peyser services, WIA services, the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA), the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Welfare Transition Program. In this integrated context it is Florida's goal to have all partners work together to effectively serve Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants under the oversight of the regional workforce board with the ultimate objective of effecting their return to the active workforce as soon as possible. As with all services and programs available in the state's One-Stop centers, the funding, the mix of services and general approach are to be determined by local memoranda of understanding between the partners as guided by the local plan. However, certain guiding principles are provided by state policy as set forth by the Governor and Workforce Florida, the state workforce investment board.

The full array of services is available to all UC claimants through the State's One-Stop Career Centers and through the Employ Florida Marketplace (EFM), the state's case management and self-service system. As mentioned above, state statute requires core services to be provided electronically. To the extent possible it is the Florida's intent to make self-services available to all job seekers including enhancements directed to UI claimants. It is also our goal to electronically deliver many other labor exchange services heretofore only available as one-on-one staff assisted services. These services include registration, orientation, skills assessment, skills matching, job matching, the provision labor market and training information, referral to training, and job referral. Providing these services electronically does not preclude the provision of staff assisted services, but is rather intended as an expansion and enhancement of these services. By maximizing electronic self-service and electronically delivered services for the majority of UI claimants who are candidates for immediate employment it is our goal to increase the delivery of one-on-one staff services to the UI claimants most in need of training and other assistance.

In Florida, all UI claimants are registered as job seekers in the Employ Florida Marketplace within 24 hours of filing for unemployment benefits. This is accomplished via an automated interface between the UI system and EFM. Nightly a file of new UI claimants is sent to EFM where basic registration created. This includes the client's email address, and work history information. The career services skills matching functionality of EFM is then utilized to generate an initial listing of current jobs in the system based the employment information each claimant gave when filing his/her claim. This generates an automatic email to the claimant that: 1) informs the claimant of his/her EFM log on information; 2) provides a link to the initial list of jobs matched to the claimant's employment history; and 3) provides the link for him/her to complete a full resume and begin active use of the system to search and apply for jobs. This information also becomes immediately available to staff who utilize it to contact claimants regarding other One-Stop services available. This skills information also automatically becomes available to employers who are searching for candidates based on the skills needed to fill a job opening.

Florida's reemployment services are centered on the Priority Re-Employment Program (PREP), the state's Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services effort now operational statewide. A pool of possible PREP claimants is created on a weekly basis that excludes: a.) claimants whose program identification is other than Intrastate UI, CWC (combined wage program) UCFE (federal workers) and UCX (ex-military personnel); b.) Interstate claimants; c.) transitional claimants; d.) claimants on recall status; e.) seasonally unemployed claimants; f.) partially unemployed claimants; and g.) claimants with a first payment issued more than 42 days after the Benefit Year Beginning date. Claimants are placed in the PREP pool on the 4th week of their claims for early intervention purposes.

The PREP pool is transferred to EFM and the One-Stop Career Center staff use the pool to schedule claimants for orientation services. The current program requires a review at the local level to determine those individuals most likely to exhaust their benefits using the following factors: tenure on their most recent employment, education level, total unemployment rate in the local labor market, last occupation is one of the occupations most in decline (O*NET), and Standard Occupational Classification (SOC). A group assessment interview and the development of a service plan are coupled with the orientation. Based on the service plan the following services are made available for those claimants who are not job ready: job search workshops, testing, counseling, specific labor market information, and referral to education and or training.

The Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI), Office of Unemployment Compensation Services is currently participating with WFI, and the AWI One-Stop Program and Support staff in the modification of the PREP program. The modification includes utilizing a statistical targeting methodology using the claimants' characteristics to identify claimants that are most likely to exhaust and need intensive services or training. This workgroup is currently reviewing the validity of the statistical targeting and the assignment of a probability score to identify those claimants most likely to exhaust their benefits. Once the validation process is completed, the process will be integrated between the UI-to-EFM Interface, EFM work registration records and Labor Market Information and include those claimants in the PREP pool. This modification will be an enhancement to the PREP pool and assist the One-Stop Career Centers in identifying those claimants in need of more intensive staff assisted services.

Additionally, six regions in Florida are currently participating in the USDOL Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) Pilot Program. This program involves the following:

- Participating One-Stop Career Centers randomly select a certain number of participants for REA from the PREP pool.
- The One-Stop Career Centers enter the participant information into EFM and designate them as an "REA."
- The One-Stop Career Center sends an appointment letter for the participant to come in for an assessment interview.
- During the interview the REA participant is provided:
 - Labor market information unique to their area of work experience. If the labor market information shows the participant's occupation to be in decline, they can be referred for training.
 - One-Stop staff assists in developing an employability development plan.
 - One-Stop staff provides several job referrals as well as information on other services the One-Stop offers.
 - Note: AWI recommends that staff follow-up with participants if they are still unemployed to see if they can be further assisted in their employment efforts
- If an REA participant doesn't show up for their assessment appointment, the participant information is sent to Unemployment Compensation (UC) Adjudication for fact-finding.
- If the participant has "good cause," UC will issue a determination which automates a notice to the One-Stop Career Center indicating they should be rescheduled for a second appointment.
- Once rescheduled for a second interview, if the participant is a "no show" again, the information is sent to UC for adjudication, but the participant is not rescheduled a second time. The program only requires they be rescheduled once.
- When the assessment is completed at the One Stop, an automated notice is generated to UC to conduct an Eligibility Review.

- Note: AWI, working with the Regions, has automated many of the operational processes to streamline workload efforts.

Currently the state is in the process of applying for additional REA funding in order to expand the program to other regions who wish to participate.

Due to the current economic downturn and the high rate of unemployment in the state, staff-assisted reemployment services will be targeted to claimants who qualify for state extended benefits. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) encouraged states to amend their extended benefits (EB) provisions to allow an EB period to trigger based on the total unemployment rate. By doing so, states whose EB periods are defined by the insured unemployment rate would in many cases immediately enter an EB period thereby entitling its unemployed workers up to an additional 13 weeks of benefits or even 20 weeks, for states with the total unemployment rate of at least 8 percent.

The Florida Legislature passed into law Senate Bill 810 on April 29, 2009. This bill provided Florida the ability to amend the Unemployment Compensation Law and allow an EB period to trigger based on the total unemployment rate.

It is estimated that approximately 250,000 claimants will qualify for the Extended Benefits program. These individuals have previously qualified for 26 weeks of regular unemployment, exhausted their claim, and have been provided up to 33 weeks of Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) benefits, and have exhausted those additional benefits.

At the state level, Florida plans to pilot two software solutions to assist the delivery of local reemployment services. It is the plan to use these tools to assist the state's One-Stop centers in assessing the needs of UI claimants and enhancing local reemployment services. These two tools are: Help-Wanted Online (HWOL) and the Workforce Associates' Transferable Occupation Relationship Quotient (TORQ).

HWOL is an evolution of the former Conference Board Help Wanted Index that now represents a fully developed system that measures the demand side of the labor market. It scrapes myriad job ads from internet sites. Job ads can be analyzed by state, metro area and cities through time and can be filtered for various attributes. HWOL has the potential to identify current openings even in the recession, which represents a potential asset to local and state workforce planners. Current measures of occupational demand are for the long-term and there is need for more current actionable data for analysis. HWOL also has the potential to identify new and emerging, green and biotech occupations.

The TORQ software allows the integration of multiple types of data files from the federal and state levels to include most widely used occupational attributes from the O*Net national database, Florida and substate projections by industry and occupation, national projections data, employer data from InfoUSA, educational providers from the Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System, and approved providers for WIA. This is single system that can provide product integration on one platform from multiple data sources. This product will improve the analysis of O*Net tools including career pathing. TORQ software promises to be a very positive asset to local staff seeking to reemploy UC claimants.

The planned cost for acquiring these software tools for state use in support of the Regional Workforce Boards amounts to approximately 31% of the Reemployment Services (RES) ARRA state-level set-aside funds.

As stated elsewhere in the state's plan modification, all specific service strategies employed at state's One-Stop Career Centers, including Recovery Act funded initiatives, are determined at the local level under the direction of the regional workforce board. However, state policy sets forth the general principles to guide local efforts and often the state provides tools to facilitate and support specific initiatives

In the case of reemployment services targeted to addressing the needs of unemployment compensation claimants and exhaustees, the state has issued guidance outlining state reemployment policy and the principles set forth in TEGL 14-08 related to the Recovery Act. This guidance requires each region to do the following at a minimum:

- Develop a written RES plan (for both formula and ARRA funds).
- Incorporate strategies in the local RES plan to address Frontline Walk-Ins and RES Intensive customers as defined in the guidance.
- Incorporate the Priority Reemployment Program (PREP) as part of the local RES strategy for the selection of the UC claimants targeted for RES and that for those selected provide, at a minimum, an assessment and orientation service.
- Incorporate in the local RES plan a strategy to ensure that 62.5 percent of the Region's ARRA Wagner-Peyser Program funds are spent on reemployment services.
- If the Region is participating in the REA demonstration program then the plan must include how that program fits into the region's overall RES strategy.

The guidance provides strategies and recommendations to assist the regions in developing their plans for each of the four RES components mentioned above: RES Frontline Walk-ins, RES Intensive Services, PREP, and REA.

As previously noted, the state has provided, or will provide tools to support these local reemployment strategies: the automated interface between the UC system and EFM providing for automatic email notices and the acquisition of Help Wanted Online and the Transferable Occupation Relationship Quotient (TORQ) software to provide local regions assistance in their efforts to assess the needs of, and to counsel with RES clients. Also, now that the state has begun providing Recovery Act related extended benefits, the state will be modifying the UI interface to tag in EFM those claimants who qualify for, or apply for extended benefits and the guidance directs the regions to include this group as one group targeted for intensive reemployment services.

The guidance also provides the regions with an assessment tool that will enable local staff to separate claimants into categories for tiers of service and encourages them to use this or a similar tool as part of their plans. The categories for tiers of service are: Tier I - Job Ready Claimants; Tier II – Claimants Needing Job Search Assistance; Tier III – Claimants Needing Skills Training or Skills Transferability Analysis; and Tier IV – Claimants Needing Assessments, Intensive Services, and Training.

Though reemployment services are integrated with Wagner-Peyser and other partner programs, the state has established a comprehensive outreach effort unique to RES and in following the state's guidance local RES plans will include outreach, assessment and counseling approaches unique to these clients as well.

With the additional resources provided by the Recovery Act the state will be able to enhance and expand those tools designed to support RES. And with the use of these tools and the additional staff acquired with Recovery Act funds the state's local One-Stop system will be able to provide claimants a greater number of staff-assisted intensive services.

Question IX.C.1.b. Describe how the State will ensure the three-tiered service delivery strategy for labor exchange services for job seekers and employers authorized by the Wagner-Peyser Act includes: (1) self-service, (2) facilitated self-help service, and (3) staff assisted service, and is accessible and available to all customers at the local level. (§112(b)(17)(a)(i).)

In order to ensure that jobs generated through the Recovery Act are accessible and available to all customers, describe how the state will facilitate the listing of such jobs on the State Job Bank.

In Florida, self-services are available to all job seekers and to employers. Services may be accessed from computer workstations at One-Stop Career Centers and personal desktop computers through the Internet. In addition to accessing information electronically, customers can choose to receive information in more traditional forms such as printed material which will be available at One-Stop Career Centers.

The Wagner-Peyser component of EFM consists of a self-registration portion for the job seeker and the employer, as well as input of a job order by an employer and the ability of a job seeker to search for jobs on the system. Staff input on the self-registration portion consists of determining whether an employer registration is valid and correcting any problem with a job order prior to approving for public view. All jobs generated as a result of ARRA will be listed and advertised in the state's automated EFM system. The employer must register in EFM and their registration must be approved in order to post job orders in the system. After the employer's registration is approved, all job orders for the employer will be posted in EFM by staff in the One-Stop Career Centers or they may be posted directly in EFM by the employer. Job seekers have access to EFM to perform job searches and may register in the system and perform self referrals or staff assisted referrals on the job orders in EFM. EFM records all referrals on the job orders.

Resource rooms are made available in each One-Stop Career Center for self-service. These rooms are equipped with computers, printers, copiers, fax machines, telephones, etc., for use by the self-reliant job seeker to help with job search activities.

Facilitated self-help services will also be available for job seekers at the One-Stop Career Centers, such as assessment and career counseling, job matching services and group activities such as job clubs and workshops. To some extent, group services will be available to the general population with some activities designed specifically for customers eligible for specific programs.

For employers, group activities, training and seminars may be offered on topics such as unemployment insurance, dislocated worker programs, and labor laws. The One-Stop Career Center may also be used for recruitment, initial screening, testing, etc., of applicant groups. One-Stop Career Centers may also house Employer Services Centers which provide a resource center for businesses to use like a branch office providing a desk, phone, fax, copier, etc.

The State will assure that these services are provided by means of the State's monitoring tool that was developed which will assess each Regional Workforce Board's Wagner-Peyser Program. The tool will be designed to determine that all three levels of services are being used.

To ensure that all tiers are available and accessible to all customers at the local level, the State implemented a Mystery Shopper program based on the national initiative. This program was designed to determine factors such as: Both a job seeker role and an employer role will be assumed by the Mystery Shoppers for each of the One-Stop Career Centers selected. A specific set of barriers will be developed for the job seeker role and a specific set of requirements will be developed for the employer

role. Additionally, Florida adds supplementary questions to the federally required “Customer Service” questions to assess the quality of the services that are being given to job seekers and employers.

Pursuant to Florida law and policy, the funding of One-Stop core services and intensive services is to be determined by local memoranda of understanding between the One-Stop partners, and no one partner is presumed to be the sole source of funding for any of the core services. Coordination of services available at local One-Stops is documented through the local memorandum of understanding. Each required and optional partner is party to the local agreement and specifies the services that will be available including the method to share costs of operating the system. The provision of core services is a shared cost and does not rely solely on Wagner-Peyser funds authorized under WIA. Wagner-Peyser funds are used to provide employment services by state merit system staff in the One-Stop Delivery System sites. The Agency for Workforce Innovation, as the state’s administrative entity is responsible for the unemployment compensation and public employment service programs. The employment services, funded by Wagner-Peyser and the unemployment compensation program, are combined at the local level in the One-Stop Delivery System sites.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Services

Question IX.C.1.a. Describe state strategies and policies to ensure adults and dislocated workers have universal access to the minimum required core services as described in Section 134(d)(2).

Core Services: Pursuant to Florida law and policy, the funding of One-Stop core services and intensive services is to be determined by local memoranda of understanding between the One-Stop partners, and no one partner is presumed to be the sole source of funding for any of the core services.

Additionally, the Workforce Investment Act, as amended, requires core services to be provided electronically, utilizing existing systems and public libraries. The Workforce Investment Act, as amended, directs the Florida Department of Management Services to coordinate a plan among agencies for a One-Stop Career Center Electronic Network to assure that a uniform method is used to determine eligibility for and management of services provided by agencies conducting workforce development activities. The Department is also to develop strategies to allow access to the databases and information management systems of these Florida agencies in order to link information in those databases with the State’s One-Stop Career Centers: the Agency for Workforce Innovation’s Unemployment Compensation System and Job Service System; the Department of Education’s Student Financial Assistance System; and, the Department of Children and Families (FLORIDA) System. Florida’s Workforce Innovation Act of 2000 continues to require the provision of services electronically to the fullest extent possible.

In the fall of 2001, a One-Stop System Tracking (OSST) information technology system was implemented statewide. It provides web-based case management, reporting, and other electronic functionalities for serving TANF and FSET clients. In January 2007, WFI, working in conjunction with AWI, implemented the Employ Florida Marketplace system for the WIA and Wagner-Peyser programs. The OSST system and the EFM interface provide an integrated data collection system.

Providing core services electronically does not preclude the provision of staff assisted labor exchange services under the Wagner-Peyser Act, but is rather intended as an expansion and enhancement of these services. Job seekers will continue to be assisted through job registration, employment counseling, and job referral by Agency for Workforce Innovation staff. As part of the registration process, applicants’ skills, knowledge, and abilities are assessed to determine the appropriate jobs to which they may be referred. Agency staff also suggests training programs that would best serve the needs of those applicants who are not job ready, as well as, community supportive services.

In Florida, self-services are available to all job seekers and to employers. Services may be accessed from computer workstations at One-Stop Career Centers and personal desktop computers through the Internet. In addition to accessing information electronically, customers can choose to receive information in more traditional forms such as printed material which will be available at One-Stop Career Centers.

All specific service strategies employed at Florida's One-Stop Career Centers, including Recovery Act funded initiatives, are determined at the local level under the direction of the Regional Workforce Board. However, state policy established by the Governor, the Florida Legislature, and Workforce Florida, Inc., and guidance issued by the Agency for Workforce Innovation guide the local One-Stop system effort.

Preference for public assistance and low income individuals is established in state legislation drafted to implement the Workforce Investment Act and is state policy. Accordingly local planning instructions direct the state's 24 Regional Workforce Boards to design core service strategies and procedures ensuring that these preferences are extended. The results of these efforts are also monitored and evaluated at the state level. Workforce Florida's balanced scorecard report evaluates levels of service for groups with special needs on a quarterly basis to determine if such groups are adequately represented among all participants served.

Additionally, services to low income individuals are facilitated by the state's organizational structure that places the key partner programs under the direction of the Regional Workforce Boards and the management of the local One-Stop operators. (See the more detailed response to Question IX.C.1.c) As mentioned previously, this is facilitated by the electronic network and the integrated case management services previously described in this section.

As a result of these efforts, 26,991 low income individuals received WIA adult services during the program year ending June 30, 2009. This represents 55.8% of all WIA adults.

The Employ Florida Marketplace (EFM) Florida's integrated intake, case management, and management information system also supports priority of service for low income adults. All One-Stop Career Center program participants are initially registered in EFM either directly or via interface with other systems such as Unemployment Compensation and the One-Stop System Tracking (OSST) for TANF. The EFM registration collects demographic and basic eligibility necessary to identify the low income individuals for priority services funded with ARRA funds as well as services provided with regular local funds.

Florida has also initiated efforts to make all its citizens aware of the services available to them that can now be increased with the State's receipt of ARRA funds. The Florida Office of Economic Recovery has established a website www.flarecovery.com to make all the state's citizens aware of programs and services available at the federal, state, and local level. This web site includes a link to EFM and provides information regarding those programs where low income individuals are given priority of service.

Given the state's well established and long-term priority of service policy, our integrated approach to service delivery and our intensifying outreach efforts, occasioned by the current economic situation and the receipt of ARRA funding, we have not seen the need to develop any additional state-level strategies or directives aimed at increasing services to low income individuals. We fully expect to see an increase in the number of low income individuals served as a result of the use of ARRA funding to increase these on-going efforts.

Question IX.C.1.c. Describe how the state will integrate resources provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act and WIA Title I for adults and dislocated workers, as well as resources provided by required One-Stop partner programs, to deliver core services. (Section 112(b)(17)(a)(i).)

It is Florida's objective is to maintain a seamless and fully integrated service delivery system that ensures availability of all workforce services to our customers with focus on the targeted populations such as veterans, individuals with disabilities, youth aging out of foster care, out-of-school youth, children of incarcerated parents, migrant youth, native American youth, youth with disabilities, military spouses, migrant and seasonal farm workers, older workers and others.

The planning process offers a vehicle for the Governor and the State Workforce Investment Board (WFI) to set forth policy and expectations for achieving the goal of integrated service delivery systems while overcoming administrative challenges and to foster a policy environment conducive to full integration of funding and facility usage.

Pursuant to Florida law and policy, the funding of One-Stop core services and intensive services is to be determined by local memoranda of understanding between the One-Stop partners, and no one partner is presumed to be the sole source of funding for any of the core services.

Coordination of services available at local One-Stops is documented through the local memorandum of understanding. Each required and optional partner is party to the local agreement and specifies the services that will be available including the method to share costs of operating the system. The provision of core services is a shared cost and does not rely solely on Wagner-Peyser funds authorized under WIA. Wagner-Peyser funds are used to provide employment services by state merit system staff in the One-Stop Delivery System sites. The Agency for Workforce Innovation, as the state administrative entity is responsible for the unemployment compensation and public employment service programs. The employment services, funded by Wagner-Peyser and the unemployment compensation program are combined at the local level in the One-Stop Delivery System sites.

All Wagner-Peyser services, WIA services, the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA), the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program (FSET) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Welfare Transition Program, and other partner programs are integrated to the maximum extent possible in Florida's One-Stop Career Centers. The programs just named come under the direction of the regional workforce board and their program staff is managed by the One-Stop operator to facilitate the seamless delivery of services to One-Stop customers.

The Employ Florida Marketplace (EFM) serves as the case management and management information system for Wagner-Peyser, TAA, WIA and special grants. Additionally, via interfaces with the One-Stop System Tracking (OSST) information system serving the TANF and FSET programs and the unemployment compensation system all these customers are also automatically registered for services in EFM. The integrated case management of customers receiving services from these various partner programs is further facilitated by a waiver originally approved by USDOL in 2005. This waiver allows One-Stop center staff funded by WIA or Wagner-Peyser funds to perform participant intake and eligibility determination for other supportive workforce programs such TANF, FSET and Medicaid. This integration facilitates the outreach to low individuals and other groups having preference for services and has definitely resulted to increased numbers receiving services.

The same integrated approach will apply to the increased Wagner-Peyser and WIA funding the state has received through the ARRA. The flexibility extended the regional boards that allows them bring local

partners together to design the best mix of services for their area will also apply to the ARRA resources. State planning guidance has been issued to inform them of the provisions of TEGL 14-08 and directing them to modify their plans to describe how ARRA funds will be integrated with Wagner-Pesyer and WIA funds and directing them to submit a plan that will provide for a significant portion of the funding to be directed toward services for low income and low skilled individuals in need of training. The expectation has also been communicated that these individuals will receive a greater number of services with the additional staff and training funds acquired through the ARRA. At the state level, these efforts will be tracked to monitor the expected increases in the number of individuals served and the numbers of individuals referred to or placed in training.

Question IX.C.3.a. Describe the Governor’s vision for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals including the investment of WIA Title I funds and the leveraging of other funds and resources. (Section 112(b)(17)(a)(i).)

In its response, the state should describe how the state will increase training access and opportunities for individuals, including the investment of WIA Title I funds and Recovery Act funds, and the leveraging of other funds and resources. How will the state use contracts with institutions of higher education and other training providers (as described in Section 6 of this TEGL) to maximize funds to the greatest benefit?

The Governor’s vision in Florida for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals is anchored in state statute that requires that fifty percent (50%) of the formula funds for adults and dislocated workers must be allocated to individual training accounts unless the local board obtains a waiver from WFI. This requirement affirms the vision of the Governor that a majority of funding must go for direct training related costs. Costs that qualify under the 50% rule will include all customer service costs associated with the Individual Training Account (ITA) program such as tuition, fees and materials, ITA performance payments, and the costs of assessment, career planning, and case management. This rule will apply to both regular formula and ARRA funding. The vision of the Governor is that the additional funding resources result in more individuals getting training and obtaining employment.

The cost of all forms of basic literacy training will be included, as well as the value of any Pell Grant coordinated with an ITA. The total value of such Pell awards will be added to the local Regional Workforce Board’s adult and dislocated worker allocations in the computation of compliance with the 50% rule. This policy provides an incentive for Regional Workforce Boards to coordinate and leverage other funding resources such as Pell Grants.

The increased emphasis on training and the new emphasis on emerging “green” jobs will require that the State and Regional Workforce Boards work with existing training providers to develop the training that is needed for individuals to obtain the new “green” jobs. Workforce Florida has already taken a huge step in investing state-level funding and obtaining state general revenue support for the establishment of several “Banner Centers” that are tasked with working with Industry to develop new training curricula for new and emerging occupations. The current funding crisis faced by public educational institutions including community colleges and universities provide an incentive for them to partner with the workforce community to tap into that funding resource. The new flexibility to pay for class size projects can be used as an effective marketing tool to get existing training provider to revised current program to offer more short-term results or establish new programs where there are none.

The Governor is committed to increasing training opportunities to individuals through alternate delivery vehicles such as On-the-Job-Training (OJT) and customized training and local Regional Workforce

Boards are encouraged to develop local partnerships with community businesses and industry as well as encouraging economic development in their respective areas. Final guidance [AWI FG 00-009](#) was issued on May, 30 2000 providing service providers guidance related to OJT contracts. The coordination of workforce training programs with economic development strategies as envisioned by the Florida workforce legislation begins at the Regional Workforce Board local level and is coordinated at the state level by the WFI Board functioning as the state's HRIC board. To further the encouragement of Regional Workforce Boards to consider OJT and customized training strategies the State has requested waivers that will allow the reimbursement of up to 90% of the cost of an OJT and to decrease the percentage that an employer must pay for customized training to a low of 10% for very small employers. This strategy can help in those emerging "green" occupations when traditional classroom training is very limited or non-existent.

State Strategies - Institutions of Higher Education (IHE)

State-level contracts with institutions of higher education are components of Florida's strategy for increasing training access and opportunities. The Banner Centers identified in our response above have constituted the major contracts funded with state-level formula funds.

From a concept that formally surfaced in Florida's economic development strategic plan - *Roadmap to Florida's Future* – Workforce Florida was charged with serving as a catalyst for developing workforce talent. These Workforce Education Cluster Centers, later named Employ Florida Banner Centers, were created. They are designed to serve as the leading resource and focal point to address the state's economic priority of increasing talent in high-skill, high-wage targeted sectors. These Centers align the local workforce boards and educational entities, primarily community colleges, under the following guiding principles.

- ❖ Become the intersection between education and businesses in Florida's targeted industry sectors.
- ❖ Enhance existing industry knowledge as the **statewide nexus** for information related to the workforce needs of a targeted industry.
- ❖ Create industry-driven workforce development products and services valued by businesses designed to train a globally competitive workforce.
- ❖ Support the pipeline development needs of the industry from entry-level to advanced workers.
- ❖ Deliver workforce development products, services, training, and access to certifications valued by industry.
- ❖ Expand delivery through partnerships with industry and other educational facilities across the state; secondary and postsecondary, public and private.
- ❖ Promote and support economic development in a targeted industry throughout the state.
- ❖ Utilize the value of products and services developed to create income/revenue streams.
- ❖ Apply a business model for becoming a self-sustaining entity within five years.

Banner Centers are charged with becoming a **statewide, go-to resource** for cutting-edge training for entry-level and experienced workers who need to upgrade their skills in high-value sectors such as biotechnology, aviation/aerospace, health sciences, logistics and distribution, construction, energy, alternative energy, digital media, agri-science, water resources and manufacturing. Each Banner Center is led by a Florida community college or university, using existing infrastructure to serve as its home base, designed to become new industry focused business units within the college.

Banner Centers partner with industry in targeted sectors to identify training needs and, among other things, create new curricula. A key objective is to create timely and relevant training that can be shared across multiple educational institutions for access by businesses in other areas of the state, thus

reducing duplication. In other words, you can create it in one place and use it in another without another institution having to start from the beginning to address identical industry training needs in its community. Currently, there are 11 Banner Centers involving at least 27 different educational partners.

With the receipt of ARRA funding contracts with institutions of higher education continue as part of the state's strategy. Examples of recent awards for projects made to institutions of higher education include:

1. University of South Florida (funded with ARRA funds) - An Entrepreneurial Boot Camp designed to work with regional partners to provide a mechanism to identify regions within the State where entrepreneurs, potential startups, and early stage businesses can benefit from an organized process to maximize probability of success and increase job creation.
2. University of Central Florida - Photonics Cluster (funded with state level formula funds) - Development of necessary criteria for certifying & recertifying photonics technicians and establishment of the process for maintaining, updating and administering the certification program to meet the needs of Florida Industry.
3. University of Florida (funded with state level formula funds) - Center of Excellence for Regenerative Health Biology - (CERHB) - Pilot internship program to match employers with potential employees for eventual full-time permanent employment.

Question IX.A.5. What models/templates/approaches does the state recommend and/or mandate for service delivery in the One-Stop Career Centers? For example, do all One-Stop Career Centers have a uniform method of organizing their service delivery to business customers? Is there a common individual assessment process utilized in every One-Stop Career Center? Are all One-Stop Career Centers required to have a resource center that is open to anyone? (Sections 112(b)(2) and 111(d)(2).)

In its response, the state should describe its models/templates/approaches for service delivery in the One-Stop Career Centers, particularly whether the state is adjusting its approach to delivery increased levels of services with funds received under the Recovery Act.

- *Do all One-Stop Career Centers have a uniform method of organizing their service delivery to business customers?*
- *Is there a common individual assessment process utilized in every One-Stop Career Center?*
- *What approaches will be used to ensure funds are targeted to those most in need, including low-income, public assistance recipients, persons with disabilities, etc.*
- *How will states streamline the sequence of service to facilitate individual access to needed services and training?*

Information on Florida's workforce service delivery system policy and operations is provided in several sections of this plan. However, the following is intended to sequence the services provided to customers in the One-Stop environment.

The services provided by the required and optional One-Stop partners are coordinated and made available through the One-Stop system through local contacts, collaboration and memoranda of

understanding (MOU), typically worked out at staff level, but sometimes addressed as planning/policy issues by the Regional Workforce Board's Board of Directors, that include representation by the required and optional partners. The MOUs are facilitated by state-level Partnership Agreements between WFI, AWI, and a number of state agencies, programs and organizations including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Children and Families, Department of Corrections, Department of Juvenile Justice, Governor's Council on Indian Affairs, Division of Blind Services, Able Trust, and the Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, etc.

The Workforce Investment Act, as amended, requires core services to be provided electronically, utilizing existing systems and public libraries. The Florida Department of Management Services coordinates a plan among agencies for a One-Stop Career Center Electronic Network to assure that a uniform method is used to determine eligibility for and management of services provided by agencies conducting workforce development activities. The Florida Department of Management Services is responsible for also developing strategies to allow access to the databases and information management information systems of these Florida agencies in order to link information in those databases with the State's One-Stop Career Centers, the Agency for Workforce Innovation (Unemployment Compensation System and Job Service System), the Department of Education (Student Financial Assistance System), and the Department of Children and Families (FLORIDA) System).

Providing core services electronically does not preclude the provision of staff assisted labor exchange services under the Wagner-Peyser Act, but is rather intended as an expansion and enhancement of these services. Job seekers will continue to be assisted through job registration, employment counseling, and job referral by Agency for Workforce Innovation staff. As part of the registration process, applicants' skills, knowledge, and abilities are assessed to determine the appropriate jobs to which they may be referred. Agency staff also suggests training programs that would best serve the needs of those applicants who are not job ready, particularly recipients of public assistance and other low income individuals, as well as, community supportive services.

Coordination of services available at local One-Stop Career Centers is documented through the local memorandum of understanding. Each required and optional partner is party to the local agreement and specifies the services that will be available including the method to share costs of operating the system. The provision of core services is a shared cost and does not rely solely on Wagner-Peyser funds authorized under WIA. Wagner-Peyser funds are used to provide employment services by state merit system staff in the One-Stop Delivery System sites. The Agency for Workforce Innovation, as the state's administrative entity is responsible for the unemployment compensation and public employment service programs. The employment services, funded by Wagner-Peyser and the unemployment compensation program, are combined at the local level in the One-Stop Delivery System sites.

The State of Florida is committed to focus on those skill gaps identified by the needs of its employers and this will continue to be a high priority. Under existing legislation, the Regional Workforce Boards have the policy and service design authority for all local services including services to employers and as such, they take the lead in working with the local employer community including determination of the needs of this community. It is anticipated that surveys and focus groups will be conducted with employers who do use the One-Stop Delivery System services to continually improve services, and with employers who do not use the One-Stop Delivery System services in order to identify needed services. Local input from chambers of commerce, economic development councils, and other organizations will continue to shape the level and quality of services provided to employers.

Workforce Florida, Inc., will continue to encourage that an aggressive, coordinated outreach program be used to deliver services to employers. Strategies to be encouraged include the formation of marketing teams knowledgeable of all services/programs offered in the One-Stop site and proactive

approaches to assist employers in filling their job vacancies. Workforce Florida, Inc., will work with the Regional Workforce Boards by providing guidance to them for establishing procedures to inform the employers of Florida of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and establishing how this employer oriented program will be provided and managed in the One-Stop Delivery System sites. WFI will consult with the Agency for Workforce Innovation on the method for streamlining the administration of this program in the One-Stop Delivery System sites with the goal being to increase employer participation. The Regional Workforce Boards are required to include this local administrative procedure in their plan of service. Mass recruiting agreements, job fairs, and new business developments are strategies that may be used. Further, increased use of the Internet is also encouraged to enhance service delivery to both the employer and applicants.

The Agency for Workforce Innovation is one of the principal agencies for the service to employers in Florida. As a major partner in the State's One-Stop system by agreement with the Regional Workforce Boards at the One-Stop Delivery System sites, agency staff will assist employers in filling job openings by referring job seekers from the agency's job applicant files. Some AWI staff working in the One-Stop sites are designated to perform employer marketing functions. Marketing Representatives conduct employer contact activities to solicit job openings. Job orders received are placed into the Job Bank System. Referrals are made to employers based on applicants' skills, knowledge, and abilities.

In its basic labor exchange system, Florida ensures that all One-Stop Delivery System sites provide mandated preference and priority of services to veteran persons. All veteran persons are identified as veterans at the initial point of contact which includes physical locations, websites, and other virtual service delivery resources. Veterans and eligible persons will be made aware of types of services available under priority of service and eligibility requirements for those Department of Labor funded programs and or services.

Apprenticeships and other on-the-job-training (OJT) type programs are strongly encouraged throughout the State as alternative methods of skills training. Many of the youth grants created by the Youth Development Council using statewide 15 percent funding encourages and incorporate apprenticeships as valuable deliverables through the request for proposal process.

The Governor is committed to increasing training opportunities to individuals through the specific delivery vehicles of OJT and customized training by encouraging local Regional Workforce Boards to develop local partnerships with community businesses and industry as well as encouraging economic development in their respective areas.

The coordination of workforce training programs with economic development strategies as envisioned by the Florida workforce legislation begins at the regional workforce local level and is coordinated at the state level by the WFI Board functioning as the State's HRIC board. One of three principle tenets of Florida's workforce strategy is the High Skills/High Wages committee. This component is the state's strategy for aligning education and training programs with high-paying, high-demand occupations that advance individuals' careers, build a more skilled workforce, and enhance Florida's efforts to attract and expand job-creating business. Occupational demand and the alignment of educational training programs require a coordinated effort by Regional Workforce Boards and local educational institutions. Annually, occupations and associated training programs are reviewed to insure continued growth and demand within the respective region, with declining occupations being removed and emerging demand occupations being added to the list of approved occupations. Incentives are provided to educational institutions based upon actual performance which is measured in terms of program completion, enrollments of specific hard to serve populations, and successful job placements for programs and occupations identified by the workforce estimating process.

Productive business partnerships are essential to training Florida's workforce to meet the current and future needs of diverse business sectors. The workforce system has successfully partnered with business and industry but our current employer penetration/usage metrics indicates that tremendous opportunity exists to develop a systematic, mutually beneficial approach to developing business partnerships. Both business and workforce have a vested interest in partnering, but the onus is on the workforce system to effectively communicate and market the value of the partnership. Ease of access to Florida's workforce services via the Employ Florida Marketplace is just a start. Seven strategies to improve this partnership with business customers have been successful and will greatly enhance the employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for all job seekers.

The State's objective is to maintain a seamless and fully integrated service delivery system that ensures availability of all workforce services to our customers with focus on the targeted populations such as veterans, individuals with disabilities, youth aging out of foster care, out-of-school youth, children of incarcerated parents, migrant youth, native American youth, youth with disabilities, military spouses, migrant and seasonal farm workers, older workers and others.

The planning process offers a vehicle for the Governor and the State Workforce Investment Board (WFI) to set forth policy and expectations for achieving the goal of integrated service delivery systems while overcoming administrative challenges and to foster a policy environment conducive to full integration of funding and facility usage

In order to enhance integration through the One-Stop Career System with improved service delivery and increased efficiencies, the mission of the Workforce Estimating Conference (WEC) is to identify high skill / high wage / high demand occupations, and to make job training market-based to meet the needs of business (economic development). The WEC develops the official state demand occupations list based on industry and occupational employment projections and wages prepared by the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics Center, to meet the challenges of training the workforce to compete in today's economy.

One-Stop Career Centers- Uniform Delivery Strategies

The State has issued policy guidance to the Regional Workforce Boards that detail the methods/processes for establishing a uniform approach for service delivery. Individuals entering One-Stop Career Centers receive common services and assessments. Based on the assessments and services provided, a determination is made to refer individuals to workforce programs.

The state's provision of public labor exchange services is based on the general concept that the basic purpose of the system is to bring job seekers and employers together, and provide those services in an effective and efficient manner.

The State has issued guidance to the local regions that detail the methods/processes for establishing a uniform approach for service delivery. Although there is no statewide, common individual assessment tool used, there is a common assessment process that is used by each of the 24 Regional Workforce Boards. The State requires that an individual assessment tool be used by all 24 Regional Workforce Boards. The assessments conducted must be relevant to the customer's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. Additionally, local planning instructions require that each of the 24 Regional Workforce Boards describe its service delivery structure in the One-Stop Career Centers. Included in this process is a description of the Regional Workforce Boards business processes, counseling, testing, occupational

and labor market information, targeting of the most in need, and streamlining of services to more efficiently serve their customers.

The common practice in the State's One-Stop Career Centers is to evaluate the assessment results with the customer. After the evaluation by staff, an individual service strategy/employment plan is developed jointly by staff and the customer that identifies the plan of action and/or the next level or steps the customer must take to accomplish their employment goals. Center resources are then offered. Self-services are available to all job seekers and employers. Services may be accessed from computer workstations at One-Stop Career Centers and personal desktop computers through the Internet. In addition to accessing information electronically, customers can choose to receive information in more traditional forms such as printed material which will be available at One-Stop Career Centers.

Approaches used to ensure funds are targeted to those most in need, including low-income, public assistance recipients, persons with disabilities, etc.

Priority of service is given to low income individuals, public assistance recipients, persons with disabilities, veterans, etc. when conducting local outreach and marketing. Individuals are assessed in the One-Stop Career Centers to determine levels of assistance needed. Based on these assessments, adults and dislocated workers are provided training and supportive services leading to the acquisition of new skills.

As noted in previous sections, the state has taken the approach of broadly marketing the workforce services available as a result of the recovery act through the establishment of dedicated websites and links to other Recovery related websites that provide the general public with information on the services available and the targeting of those services to particular groups such as low-income adults. Targeted questions and answers are included on the Agency's website that inform potential participants of services available and who is eligible for what services. This information includes the requirement that low-income individuals must be provided priority of service under the Adult Program. Florida has also submitted a request to extend its current waiver that allows 100% transfer of funds between the adult and dislocated worker program. This waiver will allow the regional boards the flexibility to transfer, if needed, additional funding to serve more low-income adults.

State Strategies – To streamline the sequence of service to facilitate individual access to needed services and training

The State provides tools to facilitate and support service delivery and sequencing of services at local One-Stop Career Centers. Florida has established minimum criteria for the delivery of a demand-driven, integrated system for all One-Stops including training/competency-tested qualifications for One-Stop staff, as well as other minimum standards expected in all local areas. The minimum One-Stop Career Center criteria include standards for mandated services offered and provided.

The State's One-Stop Career Centers use a triage approach to identify and address the needs of individuals accessing services. This triage approach encompasses a tiered level of services (core, intensive, and training services) based on the needs of the customer. To maximize resources because of the increased numbers of individuals requiring workforce services, the state required through specific planning instructions, that Regional Workforce Boards evaluate the need for individual services based on a customer's need during the assessment process. This will form the general framework around which service delivery would be organized, statewide. The approach is to assess an individual's needs and depending on the results of the assessment, the customer is provided services on a needed basis. As noted previously, the customer may not need to go through layers of service to determine a need.

Youth Services

Question IX.E.1. Describe the state's strategy for providing comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth, including those most in need. (Section 112(b)(18).)

In responding to this question, the state should include the following:

- *Describe the anticipated program design for the WIA Youth funds provided under the Recovery Act. Include in this description a program design for both younger, in-school, and older or out-of-school youth (including the 22-24 year olds that can be served with Recovery Act funds.)*

Florida will use the majority of these funds to operate expanded summer youth employment opportunities during the summer of 2009, and provide as many youth as possible with summer employment opportunities and work experiences throughout the year, while ensuring that these summer employment opportunities and work experiences are of the highest quality. Additionally, Florida will put a special emphasis on developing work experiences and other activities that expose youth to opportunities in "green" educational and career pathways. Florida plans on serving both younger youth "in-school" and older "out-of-school" youth populations with these funds as well as encouraging the Regional Workforce Boards to target those 22-24 year old youth who are now eligible for the WIA Youth funds provided under the Recovery Act.

- *Will the state use the Recovery Act funds to fund only a 2009 summer youth program or some combination of 2009 and 2010? If using the funds over two summers, what percentage of funds does the state anticipate using for the first summer?*

Florida will use the majority of the WIA Youth funds provided under the Recovery Act to operate expanded summer youth employment opportunities during the summer of 2009; however, a few of Florida's Regional Workforce Boards have indicated that they plan on operating an additional summer youth program in 2010 using the remaining WIA Youth funds provided under the Recovery Act. Florida anticipates spending at least 80% of the ARRA youth funds in 2009.

- *If using the funds for summer employment opportunities, describe how the state will deliver summer youth employment opportunities. Will the state operate the program or allocate the funds?*

Summer employment services are delivered through the state's network of One-Stop career centers operated by the state's 24 Regional Workforce Boards. The funds are allocated to the Regional Workforce Boards.

- *Describe the types of worksites that will be developed for summer employment, including a mix of public and private sector work experiences, and how the state will ensure that meaningful work experiences will be developed.*

Florida, through its Regional Workforce Boards, will develop both public and private sector work experiences for summer youth employment. The State received and approved summer employment plans from each Regional Workforce Board as well as conducted monitoring visits to each local board including monitoring of a sample of the summer employment worksites.

Through Florida's 24 Regional Workforce Boards, each area has the flexibility, within federal and state guidelines, to establish the type of worksites that meet the specific needs of the community. For example, in a rural area of Florida where unemployment is at an all time high, the perception of youth

taking real jobs away from competing adults was a concern and therefore the summer employment included on-site work readiness training using only public and non-profit organizations. This differs from a more urban area of Florida in which all summer employment opportunities consisted of private for-profit employers. Each local area has developed a specific strategy to ensure that they offer meaningful work experiences.

Florida's statewide strategy mirrors the stated intent of the Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 14-08, which was communicated to the Regional Workforce Boards via [Communiqué AWI 09-03](#) on March 18, 2009. As allowed in the TEG, Florida's Regional Workforce Boards will develop expanded local youth programs using Recovery Act funds which will provide paid summer jobs and work experiences for youth, enhancing the year round WIA component and thereby increasing the numbers of targeted low-income youth served. The state of Florida launched the Employ Florida Healthcare Workforce Initiative which is funding provided for projects in four (4) Regional Workforce Boards which are partnering with health care organizations to provide training for both unemployed and incumbent workers in health care occupations such as RN's LPN's, CNA's, Medical Assistants, Home Health Aides, and Pharmacy Technicians.

Florida's strategy as it relates to developing work experiences with private/private non profit entities mirrors the content of Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 14-08, and allowed the local Regional Workforce Boards to develop work experiences with both public and private employers as they deemed appropriate. As previously stated, in a rural area of Florida where unemployment is at an all time high, the perception of youth taking real jobs away from competing adults was a concern and therefore the summer employment included on-site work readiness training using only public and non-profit organizations. This differs from a more urban area of Florida in which all summer employment opportunities consisted of private for-profit employers. Regional Workforce Boards have been asked to articulate their strategy in their local plan and the State has followed-up via monitoring.

Florida has clearly identified growth economic sectors within its plan, some of which are: Green Jobs; STEM; and Florida's Healthcare Initiative.

- *Describe the state's policy for developing the mix of classroom versus worksite time in a summer employment opportunity. Describe the state's policy for determining that summer employment opportunities are connected to academic and/or occupational learning and the types of connections that will be utilized.*

The State of Florida allows its 24 Regional Workforce Boards full flexibility in determining the scope in which they will operate their summer youth programs. By doing so, each Regional Workforce Board has the ability to react to the specific needs of their local area as determined by their local workforce board. This flexibility includes local policies and strategies for determining that summer employment opportunities are connected to academic and/or occupational learning and the types of connections that will be utilized as well as any policies or strategies regarding activities that support out-of-school youth during summer and/or non-summer months, such as supportive services, needs-based payments, or day-care. Local areas also have the flexibility to determine which of the ten Workforce Investment Act (WIA) youth program elements they provide during the summer program.

Examples of local work experiences include:

- Workforce Alliance enrolled 1,000 eligible young adults in a wide variety of employer sites in Palm Beach County including, but not limited, to the healthcare and information technology sector;

- The Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, operating in conjunction with the Collier County School District, served 150 youth, introducing them to the world of health and construction careers;
 - The Eastside High School Institute of Culinary Arts summer program was just one of the several internship options for over 500 youth in Alachua and Bradford counties;
 - The Tampa Bay WorkForce Alliance developed the Employment and Leadership Exploration program to provide worksite experiences and classroom training to more than 700 youth. Participants were hired by manufacturing companies, in addition to non-profit and community-based organizations;
 - In the Gulf Coast Workforce region youth were trained and placed into green jobs and internships;
 - Citrus, Marion and Levy counties partnered with over 100 business sites serving 300 youth. The younger youth participated in a simulated workplace where they built a computer, hydrogen powered car, experimented with solar energy models and participated in learning activities at related businesses;
 - And in the six-county Northeast region of Florida, the Regional Workforce Board partnered with a variety of business, government, and non-profit organizations to provide worksites for youth. Work experiences ranged from child care in summer camps to recycling and weatherization projects.
- *Describe any policies or strategies that the state is implementing to ensure that local areas implement activities that support out-of-school youth during summer and/or non-summer months, such as supportive services, needs-based payments, or day-care.*

The State of Florida allows its 24 Regional Workforce Boards full flexibility in determining the scope in which they will operate their summer youth programs. By doing so, each Regional Workforce Board has the ability to react to the specific needs of their local area as determined by their local workforce board.

Florida will put a special emphasis on developing work experiences and other activities that expose youth to opportunities in “green” educational and career pathways. Florida will serve both younger youth “in-school” and older “out-of-school” youth populations with these funds as well as encourage its Regional Workforce Boards to target those 22-24 year old youth who are now eligible for the WIA Youth funds provided under the Recovery Act.

Through Florida’s twenty four Regional Workforce Boards, each area has the flexibility, within federal and state guidelines, to establish the level of classroom training that meet the specific needs of the community. Florida’s Regional Workforce Boards have strong existing partnerships with academic partners. For example, in some areas basic skills deficient younger youth are receiving basic skills remediation as part of their summer experience while older youth are primarily focused on employment opportunities.

Through Florida’s 24 Regional Workforce Boards, each area has the flexibility, within federal and state guidelines, to establish the type and amounts of supportive services provided to their youth population. These can differ in types and amounts based on need and the availability of funding. A prime example of the difference in local area funding is the difference between the rural Regional Workforce Boards and the highly populated urban areas. Because each local area has different needs, they are in the best place to make this local determination and therefore establish this as a local policy.

Florida's strategy mirrors that which was communicated in Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 14-08 via [Communiqué AWI 09-03](#), transmitted to all Regional Workforce Boards on March 18, 2009. As allowed in the TEGL, Florida's Regional Workforce Boards will develop local strategies to target out of school youth during summer/non-summer months. Given the state's well established and long-term priority of serving out-of-school youth, we have not seen the need to develop any additional state-level strategies or directives aimed at increasing services to out-of-school youth. We fully expect to see an increase in the number of out-of-school youth served as a result of the use of ARRA funding.

- *Provide the anticipated number of youth to be served with Recovery Act funds, including the anticipated number of summer employment opportunities created with Recovery Act funds.*

The State of Florida expects to serve an estimated 15,000 youth in the summer of 2009. Per the request of the Governor's office, details on Summer Youth programs for each of Florida's 24 Regional Workforce Boards was made available to job seekers and employers. This information can be found on the Governor's Florida Office of Economic Recovery website at: <http://flarecovery.com/>.

Of the targeted 15,000 summer youth that are being served with ARRA funding in the summer of 2009, Florida anticipates that at least 90% will be provided with actual hands on work experience at a work site.

Early Learning: One unique aspect of Florida's commitment to serving Florida's youth is its commitment to early childhood development. Florida has embraced early childhood development as a key component to academic success and foundational to career success and long-term self-sufficiency. To that end, Florida's School Readiness and its Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten programs are housed in the Agency for Workforce Innovation. School Readiness provides early education opportunities while providing subsidized childcare. Florida's Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program is available to all four year olds and provides needed academic and social instruction to help prepare children to start school successfully.

The linkage between Early Learning services, unemployment benefits and workforce are closer than a casual observer might imagine because all of the systems support families and employment. Examples of some of the linkages are: (1) A significant percentage of School Readiness parents are also workforce system customers. Indeed, Regional Workforce Boards are represented on local Early Learning Coalition Boards as critical partners. (2) Families of unemployment compensation customers are being considered as priority customers for the Early Learning program under rules soon to be adopted. This priority will support the efforts of unemployed parents to seek reemployment. (3) Florida's Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) customers are also priority customers to the School Readiness program in order to help support efforts to secure and retain employment.

The recognition of the value of successful early learning strategies as part of the continuum of a successful life of learning is an issue whose time has come. Florida believes this is an increasing valuable workforce strategy.

[Veterans' Priority of Service](#)

Question IX.C.5.b. What policies and strategies does the state have in place to ensure that, pursuant to the Jobs for Veterans Act (P.L.107-288) (38 USC 4215), priority of service is provided to veterans (and certain spouses) who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for all employment and training programs funded by the Department of Labor?

In answering this question, the state should outline the changes to state and local policies and strategies that make them sufficient to meet the requirements of 20 CFR 1010.230, published at 73 Fed. Reg. 78132 on December 19, 2008, of the Jobs for Veterans Act regulations issued on December 19, 2008 implementing priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in Department of Labor job training programs. This includes providing the following information and/or attachments to the State Plan modification:

- *A description of the changes to policies for the delivery of priority of service by the State Workforce Agency or Agencies, Local Workforce Investment Boards, and One-Stop Career Centers for all qualified job training programs delivered through the state's workforce system. The description must include how:
 1. *The state policies ensure that covered persons are identified at the point of entry and given an opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service.*
 2. *The state policies ensure that covered persons are aware of:
 - a. *Their entitlement to priority of service;*
 - b. *The full array of employment, training, and placement services available under priority of service; and*
 - c. *Any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/ or services.***
- *A description or copy of the state's policy requiring Local Workforce Investment Boards to develop and include policies in their Local Plan to implement priority of service for the local One-Stop Career Centers and for service delivery by local workforce preparation and training providers.*

The priority of services for veterans and eligible spouses are set forth by Florida's State Veterans' Program Plan of Service. In the basic labor exchange system, Florida ensures that all One-Stop Delivery System sites provide mandated preference and priority of services to veterans and eligible persons. All veteran and eligible persons are identified as veterans or eligible at the initial point of contact which includes physical locations, websites and other virtual service delivery resources. Veterans and eligible persons will be made aware of the types of services available under the priority of service and eligibility requirements for those Department of Labor funded programs and/ or services.

The State has transmitted the federal law and guidance that requires priority of service for veterans and other eligible persons. The State's on-line case management system (Employ Florida Marketplace) was modified to include a "priority of service" pop-up that informs veterans of their rights and provides local boards and their service providers with the information needed for them to apply priority of service. The local plan instructions require that the local boards develop a local policy that ensures that veterans and other covered persons are identified at the point of entry and given an opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service. All Regional Workforce Boards and One-Stop Career Centers will ensure their two-year local plan provides clear strategies and policies for eligible covered persons with the highest quality of service at every phase of services offered. Policies shall be implemented to ensure that eligible covered persons are aware of:

- Their entitlement to priority of service;
- The full array of programs and services available to them; and
- Any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/or services.

Examples of Priority of Services for Veterans' and eligible spouses include the following:

- Referral of qualified veterans to new job openings, especially Federal Contractor job orders, prior to all non-veteran job referral activity;
- Job Skills Workshops and Job Clubs for veterans;
- Job Fairs for veterans;
- RWB web sites promoting services to veterans;
- Job referrals via e-mail;
- Veterans Stand Downs.

Veterans and eligible spouses registering in the One-Stop Career Center will be briefed on priority of service, the types of services available under priority of service, and eligibility requirements for those programs and/ or services. A proposed EFM service code would provide a means to ensure that veterans or eligible spouses are briefed on priority of services.

Florida supports a proactive, united-front, and well coordinated seamless approach to serving the needs of returning veterans and military families in Florida. The program collaborates with federal and state agencies, and other veterans and military advocates in an effort to identify and serve Florida's returning veterans, military members and their families. This collaboration involves a sharing of information on returning veterans, injured/disabled veterans and military families to ensure they receive the services they need and deserve.

Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) and Disabled Veterans Outreach Specialist (DVOP) staff continues to be cross-oriented and trained in all One-Stop workforce programs as directed by the State Veterans' Services Program Guide. Additionally, the plan requires veteran's staff to provide veterans program training to all One-Stop staff. That training includes priority of service to veterans and eligible staff.

Currently the State Veteran Program Coordinator (SVPC) and Assistant SVPC conduct State-wide veterans' program training to Veteran program staff and regional management staff. The new requirements for priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses have been incorporated in the training. Additionally, the latest changes to the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) to include the expansion of veterans' eligibility as prescribed in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is also discussed. The SVPC and Assistant SVPC will continue to conduct quarterly regional Veterans Training Workshops. State-level Veterans Roundtable forums are conducted quarterly to discuss programmatic issues.

Service Delivery to Targeted Populations

Question IX.C.4.a. Describe the state's strategies to ensure that the full range of employment and training programs and services delivered through the state's One-Stop delivery system are accessible to and will meet the needs of dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, migrant and seasonal farm workers, women minorities, individuals training for nontraditional employment, veterans, public assistance recipients and individuals with multiple barriers to employment (including older individuals, limited English proficiency individuals, and people with disabilities). (Section 112(b)(17)(A)(iv).)

In responding to these questions, the state should:

- *Describe the strategy the state will use to effectively implement the Recovery Act priority of service for low-income individuals and recipients of public assistance under the WIA Adult program.*
- *Indicate how the state will use Wagner-Peyser resources to support individuals with disabilities, such as funding disability program navigators in One-Stop Career Centers, or assisting other targeted populations.*

The One-Stop Career Centers offer a full range of employment and training services, through its One-Stop Career Centers, to meet the needs of a number of targeted populations, including dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, women, minorities, veterans and eligible covered persons, public assistance recipients, individuals with multiple barriers to employment, including those with limited English proficiency, migrant and seasonal farm workers (MSFW), children of MSFWs, as well as others who have been identified with special needs. The Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation facilitates MSFW crew chief registration and testing to provide more access to employment by MSFW's due to greater needs and barriers. Additionally, an MSFW interagency strategy group has also been formed to address MSFW training and employment issues.

The primary policies relating to displaced homemakers, non-traditional training for low-income individuals, women, senior workers, disabled individuals and others with multiple barriers, are to avoid fragmented/non-integrated "set-aside" programs and services, instead making every effort to incorporate such populations into the mainstream of One-Stop services and moving them toward the ARRA objective of providing skilled individuals entering employment that provides self-sufficient employment.

Additionally, partnerships have been developed with the Department of Corrections to develop strategies for reentry programs for ex-offenders to increase employment when the prisoners are released. Ongoing collaboration and coordination with the Department of Children and Families addresses not only employment and training needs of TANF customers, but also youth aging out of foster care. Partnerships with the Department of Juvenile Justice are also ongoing to work with the youth in the juvenile justice system to provide them training and employment assistance as well. The Agency has regularly scheduled meetings with all groups to ensure that projects and activities are on-track and are resulting in positive outcomes.

As Florida's designated resource for online job listings and "virtual One-Stop" services, the Employ Florida Marketplace is actively marketed statewide in direct advertising, co-branding and co-operative advertising and marketing campaigns through the Regional Workforce Boards and other state partners such as the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise Florida, Inc. and a myriad of others. Special icons and links have been created to direct job seekers and targeted customers to the Employ Florida Marketplace from Florida's numerous agency websites and the state's official government services portal/website, myflorida.com. On Governor Crist's own website, a specially designed logo was created with very clear text: "Find A Job – Employ Florida" and a link directly to the employflorida.com website.

A portal, within the Employ Florida Marketplace, titled "Silver Edition" has been created and is targeted specifically to those 50 and older. That website is located at <http://silver.employflorida.com/portals/silver/>. The website provides useful information to job seekers who wish to remain in or return to the workforce beyond retirement. Users can find information about volunteer and paid job openings up to 50 miles from their zip code. The site is linked to a number of resources and other senior websites for those 50 and older. Additional microportals are currently in design to focus on Florida's veterans, recent graduates struggling to find employment, Floridians

seeking “green jobs”, and unemployed Floridians who could benefit from volunteer opportunities clearly linked to career development and skill sharpening.

Describe the strategy the state will use to effectively implement the Recovery Act priority of service for low-income individuals, and recipients of public assistance under the WIA Adult program.

As previously referenced, priority of service is given to low income individuals, public assistance recipients, persons with disabilities, veterans, etc. when conducting local outreach and marketing. Individuals are assessed in the One-Stop Career Centers to determine levels of assistance needed. Based on these assessments, adults and dislocated workers are provided training and supportive services leading to the acquisition of new skills.

The State provided guidance and planning instructions to the Regional Workforce Boards to ensure that the expenditure of ARRA funds is focused on priority of service to low-income individuals and veterans. The Regional Workforce Board are updating their local plans based on guidance from the State. The instructions are designed to elicit the following information:

- Detailed descriptions about local outreach and marketing strategies to inform the general public that ARRA funded programs are available to low-income individuals and veterans.
- The local Supportive Service operating policy that will detail guidelines for providing supportive services, such as gas cards, bus passes, repair of cars, other modes of transportation, child care, clothing allowance, etc. These services will enable enrollees to participate in the WIA program.

The State will require in its request for proposals to fund state-wide innovative programs that the funded service providers submit proposals designed to target low-income individuals and veterans.

Indicate how the state will use Wagner-Peyser resources to support individuals with disabilities, such as funding disability program navigators in One-Stop Career Centers, or assisting other targeted populations.

The One-Stop Career Centers offer a full range of employment and training services, through its One-Stop Career Centers, to meet the needs of a number of targeted populations, including dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, women, minorities, veterans and eligible covered persons, public assistance recipients, individuals with multiple barriers to employment, including those with limited English proficiency, migrant and seasonal farm workers (MSFW), children of MSFWs, as well as others who have been identified with special needs. The Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation facilitate MSFW crew chief registration and testing to provide more access to employment by MSFW's.

The primary policies relating to displaced homemakers, non-traditional training for low-income individuals, women, senior workers, individuals with a disability and others with multiple barriers, are to avoid fragmented/non-integrated “set-aside” programs and services. Instead, we make every effort to incorporate such populations into the mainstream of One-Stop services and moving them toward the ARRA objective of becoming a skilled individual entering employment that provides self-sufficient employment.

Additionally, partnerships have been developed with the Department of Corrections, to develop strategies for reentry programs for ex-offenders to increase employment when the prisoners are released. Ongoing collaboration and coordination with the Department of Children and Families

addresses not only employment and training needs of TANF customers, but also youth aging out of foster care. Partnerships with the Department of Juvenile Justice are also ongoing to work with the youth in the juvenile justice system to provide them training and employment assistance as well. The Agency has regularly scheduled meetings with all groups to ensure that projects and activities are on-track and are resulting in positive outcomes.

As Florida's designated resource for online job listings and "virtual One-Stop services," the Employ Florida Marketplace is actively marketed statewide in direct advertising, co-branding and co-operative advertising and marketing campaigns through the Regional Workforce Boards and other state partners such as the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise Florida, Inc. and myriad others.

Special icons and links have been created to direct job seekers and targeted customers to the Employ Florida Marketplace from Florida's numerous agency websites and the state's official government services portal/website, myflorida.com. On Governor Crist's own website, a specially designed logo was created with very clear text: "Find A Job – Employ Florida" and a link directly to the employflorida.com website.

For those 50 and older, a portal, within the Employ Florida Marketplace, titled "Silver Edition" has been created and is targeted specifically to those 50 and older. That website is located at <http://silver.employflorida.com/portals/silver/>. The website provides useful information to job seekers who wish to remain in or return to the workforce beyond retirement. Users can find information about volunteer and paid job openings up to 50 miles from their zip code. The site is linked to a number of resources and other senior targeted websites.

Additional microportals are currently in design to focus on Florida's veterans, recent graduates struggling to find employment, Floridians seeking "green jobs", and unemployed Floridians who could benefit from volunteer opportunities clearly linked to career development and skill sharpening.

Section III. Operations

Transparency and Public Comment

Instruction from Section II of State Planning Guidance Plan Development Process: Include a description of the process the state used to make the Plan available to the public and the outcomes of the state's review of the resulting public comments. (Section 111(g) and 112(B)(9).)

The Recovery Act places a high priority on transparency. The state should describe:

- *State efforts to promote transparency.*
- *The process used to make the Plan modification available to the public and the outcome of the state's review of resulting public comments.*

The U. S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is requiring Florida and all states, to submit a modification of its current State Plan by June 30, 2009. Several events prompt the requirement for Program Year (PY) 2009 State Plan modifications. The downturn in Florida's economy and its effects upon Florida's workforce prompts Florida to reconsider and reconfigure some of the strategies outlined in the current State Plan in order to serve workers, jobseekers and businesses facing different challenges than at the time the Plan was last updated. Further, the additional WIA and Wagner-Peyser funding made available to Florida through the Recovery Act expands the outreach of workforce development and requires new strategies for increasing the capacity of the workforce system. Lastly, the issuance of the Jobs for Veterans Act Final Rule requires the State Plan to specifically address certain aspects of state policy ensuring priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses.

Steps in the workforce planning process have been collaborative, and fully synchronized with policy, strategic and other directives of the Governor, State legislature, economic development/business leaders, education and other state and local agency and program partners. The Board of Directors of Workforce Florida, Inc., our statutory workforce policy, planning and oversight board (also serving as the State Workforce Investment Board – SWIB per federal WIA law) has been the focal point of collaboration on workforce planning and linkages to key partners. These collaborative efforts have resulted in the identification and implementation of workforce policies and programs that further promote Florida's economy and provide needed job and training opportunities to our workforce customers to ensure they are served in a seamless and transparent manner.

Public Comment

The plan modification was emailed to all Regional Workforce Boards for comment. The plan was also notice on both the Workforce Florida, and the Agency for Workforce Innovation websites. Additionally, the plan was provided via email so that businesses and the general public were aware of it as well as other workforce, education and economic development partners. Further, the plan was also discussed during the WFI Board meeting May 28, 2009, inviting the public to provide comment. The plan was publicly noticed on May 26, 2009 and the public comment window ended June 12, 2009.

Increasing Services for Universal Access

Question VI.C. What state policies are in place to promote universal access and consistency of

service statewide? (§112(b)(2).)

In its response, the state should explain how it will efficiently and effectively use its Wagner-Peyser Recovery Act funds to support the hiring of sufficient levels of staff in the limited time period available for state One-Stop Career Centers to provide universal access and services required to meet the needs of increased numbers of customers in the economic downturn.

The State's commitment to universal service, including services for those receiving public assistance, is enumerated in great detail in Chapter 445, Florida Statutes. Section 445.009, F.S., mandating the One-Stop delivery system offers the best summary of programs/services to be offered, the full scope of workers, job seekers and employers to be served, data systems to be used/interfaced, and consistent cross-cutting accountability mechanisms. The statutory mandates are then reinforced and implemented through policy decisions adopted by WFI and then promulgated/monitored by AWI. Particularly pertinent to universal access and consistency of service are policies and monitoring procedures for capturing data and reporting services to all customers, with identification of special characteristics (e.g., youth aging out of foster care, youth in the juvenile justice system, homeless, individuals with disabilities, MSFW, older individuals, etc.), development of One-Stop minimum standards/criteria, requiring minimum workforce-specific initial and continuing education training for One-Stop staff, collaborative pursuit of competitive grants to serve special needs of targeted populations, and awards for best practices in serving all One-Stop customers. Additionally, to ensure consistency of service, AWI provides statewide basic training twice per year on-site for each program and via webinars for additional requests.

To ensure universal access and consistency of service with the increase in the number of unemployed customers, funding for ARRA staff was distributed to the regions using the same formula the federal government uses to provide Wagner-Peyser funds to the states. The regions have begun to hire merit AWI career staff or hire temporary staff through Other Personnel Services (OPS) to efficiently facilitate the transitional increase in services. Staff will receive initial training at the local level and state AWI staff will provide basic training for the ARRA staff in June. Emphasis will be placed on re-employment services and the use of an assessment to develop an employment plan. The State is currently reviewing the O*Net Interest Test and Ability Profiler for use as assessment tools to help develop employment plans. Additionally, Florida is reviewing products to help identify and codify transferable skills. These services and products will be available to the universal WP customer. The State is also undergoing a restructuring of the profiling of Unemployment Claimants to devise a tiered approach to the provision of services. This information will assist One-Stop Career Centers in providing further case management assistance to those claimants.

Local Planning Process

Question VIII.D. Describe the state-mandated requirements for local areas' strategic planning, and the assistance the state provides to local areas to facilitate this process. ((§112(b)(2) and 20 CFR 661.350(a)(13).)

In responding to this question, states should describe how they are facilitating the use of the local planning process to ensure that local areas are able to update their Local Plans and still quickly and efficiently deliver increased levels of services as intended under the Recovery Act.

The local planning process is compatible with federal instructions and state planning is primarily achieved by a very open state planning process. The Regional Workforce Boards have been advised and consulted at every step of the process, including initial outlines for the state plan, proposed waiver

requests, timetables for public comment, full dissemination of the state plan draft well in advance of submission, and an opportunity to comment. In some sections of the plan and waivers, RWB staff has contributed language and advice. Regional Workforce Boards have already been advised to start considering elements of their local plan that will need to be modified or added to comply with the requirements of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and implementing guidance.

Regional Workforce Boards have been made aware that the State Plan will not be fully approved until late June 2009 and that WFI will issue local planning instructions prior to or at that point. WFI has tentatively considered advising the Regional Workforce Boards to consider their current plans to be extended until November 30, 2009. However, to ensure that local areas are able to update their local plans, yet timely expend funds and provide an increase in services, the Regional Workforce Boards have been informed to begin the process of developing an outline of planned changes and/or modifications to their local plans to respond to and implement the requirements of the ARRA until such time as the State plan has been approved. Additionally, planning instructions have already been sent to the Regional Workforce Boards to guide them in developing plans for implementing summer youth activities in their service areas. Regional Workforce Boards will be required to submit their Summer Youth Program implementation plans by May 25, 2009 for state approval. Instructions for completing the Regional Workforce Boards' plan modifications will be provided in June and they will be required to submit those plans for state approval by September 15, 2009. Based on the final instructions provided, WFI and AWI program staff will thoroughly review each of the 24 submissions and prepare recommendations on approval/rejection/modifications for consideration by the WFI Board of Directors at its November 2009 quarterly meeting. That review will include consideration of consistency with state strategic directions and the ARRA and implementing guidance.

Procurement

Question VIII.F.5. Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes that will be used at the state level to award grants and contracts for activities under title I of WIA, including how potential bidders are being made aware of the availability of grants and contracts. (§112(b)(16).) (Note: All procurements must comply with OMB requirements codified in 29 CFR Parts 95.40-95.48 and 97.36.)

In answering this question, the state should describe:

- *How providers of all youth services will be procured under the Recovery Act. If using funds for summer employment opportunities and the fiscal agent or the state is not operating this program element, please specifically describe procedures for procuring summer employment operational entities and job opportunities.*
- *How the state will implement the Recovery Act provision that a Local Workforce Investment Board may award a contract to an institution of higher education or other eligible training provider if the local board determines that it would facilitate the training of multiple individuals in high-demand occupations, and if such a contract does not limit customer choice.*

Provider Selection Policies

Selection of training providers by Regional Workforce Boards is largely governed by state law and policy, particularly the requirement that Individual Training Account (ITA) workforce funds be spent only to train for occupations on the state or applicable local Targeted Occupations List that is limited to occupations that offer wages above certain minimum levels established annually by the State's Workforce Estimating Conference, and for which there is adequate employer demand based on

estimated openings to be filled. The State also requires all training providers to be either public institutions or private sector providers appropriately licensed to offer the demand training by the requisite state or federal authority, with the most common licensing authority being the Florida Department of Education.

The state allows local discretion in requiring Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), contracts or other formal agreements including terms for invoicing and payment of ITAs, also allowing Regional Workforce Boards to determine duration of such contracts, periodic review and any reapplication requirements. Similarly, Regional Workforce Boards have the authority to remove training providers from the local Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) based on comparative performance on post-exit outcomes as reported by FETPIP or local data. The State maintains the ETPL online, and consists of all training providers determined eligible by the 24 Regional Workforce Boards, along with authorized courses and “consumer reports” information.

Selection of youth service providers by Regional Workforce Boards is procured through a competitive process with qualified service providers. Regional Workforce Boards often contract directly with agencies/organizations serving target populations based on historically demonstrated success serving the most at-risk populations and those having barriers to employment including juvenile offenders, school drop-outs, disabled youth, those in or aging out of foster care, children of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, youth for whom English is a second language, and others meeting the WIA eligibility criteria. Additionally, local RWB processes ensure that Faith-Based and Community Based Organizations are permitted to compete on an equal basis with other potential providers. However, local discretion will be employed in the selection of service providers for delivering stimulus funded summer employment and training, as well as year-round activities for eligible youth. The State has been granted a waiver of the WIA requirement that all providers of youth services must be competitively procured. The waiver will allow Regional Workforce Boards to either add to existing contracts or, if allowed by their local procurement policy, issue a limited or non-competitive award. Any complaints or grievances regarding selection or denial of a service provider and or eligible training provider status can be filed under the general workforce grievance procedures, including right to a hearing as set out at [Grievance, Complaint, Hearing, and Appeal Procedure](#) under Guidance Paper, [AWI FG 00-004](#), and adopted by Florida Chapter 60B-11, Florida Administrative Code. Other than direct statutory mandates, these policies were publicly discussed with Regional Workforce Boards repeatedly before and since original enactment.

All state-level procurements including contracts with institutions of higher education are subject to relevant OMB procurement requirements and compliance with these provisions are included in the state's monitoring plan and annual A-133 audit reports for all grant recipients.

The contracts for the Banner Centers and the three other recent contracts identified in our response to Question IX.C.3.a were awarded through a competitive process meeting the above referenced OMB requirements. From funding approved and allocated by WFI's Board of Directors, special pilot/demonstration projects are solicited by the Board's chartered policy Councils through a request for proposal process. In concert with the Agency for Workforce Innovation, Requests for Proposals are issued and advertised. If necessary a pre-bid conference is held. All issues discussed at pre-bid conference, as well as other submitted questions with answers, are posted on website for all respondents to review. Upon receipt of submitted proposals, an identified evaluation team, which includes subject matter experts, reviews, evaluates and ranks proposals. Official awards are made and the Agency for Workforce Innovation is directed to notice awards. Awarded projects are posted on WFI's website.

Florida will not develop a specific state policy implementing this provision at the local level but has advised and encouraged local boards regarding the allowability of providing training in this manner

subject to OMB procurement requirements and the state will include review of local implementation in its monitoring process.

Question VIII.G.2. Describe how the state helps local areas identify areas needing improvement and how technical assistance will be provided. (§112(b)(14).)

In answering this question, the state should describe its strategy for providing training and technical assistance to local areas for all programs funded by the Recovery Act, including whether Recovery Act funds will be used for technical assistance and training to local areas. The state should also address training to be provided to new staff and technical assistance on the creation of a summer employment program.

Local Improvement and Technical Assistance

Primary responsibility for coordination of services provided by optional One-Stop partners is overseen by the Regional Workforce Boards, subject to annual state monitoring and guidance. Part of the state monitoring process includes identifying needs for improvement and when improvements are identified, Regional Workforce Boards are required to provide corrective action plans. Both state agency experts and Dynamic Works training courses, including on-site and web-based training, are offered as technical assistance. WFI has also recruited other Regional Workforce Boards to serve as “peer consultants” to provide more intensive technical assistance in cases of serious need. Additional merit staff and other program staff will be hired to serve the increased number of customers entering the State’s One-Stop career centers as a result of the ARRA. Training will be provided to those individuals similar to all other training. Also, newly hired front-line staff must attain the required Tier I certification within six months of their hire date, as well as the annually required 15 hours of continuing education. This process is monitored on an annual basis.

As referenced in other sections, technical assistance and training is also provided during the on-site monitoring reviews of the Regional Workforce Boards’ program services, activities, and processes. Technical assistance and training is also provided to local areas on Recovery Act requirements, including summer youth activities. Training plans are developed, seminars are held, TIPs and other materials are posted on the website including questions and answers, etc. Additionally, planning instructions are prepared and sent to the Regional Workforce Boards to guide them in developing plans for implementing summer youth activities in their service areas.

Monitoring and Oversight

Question VIII.H. Describe the monitoring and oversight criteria and procedures the state utilizes to move the system toward the state’s vision and achieve the goals identified above, such as the use of mystery shoppers, performance agreements. (§112(b)(14).)

In responding to this question, the state should demonstrate, through a monitoring plan or otherwise, that the state monitoring system meets the requirement of 20 CFR 667.410(b)(2) and that the state’s plan includes monitoring and oversight of the additional funds provided under the Recovery Act, particularly plans to monitor reemployment services and summer employment, including summer employment worksites.

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998; (20 CFR 660.300, 667.400, and 667.410) requires that the State develop procedures to ensure the policies relative to program quality and outcomes meet the objectives of the Act, including One-Stop Career Centers and training providers. Additionally, regular oversight and monitoring must be conducted of its WIA activities and those of its sub recipients and

contractors in order to determine that expenditures have been made against the cost categories and within the cost limitations specified in the Act and regulations; determine whether there is compliance with other provisions of the Act and regulations; and provide technical assistance as necessary and appropriate.

The State, through its Workforce Development Agencies, provides regular oversight and monitoring of its statewide workforce programs and projects. The programmatic and fiscal monitoring component in place ensures substantial compliance with the requirements of WIA and other administrative circulars and provisions, including the uniform administrative requirements under section 184(a)(4) WIA.

The State's oversight and monitoring system will further ensure compliance with the programmatic, accountability, and transparency provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and implementing guidance, in addition to the regular provisions of WIA and the Wagner-Peyser Act. On-site programmatic and fiscal monitoring will be conducted in each of the 24 regions and will include monitoring of reemployment services, as well as summer youth employment program activities and worksites.

Additionally, nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements and procedures, including complaint processing and compliance monitoring are governed by the regulations implementing WIA section 188, codified at 29 CFR part 37. Florida's fulfillment of these requirements is described in the *Methods of Administration* which is available on line at: www.floridajobs.org/civilrights/ocrmoa.htm. All programs are monitored for compliance with the non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity provisions of 29 CFR, Part 37.

Accountability and Performance

Question X.C.1. Describe the state's performance accountability system, including any state-system measures and the state's performance goals established with local areas. Identify the performance indicators and goals the state has established to track its progress toward meeting its strategic goals and implementing its vision for the workforce investment system. (Sections 112(b)(3) and 136(b)(3).)

- *The Recovery Act emphasizes the importance of accountability. Describe the state's overall efforts to hold the state and its local areas accountable for the results of activities funded by the Recovery Act, and how the state will measure whether it has achieved the state's goals for implementation as described in Questions I.C. and I.E. under "State Vision and Priorities.*
- *The Recovery Act requires state to report on work readiness to assess the effectiveness of summer employment opportunities to youth. The state should identify its methodology for determining whether a measurable increase in work readiness skills has occurred, and what tools will be used for determination.*

In addition to the USDOL Common Measures Florida has also utilized other short-term and long-term workforce performance measures, with many being applied to workforce-related programs like TANF and Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET) as well as mainstream workforce programs like WIA and Wagner-Peyser. Most notable are the 3-Tier Outcome report required by section 445.004 (9), Florida Statutes, and the newly implemented Regional Workforce Balanced Scorecard Report.

Florida will integrate the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) programs into its workforce performance and accountability system where applicable in accordance with the aforementioned measurement and performance principals. Additionally, Florida has implemented an

enhanced Balanced Scorecard framework to track and measure the specific performance objectives of the ARRA. The Balanced Scorecard is a cascaded strategy implementation instrument consisting of four perspectives;

- Financial-(Resource Allocation)
- Service Delivery-(Customer)
- Internal – (Internal Processes)
- Learning and Growth – (Goodwill)

These perspectives cascades to three levels;

- Level one - Overarching objectives of Workforce Florida Board of Directors
- Level two - Objectives that are aligned in accordance with Florida’s eight economic development regions
- Level three - Objectives that are specific to Florida’s 24 Regional Workforce Boards

Even before Congress adopted the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), Florida already had considerable and effective experience using “WIA-like” longitudinal performance tracking, largely relying on Unemployment Insurance/Compensation wage records to document entered employment, retained employment and earnings over time. Such long-term outcome tracking is at the heart of the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP), our statutory “Three Tiers” annual reporting requirements, and even our prior JTPA performance reporting under a waiver that allowed us to use the more comprehensive UI/C wage records rather than the USDOL standard phone survey methodology. Consequently, Florida strongly supported the WIA legislation and use of UI/C wage data due to its low cost, more comprehensive coverage, nation-wide utility, excellent research capability, standardized reporting methodology, and overall reliability.

However, Florida was also keenly aware of the downside to using only UI/C wage records and similar longitudinal data/measures. The primary disadvantage is how long it takes to get the outcome data, up to 24 months/8 quarters to get complete long-term retention/earnings data on exiters in any given quarter. That time lag renders such longitudinal measures minimally useful for state or local effectiveness evaluation, legislative accountability reporting, program/contract management or any semblance of a “real time” picture of how the system is performing currently as opposed to months or years ago. Consequently both the state level and local Boards saw the need for a set of interim, short-term performance indicators that corresponded with the “top-down” federal measures, but also served the more immediate state and local performance assessment needs.

Florida has developed several “near real-time” tools available to the state and local Boards to include the Monthly Management Reports (MMR) that are generally updated within 45 days after the end of each quarter, and a data warehouse that is refreshed nightly from the state Management Information System production server. The data warehouse can produce ad hoc reports from prepared or custom queries that allows for more effective local program evaluation, legislative accountability reporting, program/contract management. Additional program performance management reports and measures such as re-employment strategic measures, needs related payment, reduction in UC benefits, etc., and performance dashboards are continually being developed to ensure appropriate accountability and transparency.

Although Florida had been using and reporting a wide array of short-term program-specific performance data prior to WIA, the state’s decision to implement WIA early also included a more systematic initiative by the WFI Board to establish as a set of interim, short-term measures to give the

WFI Board a “dashboard” look at how all major programs are performing in all of our 24 Regional Workforce Boards, also allowing them to use the same short-term performance data for local case and contract management. Some of the guiding principles used in developing and later modifying the interim measures included:

KISS--- keep it short and simple: one-page only, no more than 15-20 items representing “vital signs” for major programs, not details for every minor program and sub-group of customers. Primarily using Entered Employment Rate (EER)

SHORT-TERM USEFULNESS---can show valid outcome results no later than 45 days after the end of each quarter, and not having to wait months or years for longitudinal data like UC wage reports, therefore, useful in case management, and performance-based contract/project management.

PREDICTIVE---includes short-term items that are validly predictive of longitudinal outcomes (e.g., WIA Core Measures based on UC wage records; TANF Workforce Success, etc.) especially those that earn federal performance bonuses.

OUTCOMES--- showing results/outcomes of services for “exiters” rather than status, workload, “seat time” or other process statistics.

LOW BURDEN---uses case management and other administrative data already being collected and reported on at least a quarterly basis, without requiring capture of additional data or running of special frequency reports.

BLEND OF COMPARABILITY AND FLEXIBILITY--- try to maintain stability of key measures from year to year to allow for “apples to apples” trend analysis and planning, while adding and deleting items as required by program changes or need for new indicators.

NO FAULT ON NEW MEASURES---if a new measure is experimentally introduced (e.g., employed worker), it will be tracked and reported for a year ranking, and may be discontinued if determined to be unhelpful.

The newly implemented Regional Workforce Board Balanced Scorecard Report has been designed as a key indicator “dashboard” report that presents a balanced picture of regional workforce board activities and outcomes. The report includes a mix of long-term measures, short-term measures, customer satisfaction survey results, and key yes/no indicators relating the Workforce Investment Act, Wagner-Peyser, and Welfare Transition program areas as well as employer services. The main report is a summary report that is a less technical, plain-English report produced for the use of the state and local workforce boards and policy makers. The report is also used at the state level for the basis for awarding incentive dollars for each of the above stated program areas.

As previously mentioned, Florida has implemented an enhanced Balanced Scorecard platform that will phase into its Performance and Accountability structure. The Balanced Score card is a cascaded strategy implementation instrument consisting of four perspectives; Financial-(Resource Allocation), Service Delivery-(Customer), Internal – (Internal Processes), and Learning and Growth – (Goodwill). These perspectives cascades to three levels. Level one are Florida workforce Investment board’s overarching objectives. Level Two are objectives that are aligned in accordance with Florida’s eight Economic Development regions and the Level three Objectives are specific to Florida’s 24 Regional Workforce Boards. The Balances Scorecard 1.5 (BSC 1.5) will be specific to the ARRA and will serve as a precursor to BSC 2.0 that will incorporate the entire cluster of workforce programs. Each of these

Balanced Scorecards along with the existing Accountability and Performance principals will allow the state to measure and hold local areas accountable for the results of all funded programs.

Regarding the USDOL Common Measures, Florida has carefully calculated our performance in the most recent reported quarters, analyzed actual performance compared to negotiated goals at both state-level and for each of the 24 Regional Workforce Boards and then have engaged in “bottom-up” negotiations with each Regional Workforce Board and have reached agreement on their individual goals. Florida’s most current proposed levels of performance as agreed by USDOL are provided as Appendix 3 to this plan.

Among the targeted groups served in workforce programs which are tracked and reported for outcome performances are Veterans, individuals with disabilities, ex-offenders, the homeless, seniors and multiple combinations of factors (e.g., vets with disabilities, senior vets, etc.). Florida also tracks and reports on TANF participants/exiters, primarily using quarterly UI Wage records that are regularly provided by the state Department of Revenue, and also used by our renowned Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP), which produces annual reports showing outcomes for exiters from over 200 programs, including WIA, Wagner-Peyser, vocational education, vocational rehabilitation, prison training programs and others. FETPIP also tracks for employment by the Department of Defense, the military, federal civilian service, continued education in public and private schools/universities, public assistance status, imprisonment, and other outcomes. See www.fldoe.org

The Recovery Act requires states to report on work readiness to assess the effectiveness of summer employment opportunities for youth. Florida’s Regional Workforce Boards will describe in its local plans how they intend to access the effectiveness of the summer employment opportunities. Such tools as the Ready to Work certifications may be considered as the measurement device of choice to assist local areas in determining work readiness skills effectiveness. Additionally, summer employment, internships, job shadowing, on-the-job-training (OJT) and work experience activities will be recorded in the management information system.

To assist in the effective delivery of services, the state has developed and operated a program and performance management and monitoring system to assist the Workforce Florida Inc. board and local workforce boards to identify early program successes and failures. The performance management system and procedures are in place to collect and report program and performance information, which is needed to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of program services, and to complete federal and state reporting requirements. Program management activities include data validation, performance reviews, incentive awards and sanctions, reviews of monitoring deficiencies, and technical assistance and capacity building.