

National Workforce Week of Action – August 15-19, 2011

Talking Points on Fiscal Year 2012 Workforce Funding

- I urge you in the strongest possible terms to oppose any funding cuts for federal education and training programs under the Fiscal Year 2012 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill.
- With more than 14 million Americans currently unemployed, now is not the time to reduce our investments in programs that are helping workers get the skills they need to find and keep jobs:
 - Last year, more than 8 million jobseekers were served under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)—a 234 percent increase in participation rates over just two years—and 4.3 million of these individuals found jobs, despite continued high unemployment. *[provide state, local statistics if available]*
 - The number of Pell Grant recipients has increased by more than 50 percent since 2008, with more than 9.4 million low-income students (including working-age adults) receiving grants this year.
 - Millions of others have received valuable job preparation and skills training through federally-supported adult basic education and career and technical education programs.
 - *[If applicable, provide relevant participation rates, statistics for other programs you work with]*
- It's not just workers who need skills—a recent report indicates that 40 percent of U.S. businesses have job openings that have gone unfilled for more than six months because of a lack of qualified candidates. *[Provide local examples of businesses/industries struggling to fill job openings]*
- Despite the clear and demonstrated need for investments in a skilled workforce to help sustain our economic recovery, Congress already cut more than \$1 billion in funding for WIA, career and technical education, and other workforce programs in Fiscal Year 2011. These cuts are having a devastating impact on the ability of states and local communities to provide training and related services to jobseekers and businesses *[provide specific examples of how WIA, other cuts have impacted services in your program/area]*
- Now Congress is considering additional, much deeper cuts for Fiscal Year 2012—even further reducing our ability to get America back to work and to compete in the global economy.
- Please reject any additional funding cuts to federal workforce development programs in Fiscal Year 2012, and ensure that the final Fiscal Year 2012 budget includes investments in job training and education that will help us build the skilled workforce our economy depends on.