

**MONDAY MORNING GROUP OF WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY
ANNUAL ADVOCACY TRIP – WASHINGTON, DC
APRIL 9 – 11, 2024**

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE STRONGER WORKFORCE FOR AMERICA ACT

ISSUE: In December 2023, the House Education and Workforce Committee provided mark-ups and advanced H.R. 6655, The Stronger Workforce for America Act (ASWA), which will make significant updates to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

ACTION: The Monday Morning Group urges Congress to support the reauthorization of WIOA under H.R. 6655, now referred to as ASWA, and the reconsideration of three primary areas of concern that will negatively impact Local Workforce Development Boards. Specifically:

- **Mandates New 50% Training Requirement for Adult and Dislocated Worker Formula Funds**
 - Creates a federal, one size fits all requirement for local workforce boards to spend at least 50% of their funds on training.
 - Does not allow local workforce boards to tailor funded activities and services to meet local needs.
 - Does not consider supportive or wraparound services that help jobseekers enroll in, and successfully complete, training towards the mandate.
 - Will lead to a significant reduction in other critical services delivered to jobseekers and employers.
 - Under the JOBS Act of 2023 (S.161) language allows expanded eligibility for the use of Pell Grants to be utilized for short-term Career Technical Education. This will allow additional funding streams to pay for training, further lessening the need for this mandate.

- **Increase State-level Set Asides to 25% of Total WIOA Allocations**
 - In addition to the existing Governor’s Reserve fund (15%), ASWA allows for the creation of a new “Critical Industries Fund” up to 10%.
 - This will further reduce local resources available to deliver tailored needs of local jurisdictions and if the 50% set-aside for training is approved the program will be nearly impossible to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers.
 - There is no guarantee that funds under this set-aside will be distributed equally among local jurisdictions.

- **Local Workforce Development Area Redesignation Requirements**
 - Directs state Governors to commence a redesignation process for LWDA’s.
 - Governors can propose maintaining existing LWDA’s or propose new designations which must be presented to local boards for consideration. However, if LWDA’s vote against the redesignation process the “fallback” language still results in changes in geography for LWDA’s.

BACKGROUND: In 2014, WIOA was signed into law as a bipartisan effort to reform and modernize the workforce development system to address the evolving needs of employers and jobseekers. Since its enactment into law, WIOA has demonstrated its effectiveness in modernizing and strengthening the nation’s workforce development system with millions of people through employment and training services. However, as the workforce and economy dynamics continue to rapidly change, it is vital for workforce development programs to stay intact with strong representation and influence at the local levels.