

MONDAY MORNING GROUP OF WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY
ANNUAL ADVOCACY TRIP – WASHINGTON, DC
APRIL 7 – 10, 2024

REAUTHORIZATION OF A STRONGER WORKFORCE FOR AMERICA ACT

ISSUE: Proposed edits in H.R. 6655 contributed to the advancement of the A Stronger Workforce for America Act (ASWA), which will introduce significant updates to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). However, a well-intentioned effort to standardize workforce development will only make it more difficult for local partners to address local needs and priorities.

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, the Monday Morning Group requests the reconsideration of:

- **Mandating New 50% Training Requirement for Adult and Dislocated Worker Formula Funds:** This effort creates a federal, one-size-fits-all requirement for local workforce boards to spend at least 50% of their funds on training. This requirement does not allow local workforce boards to tailor funded activities and services to meet local needs. It also does not consider supportive or wraparound services that help jobseekers enroll in, and successfully complete training. The Monday Morning Group fears will lead to a significant reduction in number of jobseekers and employers served at the local level.
- **Increasing State-level Set Asides to 25% of Total WIOA Allocations:** In addition to the existing Governor's Reserve fund (15%), ASWA allows the states to allocate an additional 10% to the reserve fund. This will further reduce resources available to deliver tailored needs of local jurisdictions. If the 50% set-aside for training is approved, the program will be nearly impossible to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers. Furthermore, 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 Local Workforce Development Areas (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 in a bipartisan effort to reform and modernize the workforce development system to better address the evolving needs of jobseekers and employers. WIOA is the backbone of the United States workforce system, through employer led initiatives and has demonstrated its effectiveness in modernizing and strengthening the nation's workforce assisting millions with employment and training.

WIOA funding levels have remained stagnant for nearly a decade, failing to keep up with inflation and evolving labor market needs. Increased funding for WIOA programs is essential to addressing critical workforce shortages, expanding access to training and upskilling through career technical education and apprenticeships, and strengthening economic growth.