



March 12, 2025

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Chair  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Vice Chair  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chair  
House Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Collins, Vice Chair Murray, Chair Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We are writing as part of the Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce (CIAW), a coalition dedicated to growing our economy by strengthening the investment in America's workforce. Our organizations are committed to meeting the needs of workers, learners, and employers across the nation, helping people of all ages pursue education, develop in-demand skills, and secure family-sustaining employment without the need for a four-year college degree.

We urge you to increase and strengthen investments in skills and workforce development as you work to finalize full-year federal fiscal year 2025 (FY25) appropriations legislation. Investments that serve youth and adults authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), including Wagner-Peyser and Adult Education, Youth program, apprenticeships, the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, the community service employment for older workers under the Older Americans Act, the Strengthening Community College Training Grants, and workforce adjacent programs that prepare all individuals for sustainable and high-quality employment yield substantial dividends for America, as evidenced by increased wages, tax revenue, labor force participation, and U.S. competitiveness, while also reducing reliance on public assistance.

- For example, FutureWork Systems<sup>1</sup> analyzed the most recently released U.S. Department of Labor data and found that services under Title I and Title III of WIOA – an annual investment of \$3.84 billion – led to an estimated \$61.6 billion in annual earnings for almost 1.5 million job seekers.<sup>2</sup>
- The return on investment is quite powerful: for every \$1 invested in WIOA, the economy sees approximately \$15.03 in wages earned. Investing in American workers is clearly a cost-effective federal investment which benefits our entire nation.
- The most recent findings of the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)<sup>3</sup> indicate that approximately 30 percent of U.S. adults were struggling in literacy, numeracy, or adaptive problem solving. Equipping workers with the in-demand skills of today’s economy is essential for businesses and industries and is a vital strategy for ensuring the U.S. economy remains the world’s most powerful growth engine.
- Addressing workforce shortages (currently 7.6 million unfilled jobs) keeps businesses open, ensures families receive essential goods, and supports vital community services.
- A skilled workforce reduces reliance on public assistance, increases tax revenue, and strengthens business profitability.

We remain concerned that the House FY25 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill, approved by the House Appropriations Committee in July 2024, called for substantial reductions—or in some cases the elimination—of funding for core workforce, education, and skills development. We strongly oppose these proposed disinvestments in the American workforce at a time when new resources are needed to address emerging challenges facing learners, workers, and employers.

Investing in the public workforce system is arguably among the federal government’s most worthwhile and remunerative programs in terms of supporting families, businesses, and communities, while bolstering local economies by generating billions of dollars in wages.

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<sup>1</sup> FutureWork Systems (futureworksystems.com) provides business intelligence applications specifically designed for the Workforce Development system.

<sup>2</sup> USDOL’s latest data from the WIOA Individual Performance Records (Public Use, Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL)) data for the rolling 4 quarter reporting period ending March 31, 2024 was used to calculate this amount. The average annual earnings of program participants after successfully gaining employment is approximately \$41,000, which translates into \$61.6 billion in earnings and economic impact. This calculation assumes full-year employment at second-quarter earnings levels, which may vary depending on job duration and wage changes.

<sup>3</sup> [https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/piaac/2023/national\\_results.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/piaac/2023/national_results.asp)

The Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce thanks you for your leadership and commitment to a strong American workforce and we welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues further.

Sincerely,

*American Federation of Teachers*  
*Association of Community College Trustees*  
*Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP)*  
*Corporation for a Skilled Workforce*  
*Council for Adult and Experiential Learning*  
*Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)*  
*National Association of Regional Councils*  
*National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB)*  
*National Association of Workforce Development Professionals*  
*National Collaborative for Transformative Youth Policy (TYP Collaborative)*  
*National Skills Coalition*  
*National Youth Employment Coalition*  
*United States Workforce Associations*  
YouthBuild Global