



July 13, 2017

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Labor-HHS Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Labor-HHS Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce (CIAW) is a diverse coalition of national organizations that offer direct services, advocacy, research, and policy development to help people of all ages and conditions develop their skills, enter gainful employment, and enroll and succeed in postsecondary education. We write to express our strong opposition to proposed cuts to vital education and training programs in the Fiscal Year 2018 (FY 2018) Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) appropriations bill.

The draft appropriations bill would cut \$85.7 million from Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I state grants, and eliminates Title III Employment Services Grants, making it harder for states and local communities to provide needed skills training and services to businesses and workers. These cuts are on top of years of disinvestment – state workforce grants have declined by nearly 40 percent in real terms since 2001 – and come at a time when employers are struggling to fill nearly 6 million current job openings.

The bill eliminates \$95 million in funding for apprenticeship expansion and support for data collection on program effectiveness, just weeks after the White House signed an Executive Order prioritizing apprenticeship as a strategy to improve workforce education and training and calling for agencies to evaluate workforce programs they administer.

The bill eliminates nearly \$300 million in funding for Dislocated Worker National Reserve programs, and \$100 million in funding for the Senior Community Service Employment Programs, despite continued challenges facing participants as they seek to reconnect to the labor market.

The bill proposes rescinding \$3.3 billion from the Pell surplus – on top of the \$1.3 billion cut to Pell grants in the FY 2017 spending package – severely undermining the long-term financial stability of the program and putting vital aid for low-income students at risk.



These proposed cuts would all come on top of historic disinvestments in critical workforce and education programs and the already low caps on non-defense discretionary spending under the 2011 Budget Control Act. It is critical to end sequestration and raise the harmful spending caps. In addition to cuts to Department of Labor workforce programs, career and technical education programs that prepare workers for the jobs of tomorrow have been cut by 32 percent since 2001. Investments in adult education have been cut by 21 percent since 2001. AmeriCorps is authorized to provide opportunity for 250,000 youth and veterans to serve their country and gain in-demand skills but is only funded to meet the needs of 80,000 participants.

We simply cannot compete in the global economy if we keep cutting and eliminating effective programs. CIAW urges the committee to reject these cuts and instead focus on restoring investments in our nation's workers by:

- Funding WIOA Title I employment and training programs at authorized levels so states, local areas, and other partners can fully realize the bipartisan vision outlined by WIOA;
- Funding adult education and literacy programs under Title II of WIOA at least at authorized levels to ensure that the 36 million Americans with low basic skills can take advantage of existing and emerging economic opportunities;
- Funding Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (ES) activities under Title III of WIOA at current-year levels to give states the additional resources they need to provide WIOA's intensive reemployment services;
- Funding the vocational rehabilitation program and other employment services authorized under WIOA Title IV for adults and students with disabilities at current year levels;
- Funding job training and employment services for older workers (Senior Community Service Employment Program) at no less than current year levels and maintain the proposed funding increase for employment services for at-risk veterans (homeless Veterans Reintegration Program);
- Maintaining or increasing the \$95 million investment in apprenticeship programs in current-year funding;
- Maintaining current funding levels for CTE state grants under the Carl D. Perkins Act, in response to the House-passed reauthorization in 2017; and



- Sustaining funding - including preserving the current surplus fund - for the federal Pell Grant program to ensure that the more than 7 million low-income students receiving this critical financial assistance can continue to pursue their education.

If you have questions about this letter or its attachments, please contact Kermit Kaleba, at Kermitk@nationalskillscoalition.org. Thank you for your attention to these important issues.

Sincerely,

American Association of Community College Trustees
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Development Board
California Workforce Association
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE)
Corporation for a Skilled Workforce
Corps Network
Council on Adult and Experiential Learning
Easterseals
Heartland Alliance
Goodwill Industries International, Inc.
Indiana Workforce Board Association
Jobs for the Future
Maryland Workforce Association
Michigan Works! Association
Minnesota Workforce Council Association
National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity
National Association of Counties
National Association of Development Organizations
National Associations of Regional Councils
National Association of State Workforce Agencies
National Association of Workforce Boards
National Association of Workforce Development Professionals
National Coalition for Literacy
National Council on Aging (NCOA)
National College Transition Network at World Education, Inc.
National Immigration Law Center
National League of Cities
National Skills Coalition



National Youth Employment Coalition
New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals
Oregon Workforce Partnership
Proliteracy
Rocky Mountain Workforce Development Board
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
Texas Association of Workforce Boards
The National Council for Workforce Education
The Pierce County Workforce Board
United Way Worldwide
Workforce Data Quality Campaign
Workforce Southwest Washington
Workforce Snohomish
Young Invincibles
YouthBuild