



June 25, 2014

Senate Passes Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Investment Act!

Earlier today, the Senate approved a measure that would reauthorize public workforce programs. The bill, *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)*, had support from both Democrats and Republicans.

This reauthorization is a long time in the making. Progress had been stalled since the House passed the Skills Act back in March 2013 and the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee approved their bill in July 2013. Since that time, there have been a lot of intense, behind the scenes negotiations that resulted in this compromise bill.

This bill does not make drastic structural changes to the system, but it does include provisions that will streamline programs, strengthen the emphasis on serving local employers, and increase the transparency of training providers.

While not a block grant, the measure eliminates 15 workforce programs, most of which have not been funded in recent years. It restores the state set aside to 15% and includes a 90% hold harmless provision for adult and youth programs to help protect against wide variations in annual funding levels due to the formula. It also allows 100% transfer of funds between adult and dislocated worker programs.

What's next?

First - let's take a collective breath of relief. Since reauthorization efforts had languished for so long, some legislators used the delay as an excuse to rally against providing additional funding workforce programs. This excuse has now been eliminated.

The bill is heading over to the House of Representatives, where it is expected to pass. Once approved by the House, it will be sent to the White House for President Obama's approval. Then, the Department of Labor will move forward with issuing guidance and developing regulations.

This is a positive step forward for the system and NAWDP is very pleased with the outcome.

Thank you for all of your efforts on this. Because of your hard work, most of NAWDP's requests were included in this bill. Now, we can turn our full attention to ensuring there is adequate funding for our programs.

Bridget Brown
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