



April 13, 2023

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriation
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Baldwin and Ranking Member Capito:

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill, we urge you to include strong, robust investments in job training and adult education programs so that U.S. workers and businesses have access to the skills they need to grow the economy and maintain our nation's competitive edge. Your continued support for federal workforce programs authorized by the bipartisan Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is critical to ensure the stability of our economy and the livelihoods of workers across the country.

The COVID-19 pandemic has upended our nation's workforce, and the FY 2024 appropriations bill represents a critical opportunity to build on Congress' vision for WIOA – a demand-driven workforce system that is responsive to the needs of employers and can help workers access jobs and credentials – and its funding is critical to the success of this mission. Robust funding is key for this potential to be realized – making the outcome of this year's budget and appropriations process critically important.

Additionally, according to a 2019 report from the White House Council of Economic Advisers, the U.S. would need to invest \$80 billion more each year just to reach the median level of investment in workforce development of other industrialized nations. In the next decade, technological changes in our workplaces will likely require workers in 60 percent of current jobs to reskill or upskill to stay competitive. This means more than 100 million workers will need investment in their skills to succeed in jobs of the 21st century. We need to strengthen investments today so that the workers have the skills and support services need to succeed in the jobs of tomorrow.

Maintaining robust funding for WIOA implementation is necessary for state, local, and regional workforce development stakeholders to fully carry out implement crucial legislative reforms. Doing so will improve our nation's economic competitiveness and put in place comprehensive workforce strategies that support national priorities such as rebuilding our infrastructure. With meaningful investments, programs across the nation will help workers gain the skills to support themselves and their families and ensure employers will have access to the skilled workforce they need to compete in the global economy.

In order to enhance the skills of the U.S. workforce, we urge you to:

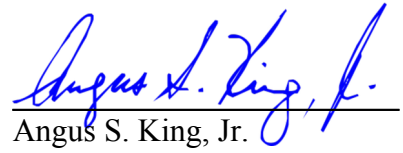
- Increase funding for WIOA Title I (job training programs) – including state formula grants under Title 1-B (youth programs, adult programs, and dislocated worker programs) – to meet the scope and scale of need for states, localities, and other partners to support workers in FY 2024;
- Support WIOA Title II (adult education and literacy programs) at levels to respond to the current worker need and business demand;
- Increase funding for WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser Employment Services) to give states necessary, additional resources to provide WIOA’s career information and intensive reemployment services;
- Fund WIOA Title IV (vocational rehabilitation program and other employment services) at levels authorized for adults and students with disabilities;
- Restore the Workforce Data Quality Initiative Grant funding to enable states to provide useful information about skills, employment, and earning outcomes to help businesses fill skilled positions;
- Expand apprenticeship programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act by increasing Congressional investment to \$535 million for FY 2024;
- Provide \$6.5 million for the Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations program to help employers and labor unions recruit, train, and retain women for nontraditional employment opportunities; and
- Provide dedicated investments to support sector partnerships so workforce boards, labor, community-based organizations, businesses, community colleges, training providers, and other workforce stakeholders can work together to train and hire workers for in-demand jobs within their communities; and
- Increase funding for career and support services, which support better training completion outcomes and facilitate continued employment.

Thank you for your attention to these critical issues. We look forward to working with you to ensure that our investments in the U.S. workforce are sufficient to meet the needs of America’s workers and businesses.

Sincerely,



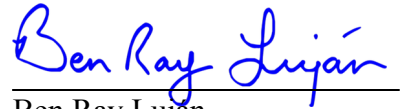
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



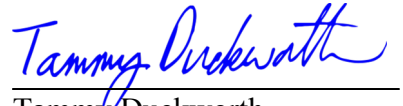
Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



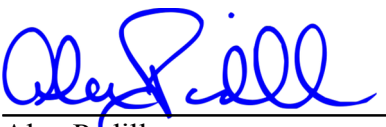
Tammy Duckworth
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Christopher S. Murphy
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Elizabeth Warren
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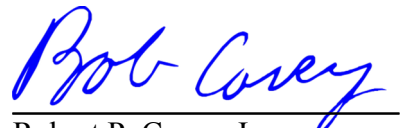
Alex Padilla
United States Senator



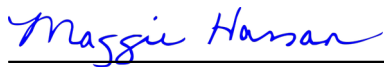
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



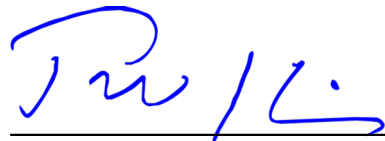
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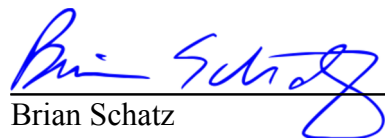
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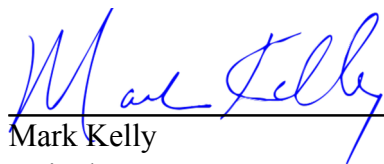
Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



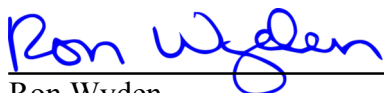
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United States Senator



Mark Kelly
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Richard J. Durbin
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Ron Wyden
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Sherrod Brown
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