2026 Legislative Priorities

February 09, 2026

The National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) has released its annual legislative priorities for 2026 on behalf of the nation’s state workforce agencies. These initiatives advocate for enhanced flexibility, investment, and alignment of workforce development; investment in labor market and workforce data insights; improvements to unemployment insurance; and support in technology infrastructure.

> “These priorities highlight the importance of a strong federal–state partnership in building a modern, responsive workforce system,” said NASWA President and CEO Scott B. Sanders. “Targeted investment and flexibility will allow states to better serve workers, strengthen businesses, and support long-term economic competitiveness.”

NASWA's 2026 Legislative Priorities include the following highlights:

Workforce Development

Advance a workforce system that is agile, aligned, integrated, and leveraged to help American workers; enhance federal funding for an industry-driven workforce system; support state-led flexibility and innovation; enhance services to veterans and military spouses; and promote worker mobility and economic advancement.

Labor Market and Workforce Data Insights

Reliable and timely labor market information is critical to ensure effective public investments that support workers, employers, and economic development.

Unemployment Insurance

Help states prepare for the next recession, improve integrity strategies , and increase flexibility.

Technology Infrastructure

Enhance federal funding and support open technology solutions, data transparency, and AI input.

These legislative priorities are published on behalf of the state workforce agencies and are developed in collaboration with members through NASWA’s 11 national policy committees, approved by the board of directors and circulated to the membership.

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