



Workforce Bulletin - July 11, 2014

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House Passes WIA Reauthorization Legislation – Heads to President for his Signature

On July 9, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bipartisan measure (H.R. 803) to reauthorize and streamline workforce programs for the first time in more than a decade, sending the bill to the President to be signed into law.

The House voted 415 to 6 in favor of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which also passed overwhelmingly in the Senate in late June. The legislation reflects months of negotiations between lawmakers in each chamber of Congress.

The measure reauthorizes 33 U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) workforce programs last authorized under the 1998 Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Although the WIA expired in 2002, the USDOL has continued to operate these programs with additional funding from Congress.

A group of lawmakers, including the chairs and ranking members of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP), announced in May they reached an agreement on the legislation.

The measure aims to strike a compromise between the House-passed Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills (SKILLS) Act and the Workforce Investment Act of 2013 (S. 1356), which the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee approved in July 2013.

- A one-page summary of the legislation can be found [here](#).
- The statement of managers, including a section-by-section summary of the legislation, can be found [here](#).
- A summary of key improvements WIOA makes to current workforce development programs can be found [here](#).
- The text of the bipartisan, bicameral agreement can be found [here](#).

Some of the key highlights show the bill would:

- Maintain the authorization of the 15 percent state allocation funding to allow states to address specific needs.
- Eliminate 15 programs; 14 within WIA, including the WIA Workforce Innovation Fund and one higher education program.
- Preserve funding for Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 and rename “employment statistics” to the “workforce and labor market information system.”
- Ensure the employment service role of assuring that UI claimants are searching for work may not be waived; and expand language to enable Wagner Peyser Act funds to be used to make UI eligibility assessments and to provide employment services and referral to training services for UI claimants. (See pages 491 and 547-554 for details).
- Restructure the Workforce Information Council (WIC) and rename it the Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC).
- Require co-location of employment service offices with one-stop centers.
- Apply one set of common performance measures to every federal workforce program under the bill.
- Reduce the number of required members on state and local workforce boards. (The legislation would reduce the size of the boards, from an estimated 43 to 33 members at the state level and 23 to 19 at the local level; maintain the requirement that a majority of members be from the business community but increase the representatives of the workforce.)
- Add a stop-loss and stop-gain limit to the state allocations of funding for the dislocated worker program beginning in fiscal year 2016 to reduce year-to-year volatility.
- Allow local boards to transfer 100 percent of funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs at the local level.
- Require states to produce one strategic plan describing how they will provide training, employment services, adult education and vocational rehabilitation.
- Strengthen the alignment between local workforce areas and labor markets and economic development regions by requiring a unified state plan covering four years to meet the requirements for each of the core programs; require states to consult with local boards and chief elected officials in order to identify local areas and planning regions that are in alignment with labor markets and regional development areas.
- Eliminate the statutory “sequence of services” and merge “core and intensive activities” into a combined “career services.”
- Strengthen evaluation and data reporting requirements; include and adjust six primary indicators for youth served under the act. (Commonality among the indicators will allow policy makers, program users, and consumers to understand better the value and effectiveness of the services.) Include performance reports to be provided at the state, local and eligible provider levels, as well as evaluations of the core programs by states.
- Specify authorized appropriation levels for each of the fiscal years 2015 -2020.

For more information and resources on WIOA, including the full legislative text and statement of managers’ section-by-section analysis, please visit NASWA’s WIA Reauthorization Resource Center at <http://naswa.org/resources/WIA/?action=home&id=3>.

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NASWA Hosts Turkish Employment Services General Director and Staff

NASWA recently hosted the General Director, Deputy General Director and an employment expert from the Turkish Employment Agency (ISKUR). NASWA staff briefed the delegation on the U.S. workforce and employment systems with a focus on the unemployment system, youth programs and labor exchange services. Further, the Turkish delegation briefed the NASWA staff on the structure of the employment service in Turkey. Turkey, like all European countries has a national model for unemployment and workforce services. The delegation was also given a tour of the District of Columbia Employment Services building and the adjoined American Job Center. NASWA looks forward to continued relationships with Turkey and other employment services staff around the world.

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NASWA, DirectEmployers Urge Strong Passage of WIOA

NASWA and DirectEmployers used the occasion of House passage of WIOA to run the advertisement in the Roll Call Newspaper, demonstrating how WIOA strengthens the Workforce Development System and the ability of the National Labor Exchange to assist both employers and employees. The advertisement is in the PDF version.

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Continuing Resolution Becoming Near Certain As Appropriations Process Slows

With fewer than 20 scheduled legislative days before the annual August recess, and disputes over economic issues and other matters, there was further discussion this week among congressional leaders about the development of an omnibus appropriations bill or at least a continuing resolution (CR) to keep the government operating when fiscal 2015 begins October 1, 2014.

It appears unlikely either chamber will finish all 12 annual spending bills by October 1, much less be able to reach bicameral agreement on them.

Extensions of current funding levels for most agencies will likely be adopted until a longer-term approach can be found, probably in a lame-duck session after the November elections.

Adding to the slowdown is the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill. Rep. Jack Kingston (R-GA), chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education, said this week the outlook for a House mark up on this legislation in his Subcommittee is “murky at best and he is not sure if his subcommittee will consider the bill in the weeks ahead.”

The Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, Harold Rogers (R-KY), has been quiet about his plans for the bill. Chairman Rogers said earlier this week he still “hopes” the measure will be marked up ahead of the August recess, but a markup has yet to be scheduled in the House. The Labor-HHS-Education spending bill, the largest domestic discretionary appropriations bill, has traditionally been one of the most controversial, making passage difficult before elections.

On the Senate side, the Chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) delayed the full committee markup of its Labor-HHS-Education bill. The Committee said the measure was “under review,” but it was widely understood the legislation was postponed because of concerns about controversial amendments, including those related to the Affordable Care Act.

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Minnesota is Second State to Officially Launch Hilton HHonors™ Military

On Tuesday, July 9th, Governor Mark Dayton (MN) officially kicked off the Minnesota Hilton HHonors Military initiative by holding a public Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signing ceremony and press conference. The excitement was followed the next day by Minnesota’s largest ever Veterans Career Fair – with more than 140 employers (all with job openings).

The Hilton HHonors Military initiative is a partnership between Hilton Worldwide, NASWA, and its members, and is part of [Operation: Opportunity](#), a major initiative to provide support to U.S. veterans and their families, including the hiring of 10,000 veterans at the company in the next five years. The program is intended to provide support to transitioning service members and veterans (includes eligible spouses) during their civilian career search by providing free hotel night stays for job interviews, job training, or other job-search related activities in any industry.

The four pilot states: Iowa, Minnesota, Arizona and Texas, worked together to develop a series of steps necessary to launch a state HHonors Military program, including but not limited to: signing an MOU between the State and Hilton Worldwide; determining eligibility criteria (which can be different for each state); and creating a consistent referral process, including checks and balances to maintain the integrity of the initiative.

HHonors Military is one way Hilton Worldwide has stepped up to help military service men and women during their job search – whether with Hilton or any other employer. For more information on starting a Hilton HHonors Military program in your state, please contact Lisa Stern at lsfern@naswa.org.

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Sponsors of EUC Legislation Seeking Supplemental Appropriations as Possible Vehicle

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) said Thursday he hopes senators get a chance to add an unemployment extension (Emergency Unemployment Compensation Act – EUC – which expired at the end of 2013) to the \$4.3 billion emergency supplemental appropriations request.

The emergency supplemental appropriations request, submitted by President Obama this week, is slated to assist with the boarder crisis and wildfires.

“Well, there’s a chance,” Senator Reid said when asked about the odds Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) would be able to attach an unemployment extension to the supplemental appropriations vehicle. Senator Jack Reed said he wants to use the emergency spending bill as a vehicle for the unemployment extension.

Senators Jack Reed and Dean Heller, (R-NV) have been the primary champions of Senate passage of emergency unemployment compensation benefits since they expired in December and have drafted two five-month long unemployment extension bills, including one that passed the Senate in April.

But attaching a EUC extension to the supplemental appropriations package will be an uphill battle given the House Majority remains opposed. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has also said that he doesn’t believe the package (emergency supplemental appropriations request) should be expanded.

It is also unclear if Reed/Heller EUC extension would be paid for, since the supplemental appropriations bill is deemed emergency spending and not required to be offset under budget rules.

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Governor Bentley Appoints New Labor Commissioner in Alabama

Governor Robert Bentley (AL) on Wednesday announced Mr. Fitzgerald Washington has been appointed to serve in the Bentley Administration as Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Labor.

“Fitzgerald Washington has a strong business background with a wealth of knowledge and experience, and is uniquely qualified to serve as Labor Commissioner,” Governor Robert Bentley said. “I am honored he is joining us to lead this important state agency. Fitzgerald will play a fundamental role as we work to provide employment opportunities for Alabamians looking for a job. I appreciate his willingness to serve in my administration, and I know he will be an honest and dedicated Labor Commissioner.”

In 2013, Mr. Washington served as Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, where he helped create the Minority Business Council to foster growth and competitiveness of minority-owned businesses in West Alabama. Other community involvement includes the Druid City Business League, Black Warrior Council Board, BB&T Bank Advisory Board, Board of Visitors for the University of Alabama College of Continuing Studies and DCH Health Systems Foundation Board of Directors.

Mr. Washington's appointment is effective August 4, 2014.

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Notices, Advisories and Reports

USDOL Directives & Releases

July 11, 2014: [TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE LETTER No. 01-14](#)

Subject: Second Distribution of Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Training and Other Activities Funds and the Process for Requesting TAA Program Reserve Funds

July 8, 2014: [TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE NO. 02-14](#)

Subject: Receiving Ticket to Work Payments as an Employment Network

July 7, 2014: [UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM LETTER No.17-14](#)

Subject: Revised Employment and Training (ET) Handbook No. 336, 18th Edition: "Unemployment Insurance (UI) State Quality Service Plan (SQSP) Planning and Reporting Guidelines"

July 7, 2014: [TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE NO. 01-14](#)

Subject: Strategies for Using Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Formula Funds to Serve Court-Involved Youth and Youth At-Risk of Offending

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Articles were contributed by Marc Katz, Charlie Terrell, and Lisa Stern.

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