



Submitted by [Brooke Heaton](#) on March 29, 2017

# **NASWA Recognizes Sen. Patty Murray with President's Award**

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Washington, D.C. – The National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) recognized Senator Patty Murray, D-WA, with the 2016 President's Award for her contributions to enacting critical workforce development legislation, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014.

WIOA was the first federal reform of the workforce system in 15 years. It modified and replaced the 1998 Workforce Investment Act (WIA). WIOA strives to improve the quality of the nation's workforce, reduce welfare dependency and meet employer skill requirements. WIOA paved the way for new collaboration within the country's workforce development system, creating new alignment between workforce, education and employers. WIOA also streamlines federal workforce training programs and grants new flexibility for states to better prepare the nation's workforce for the 21st-century. The legislation was bipartisan and easily passed through both the House and the Senate.

“Senator Murray is a ‘WIOA Pillar of Excellence’,” said Dale Peinecke, President of NASWA and Commissioner of the Washington State Employment Security Department. “She is a strong supporter of the workforce system as a means of connecting employers with a skilled workforce and helping millions of Americans find jobs. We thank her for her critical support and look forward to working with her as we continue implementation of WIOA.”

Senator Murray introduced WIOA and is the Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.

“We are pleased to show our appreciation for Sen. Murray and her leadership in the passage of WIOA,” said Scott B. Sanders, Executive Director of NASWA. “We applaud her extraordinary efforts in rebuilding America's workforce.” Last fall, NASWA presented U.S. Reps. Virginia Foxx, R-NC, John Kline, R-MN, and Bobby Scott, D-VA, and Senators Lamar Alexander, R-TN, and Johnny Isakson, R-GA, with 2016 President's Awards for their critical work on passage of WIOA.