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NASWA Releases Study on the Research and Evaluation Capacity of Nation's Workforce Agencies

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(Washington) - The National Association of State Workforce Agencies' (NASWA) Center for Employment Security Education and Research released a report summarizing the current research and analysis capacity of its member state workforce agencies. In all, 41 states participated in the study, which was funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL).

Most states reported demand from their Governor's office and General Assemblies for workforce data and program evidence but unfortunately almost 30 percent of the states responded that their research and analysis staff capacity is 'inadequate.' Considering federal, state and private funding sources, 20 percent of the states reported they spent zero dollars on research and evaluation in 2015 and almost half cite lower or much lower funding levels than in the past.

"The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act calls for the use of data to inform decisions for customers and front-line staff," said Scott B. Sanders, NASWA Executive Director. "Data holds workforce organizations accountable for outcomes and drives program and policy development. That is why it is so important to evaluate national investment in research and analysis activities."

The authors of the report, Yvette Chocolaad, NASWA Policy Director and Stephen A. Wandner, Visiting Fellow at the Urban Institute, conducted the assessment and compiled the report to assist federal and state policymakers, workforce program leaders and research staff interested in helping state workforce agencies expand their research and evaluation capacity. There are two sections of the report, the first part covers research and analysis resources in the states and the second part features case studies of Ohio and Washington State, both of which have developed significant capacity in these areas.

Read the full report: [Evidence-Building Capacity of State Workforce Agencies: Insights from a National Scan and Two State Site Visits](#)