

ADVOCACY ALERT



TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF
WORKFORCE BOARDS

We Need Your Support & Action!

The Texas Association of Workforce Boards urges your immediate engagement and action regarding the recently approved Stronger Workforce for America Act, a pivotal piece of bipartisan legislation reauthorizing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). While the Act includes several commendable provisions that enhance the flexibility and effectiveness of local workforce development efforts, it also introduces areas of concern that may significantly impact the autonomy and efficacy of local workforce boards in addressing unique community needs.

Commendable Provisions: The Act acknowledges the critical feedback from local workforce stakeholders, making strides in several areas: Simplifies the process for local governments to serve as one-stop operators.

- Increases the funding cap for incumbent worker training, enhancing skill development within existing workforces.
- Expands operational flexibility for local boards regarding one-stop centers and affiliate sites.
- Introduces a more stable state funding mechanism for Infrastructure Funding Agreements, addressing long-standing negotiation challenges.
- Maintains full transferability between Adult and Dislocated Worker accounts, ensuring adaptability to shifting workforce needs.
- Adjusts definitions and service priorities to better serve Opportunity Youth, lowering the required percentage and broadening the scope for support.
- Establishes a dedicated funding source for Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for Dislocated Workers, directly benefiting local boards through formula distribution.

Areas of Concern: Despite these positive steps, the Act mandates conditions that could restrict local decision-making and limit the scope of services offered to job seekers and employers:

- **Mandates a 50% training expenditure** for Adult and Dislocated Worker funds, imposing a one-size-fits-all approach that undermines

local flexibility and fails to recognize the value of supportive services integral to training completion and workforce participation.

- **Increases the Governor's Reserve to up to 10%** for a 'Critical Industries Fund,' potentially diminishing local resources vital for delivering mandated training services. This provision could redirect federal and existing reserve funds away from local initiatives, diminishing the impact of federal investments on state-level workforce development.
- **Introduces redesignation language** that could enable state-wide consolidation of local workforce areas against the majority will of local boards, potentially diluting local focus and undermining the representation of job seekers and employers.

Call to Action: The Texas Association of Workforce Boards, supporting the collective voice of local workforce development leaders in Texas, calls upon our members and Texas' congressional representatives to:

- 1. Urge Congress to reconsider and address the concerning elements of the Stronger Workforce for America Act that impede local workforce boards' ability to tailor solutions to community-specific needs.*
- 2. Engage in direct dialogue with the Senate HELP Committee, leveraging the opportunity to refine the legislation in a manner that preserves local autonomy and ensures a truly adaptable and responsive workforce development system.*

[*TAWB Letter to Congressional Leadership*](#)

[*Texas Congressional Labor Staff Directory*](#)

[*Congressional Letter Template*](#)

Your involvement is critical to ensuring the legislation reflects the needs and realities of Texas' workforce development ecosystem. We encourage Texas Workforce Solutions agencies to write to their Congressional members, advocating for revisions to the Stronger Workforce for America Act that uphold the principles of local governance, flexibility, and inclusivity in workforce development.

Together, let's advocate for a Stronger Workforce for America Act that fully supports the diverse needs of our communities and the future of workforce development in Texas and beyond.

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