

**TO: Workforce Investment Board**

**DATE: 07/14/11**

**FROM: WIB Staff**

**For Discussion**

**For Action**

**For Information**

**SUBJECT: Advocacy Letters**

**PROPOSED MOTION(S): For Information Only**

**DISCUSSION:** The following attached letters were sent on behalf of the Workforce Investment Board advocating for:

1. Re-direction of Florida High –Speed Rail Funds to California
2. To the Senators to include the Workforce Investment Act programs/funding to the Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee in their fiscal year 12 program priorities.

**ATTACHMENT(S): Advocacy Letters**



**WORKFORCE  
INVESTMENT BOARD**  
MERCED COUNTY

Alfonse Peterson, Chair  
Steve Newvine, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair  
Richard Liszewski, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair  
1880 Wardrobe Ave., Merced, CA 95341  
Phone (209) 724-2008 FAX (209) 725-3592  
www.mercedwib.com

May 17, 2011

Fax: 202-225-0819  
e-mail: [Teresa.kinney@mail.house.gov](mailto:Teresa.kinney@mail.house.gov)

The Honorable Dennis Cardoza  
United States House of Representatives  
435 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Cardoza:

I am writing to urge you to include Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs/funding in your letter to the Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee outlining your key FY 12 program priorities.

Unemployment rates have risen to over 21% in Merced County and millions of Americans are unemployed. WIA programs are at the forefront of assisting those impacted by the current economic slowdown, helping workers get the assistance and training they need to return to the workforce.

In Merced, WIA is making a real difference in our community. We have seen a substantial increase in the number of individuals seeking our services. County residents know that the One-Stop Career Centers, Worknet of Merced County, are the place to go to connect to the labor market. Worknet had 57,092 visits in "09/10", including 5,250 new customers. In January 2011, we have experienced an increase in both visits and new customers to Worknet. In program year "09/10" in both our Adult and Dislocated Worker program, we served 544 businesses with 1184 services. Youth programs have assisted 735 young people to stay in school, obtain their High School diploma and get jobs.

In the knowledge-driven global economy, American businesses report skills shortages at all levels of employment. Exacerbating the problem is the large portion of the workforce near retirement, many of whom are in highly skilled professions. Unfortunately, many current and potential workers don't have the knowledge and skills to take their place or fill the emerging employment needs. The Workforce Investment Act is specifically designed to address these needs.

*"Merced County's Workforce Investment system will keep pace with the new growth, the emerging economy, and the ever changing needs of the employers by creating a better educated, highly skilled workforce, that's capable, and prepared, and thoroughly knowledgeable."*

However, investment in employment and training programs continues to diminish. We commend Congressional efforts to reduce the massive budget deficit that has a stranglehold on our country, but we also know that it is the intent of Congress to simultaneously stimulate job growth as well. With this in mind, I strongly urge you to include WIA funding as a priority in your program letter to House Labor-HHS Chairman Denny Rehberg and Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro.

Thank you for considering this request. In challenging economic times we must ensure our nation's workers have access to critical WIA services.

Sincerely,



**WORKFORCE  
INVESTMENT BOARD**  
MERCED COUNTY

Alfonse Peterson, Chair  
Steve Newvine, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair  
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1880 Wardrobe Ave., Merced, CA 95341  
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May 23, 2011

The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
Hart Senate Office Building, Room 112  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Patrick\_Scandling@Boxer.Senate.gov  
Facsimile: 202-224-0454

Dear Senator Boxer:

I am writing to ask you to include the Administration's FY 12 funding request for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs in your program letter to the Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee outlining your key FY 12 priorities.

WIA programs are the front lines of assisting those impacted by the current economic slowdown, helping workers get the assistance and training they need to return to the workforce. Over the past year, more than 8 million American workers have utilized the job training and employment related services offered by WIA programs, an increase of over 234% increase in just the past two years.

Over four million job seekers were able to find jobs as a result of assistance of the workforce system – despite a ratio of 4.5 jobseekers for every available job nationally. In short, those who utilized WIA services were likely to regain and retain employment.

In Merced, WIA is making a real difference in our community. We have seen a substantial increase in the number of individuals seeking our services. County residents know that the One-Stop Career Centers, Worknet of Merced County, are the place to go to connect to the labor market. Worknet had 57,092 visits in “09/10”, including 5,250 new customers. In January 2011, we have experienced an increase in both visits and new customers to Worknet. In program year “09/10” in both our Adult and Dislocated Worker program, we served 544 businesses with 1184 services. Youth programs have assisted 735 young people to stay in school, obtain their High School diploma and get jobs.

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The Honorable Barbara Boxer

May 23, 2011

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A time of economic slowdown is not the moment to cut funding for our most valuable economic resource, our workers, and employers needing skilled workers to compete in the global economy.

I strongly urge you to include WIA funding in your program letter to Senate Labor-HHS Chairman Tom Harkin and Ranking Member Richard Shelby, requesting that they fund WIA programs at the Administration's request level.

Thank you for considering this request, in challenging economic times we must ensure our nation's workers have access to critical and effective WIA services.

Sincerely,



**WORKFORCE  
INVESTMENT BOARD**  
MERCED COUNTY

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Alfonse Peterson, Chair  
Steve Newvine, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair  
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Phone (209) 724-2008 FAX (209) 725-3592  
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May 23, 2011

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
Hart Senate Office Building, Room 331  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Facsimile: 202-228-3954

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing to ask you to include the Administration's FY 12 funding request for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs in your program letter to the Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee outlining your key FY 12 priorities.

WIA programs are the front lines of assisting those impacted by the current economic slowdown, helping workers get the assistance and training they need to return to the workforce. Over the past year, more than 8 million American workers have utilized the job training and employment related services offered by WIA programs, an increase of over 234% increase in just the past two years.

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The Honorable Diane Feinstein

May 23, 2011

Page Two

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I strongly urge you to include WIA funding in your program letter to Senate Labor-HHS Chairman Tom Harkin and Ranking Member Richard Shelby, requesting that they fund WIA programs at the Administration's request level.

Thank you for considering this request, in challenging economic times we must ensure our nation's workers have access to critical and effective WIA services.

Sincerely,

DENNIS A. CARDOZA  
18TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
HORTICULTURE AND ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LIVESTOCK, DAIRY AND POULTRY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
CONSERVATION, CREDIT, ENERGY AND RESEARCH

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-0518

May 27, 2011

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(209) 946-0361

Ms. Andrea Baker  
Acting Director  
Private Industry Training Department  
1880 Wardrobe Avenue  
Merced, California 95340

Dear Ms. Baker:

As your Representative in Congress, I'd like to take a moment to update you on some of the progress we have made during the 112th Congress. Improving our economy and supporting policies that help businesses expedite job growth is my top priority as we continue to recover from the worst recession since the Great Depression. Without question, the Central Valley is among the hardest-hit regions in the country and therefore it is imperative and we must remain focused on the economy and putting people back to work. To ensure the economy continues to grow over the long term, I am also focused on addressing the debt crisis and reducing any unnecessary spending.

**Reducing burdens on small businesses**

With my support, President Obama recently signed into law H.R. 4, legislation which I co-sponsored to reduce the tax burden on small businesses by repealing the so-called "1099 Provision." Without repeal, the 1099 Provision would have created a new, onerous reporting requirement for small businesses at a time when many are struggling to keep their doors open and make payroll.

**Oversight and Regulatory Reform**

This Congress I am serving on the Blue Dog Task Force on Oversight and Regulatory Review. This task force is charged with being actively engaged with the implementation of both health care and Wall Street reforms, and reviewing the myriad of regulations issued by the Executive Branch. The purpose of the task force is to identify problematic and burdensome regulations and seek opportunities to amend them, either through comment or legislation. Most recently, we called on the head of the new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to re-examine burdensome financial regulations that slow job growth and fail to improve consumer protections.

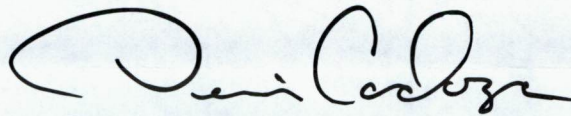
I am pleased that after we sent our letter, the CFPB launched a new initiative to simplify the mortgage disclosure forms and seek input from consumers and community banks on major rule changes before they become permanent. This would help clarify the process for consumers and cut red tape for small struggling banks. I will continue working with the Blue Dogs to push for more common sense initiatives that enable businesses to spend more time creating jobs and less on meeting unnecessary regulations.

### **Deficit Reduction**

I am also working to pass the Reduce Unnecessary Spending Act, which would require Congress to promptly consider spending cuts proposed by the President, giving them a straight “up or down” vote, and dedicating the approved savings to deficit reduction. Our government needs to operate more like a successful business and make the tough choices that will reduce our debt.

Despite encouraging signs of economic growth on the national level, many communities in the Valley continue to suffer. Small businesses in the Valley face barriers to growth and our economy continues to falter, while growing deficits further threaten a robust recovery. As your Congressman, I will continue to lead bipartisan efforts to encourage entrepreneurship and reduce deficit spending. While difficult decisions must be made, I am optimistic that we can work together to ensure a more prosperous economy for the Valley, California, and our country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis Cardoza". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping tail.

Dennis Cardoza  
Member of Congress

DC: lmm



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March 17, 2011

Mr. Ray LaHood, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Mr. Joseph C. Szabo, Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: Request for Re-direction of Florida High-Speed Rail Funds to California**

Dear Secretary LaHood and Administrator Szabo:

As Members of the California Legislature, we urge you to re-direct all federal high-speed rail funding originally designated for Florida, to California.

California has made significant progress since its initial receipt of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding in 2010. The initial ARRA funding, along with \$616 million in federal funds redistributed from Wisconsin and Ohio, and matching funds from California's Proposition 1A, bring the total available funds to begin construction to \$5.5 billion. Construction on California's starter segment begins in September 2012, creating 110,000 construction jobs that will put California's economy on a fast track to recovery.

The California High Speed Rail Authority's recently initiated the "Request for Expression of Interest" (RFEI) process. The RFEI process will help shape the development of the Authority's overall procurement process, and define how businesses can compete for high-speed rail contracts. The Authority anticipates issuing the request for proposals at the end of this year for California's starter segment, approximately 120 miles through California's Central Valley, which will ultimately serve as a "test track". This test track will give the Federal Railroad Administration the ability to certify that California's system will be capable of running 220 miles per hour. California's system is the only system in the nation proposed to reach true high speeds of 220 miles per hour (mph).

California is best positioned to deliver the nation's first High Speed Train for the following reasons:

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- 1) **Passage of High Speed Rail Bond Measure** - California is the only state in the nation to have passed a high-speed rail bond measure, Proposition 1A, of 2008, which demonstrates the public's commitment to funding the nation's first high-speed train system. We have a public commitment of \$9.95 billion in new funding which provides a guarantee to the private sector that if they put money into California's High Speed Train project, it will be successful and it will be profitable. This new money is in addition to the \$247 million the state has invested in the project over the past dozen years.
- 2) **State Matching Funds** - California has received \$2.987 billion dollars in federal funding from the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA), and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Coupled with \$9 billion dollars in bond funding from the passage of Proposition 1A, the High-Speed Rail Act, **the total investment available to date for California's high speed train will be \$11.987 billion – more than 28%** of the \$42.6 billion dollars required for total completion of Phase 1 from San Francisco to Anaheim.
- 3) **World-class High Speeds of 220 Miles per Hour** - California's high speed train system is the only nation-wide project offering world-class high speeds of 220 miles per hour. These high speeds are necessary in order to provide passenger service which is competitive with airline service with regard to travel times and ticket prices.
- 4) **FRA Approval** – California was the first state in the nation to have a plan approved by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). California's project level environmental impact report was originally approved in July, 2008. California has thirteen years of engineering and design work in place. We are ready to serve as a technological and business model for the rest of the nation.
- 5) **Global Participation - Memorandums of Understanding with Other Countries** - California has entered into "Memorandums of Understanding" with 8 countries which have a proven track record of building and operating successful high-speed train systems: Spain, France, Germany, Italy, Korea, Japan, China and Belgium. More than 135 senior managers, planners, engineers, and operators with significant project work on one or more of the high-speed train projects in Europe and Asia, as well as the Northeast Corridor, are currently involved in the planning and engineering of the California high speed rail project. Experts on this project have guided the planning, construction, and/or operation of HST systems around the world representing hundreds of billions of dollars in infrastructure development.
- 6) **Oversight & Financial Accountability** - Proposition 1A ensures protection of federal, state, and private financial investments by establishing additional oversight and accountability standards. Proposition 1A requires the following:
  - a) Creation of a peer review committee;
  - b) Creation of a pre-appropriation review process;
  - c) Creation of a pre-expenditure review process;
  - d) Independent review of financing plans; and
  - e) Independent audit of all expenditures.

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- 7) **Project Delivery** – Following the initial announcement of the selection criteria for ARRA funds, California had \$16 billion dollars in high speed rail projects that qualified for funding. California’s entire 800 mile system has a completed and certified program-level environmental review document. California has partnered with the FRA in these studies and efforts. As described in the State’s October 2009 ARRA funding application, four project sections are targeted to complete environmental review by September 2011, and to start construction by September 2012, with construction completion by September 2017.
  
- 8) **Bi-Partisan Support** - California is unified behind its high-speed train project. The project received bi-partisan support from the Legislature, former Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, current Democratic Governor Jerry Brown, and California voters. In addition, the California Labor Federation, California Chamber of Commerce, and the Sierra Club of California have all come together in support of our high speed train project.

As members of the California Legislature, we believe California is ready to be a model for the rest of the nation seeking to build high speed trains systems. We share a passion for this project with our global partners because we know that revolutions in technology from around the world are being shared during this experience. New technologies will provide workers in each of our respective countries with valuable training and new skills as we enter a new wave of transportation innovation.

High speed rail will harness the enthusiasm and talent of our young people in a way that no other industry has since the “dot com boom.” This project will help us to educate our next generation of inventors and entrepreneurs. Furthermore, as we capture the imaginations of our young people, who will be fascinated by a train that can run at 220 miles per hour, we’re teaching an entire generation the value of global cooperation and shared success.

We urge you to re-direct the State of Florida’s high-speed rail funds to California.

Sincerely,



Alfonse Peterson  
WIB Chair

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