

**MONDAY MORNING GROUP OF WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY**  
**ANNUAL ADVOCACY TRIP – WASHINGTON, DC**  
**APRIL 25 – 27, 2023**

**EXPANSION OF THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY**

**ISSUE:** Investing in the development and training of our workforce is essential to the success and future of our economy. There is a large need to facilitate workers’ ability to obtain the necessary credentials needed to address the shrinking skilled worker levels nationwide. Employers are working aimlessly to fill vacant positions and meet the demands of the market. Strong workforce investments in this labor market will allow for increased economic opportunities for both businesses and workers.

**ACTION:** The Monday Morning Group urges Congress to support legislation and programs that support the development of a skilled workforce. Specifically:

- **Increase and enhance investment in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).**
  - Provide dislocated workers, adults, and youth with more access to skills training and education opportunities aligned with in-demand occupations and American businesses more support for rapid response and worker training.
  - Scale up apprenticeships by providing enhanced investments through line-item formula funding. Provide local workforce development boards with technical assistance to foster stronger cross-sector partnerships between workforce and apprenticeship entities.
  - Strengthen subsidized employment opportunities which have a long history of positive benefits for disadvantaged workers and the broader economy.
  - Enhance the capacity of local agencies to conduct and fund outreach efforts to better engage underserved communities and priority populations in the workforce system’s services and supports.
- **Amend the WIOA to facilitate programmatic implementation and cooperation at local levels.**
  - Grant flexibility under WIOA to expand eligibility to workers, especially workers at considerable risk of displacement, so we may proactively support workers’ transitions to priority sectors.
  - Promote cooperation and coordination between regional WIOA programs. Permitting the use of funding across WIOA programs to better anticipate future labor market disruptions. Also creating new opportunities for workers not traditionally eligible for assistance.
  - Address youth employment needs by providing more flexibility under the WIOA youth program to target priority youth populations based on regional and local needs. This includes implementing specifically targeted regional employment plans for previously homeless and fostered youth.

**BACKGROUND:** In 2014 the increased investment and amendments to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act served a key role in providing reassurance for millions of working-class families recovering from the 2008 recession. Since then, the U.S economy has drastically altered. New investments and amendments must be made to ensure that families will be provided with opportunities to enter the workforce and that employers have the skilled workforce needed to grow and expand. Our top priority for a newly funded and amended WIOA is to ensure workforce development boards and local partners can successfully support economic mobility for all. Additionally, we aim to:

- Increase access and availability of childcare and other supportive services on an ongoing basis to broaden labor market participation.
- Support digital equity and access, including broadband expansion.
- Expand and scale local apprenticeship programs especially those in non-traditional sectors such as Information Technology (IT), childcare, public service, and renewable energy technology.
- Integrate entrepreneurship training and “gig economy jobs” into AJCC programming and career pathway development.
- Improve outcomes for youth aging out of foster care including increasing graduation rates; increasing degree and credential attainment and reducing poverty levels as measured at age 25.
- Increase educational attainment level and income level of residents living below 200% of the poverty level.
- Expand transitional job opportunities for youth, homeless residents, residents exiting substance use treatment programs, justice involved and TANF recipients.