

Agenda Item # 3
Recommendations to the Governor from the Council on Workforce Investment

Draft Recommendations of the Workforce System Development Committee

The Council on Workforce Investment (CWI) is advisory to the Governor on Wisconsin's workforce investment system strategies and policies. To enhance the operation and performance of the state's workforce programs, the CWI respectfully submits the following recommendations to Governor Jim Doyle.

Vision

Combine all the Workforce Investment Act required partner agencies under one governing organizational umbrella and one funding structure, with the intent to create a common direction and improved system efficiencies all the way through to the regional and local level.

Recommendation 1:

The Department of Workforce Development administers 10 of the 17 required partner programs. We recommend a first step toward the vision is to create a consolidated organizational structure to govern these programs and hold them all accountable to support the vision of a One-Stop model down to the regional and local levels.

Recommendation 2:

Streamline the funding process.

We recommend that the Governor communicate to Congress, the State Legislature, and all involved federal departments that we need to have new laws/reauthorizations begin to fit together the array of programs to provide efficiencies in the administration of and service delivery for customers.

Specific areas for co-program coordination include (a) create one planning and funding cycle, (b) consistent reporting criteria, (c) consolidated application process across programs for customers (d) consistent performance measures.

Recommendation 2a:

We also propose an interim step for streamlining the funding process – Begin with the Governor directing the Department of Workforce Development's program administrators to negotiate common waiver requests to their federally funded agencies for the purpose of program efficacy within a fluid, coordinated One-Stop system.

Recommendation 3:

Create sustainable financial support for the One-Stop infrastructure.

We recommend another first step as the Governor direct his Cabinet and all accountable agencies to (a) create financial incentives for One-Stop participation and involvement; (b) design a "fair share" allocation method among all of the state-administered workforce training and employment placement programs; (c) develop a measurable scorecard to create accountability within the infrastructure

Recommendation 4:

Accept the CWI *Milwaukee Report's* recommendations for implementation [Attachment A]

Discussion and Background

The CWI's Committee on Workforce System Development identified priority action steps related to their objectives and strategies that were in the CWI's *2005 Annual Report to the Governor*. The recommendations are intended to provide a sustainable financial infrastructure with federal, state and private-sector funds and implement the first action step: "Review Inventory of State job placement and employment-training programs to assess how to provide sustainable financial support for the One-Stop infrastructure, maximize resources for effective service delivery, and identify possible options to minimize the number of persons/agencies distributing funds."

The recommendations above address the issues that were identified as core impediments in the current system:

- Program funds come from varied sources with a multiplicity of administering entities that compound overhead costs, inevitably creates duplicity of services, and diminishes authority and accountability.
- Interagency dialogue exists but there is not a focal point of authority that would ensure common visions, on-going joint strategic planning and implementation, mutual accomplishments and measures of success/failure.
- The lack of creative thinking to transcend silo-program funding is problematic. The primary justification for each administering entity having their own "agenda" rather than cooperatively working within a workforce system framework is the fact that every workforce development program funded with federal and state funds has different requirements and performance measures.
- Authority for program operations is not only diffused but appears to have a bottom-up system given the Workforce Development Board's relative autonomy, and the lack of alignment throughout top to bottom and visa-versa.
- Historically, there have been band-aid solutions that have not resulted in systemic improvements, hence, the need for radical shifts in state structure and operations of these programs.

On behalf of the CWI, the Workforce System Development Committee conducted a variety of activities to garner input on these issues and reviewed a large volume of material, including:

- Surveying the 11 Workforce Development Board's Executive Directors, Private-sector Chairs and the Chief Local Elected Officials;
- Holding a Job Center Roundtable Listening Session with workforce program partners to gather field input on "how to design a successful, flexible and efficient system from a blank sheet of paper";
- Meetings held at Milwaukee Job Center North, the Private Industry Council of Milwaukee County, Inc., Workforce Development Center of Waukesha County, Marathon County Job Center; and
- Reviewed salient material including:
 - Local Job Center Customer Satisfaction Surveys
 - Inventory of Wisconsin's Workforce, Education and Training Programs*, June 2005
 - Labor Market Data
 - The Impact of Budget Cuts on Wisconsin's Job Centers: Staff Losses and Service Declines*, Center on Wisconsin Strategy, March 2004
 - Declining Federal Support for Wisconsin Workforce Development*, Center on Wisconsin Strategy, July 2004
 - An Evaluation of Employment and Job Training Programs*, Legislative Audit Bureau, November 1994
 - Wisconsin's Job Center Standards and *Workforce Investment Act Plan 2005-07*