

## SAMPLE LETTER

Date

The Honorable

Address

VIA FAX:

Dear Representative/Senator:

We obviously are very concerned over the impact of the Continuing Resolution (H.R. 1) that has proposed an elimination of funding for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) - our flagship program that helps serve jobseekers and businesses in our area. **We are very appreciative of the Congressman's vote (No) on this topic/we are disappointed of the Congresswoman's vote (Yes) on this topic** - if this were to pass the Senate in its current form, it would be devastating to the people of Minnesota and throughout the U.S.

The elimination of funding for such a prolonged timeframe would essentially end the nation's employment and training system during one of the worst economic downturns in American history. The Appropriations Committee is taking the position that workforce development and job training programs are not effective and therefore are expendable in this challenging budget climate in Washington.

### **How are the WIA program funds used locally?**

The items listed above are funded in large part with WIA funds. However, wherever we can, we leverage these funds. It might be with an employer match for the incumbent worker training, Pell grants for those taking additional education; or co-enrolling with a low-income program.

Workforce programs are effective. The Minnesota Office of Legislative Auditor's recent report noted, "Workforce program clients generally achieved better job and wage outcomes than similar people who filed for unemployment insurance but did not participate in workforce programs." Additionally, the Dakota-Scott area meets or exceeds the federally established performance standards for the WIA programs.

Over the past year, the WIA funded employment and training programs have provided training, placement, services and support to over eight million jobseekers nationally. Even with unemployment at 9% nationally, we placed well over 50% of those seeking services.

Our local economic development experts notes that site selectors focus on two primary criteria when looking at areas for businesses: location and a skilled workforce. In supporting our residents by providing career guidance, job match assistance, skill training and providing information and re-training services to help workers in closing or downsizing businesses to get the back into the labor force, we are providing valuable support to our businesses and regional economic development efforts.

WIA business services save businesses through offering access to skilled worker and training incentives. The Workforce Investment Board is a critical partner in our region's economic development efforts. To take away the funding that ensures our local workforce has the advice on

what skills are needed in the local labor market and the training and retraining needed to meet the ever changing demands of the business community jeopardizes our overall competitiveness.

We commend Congressional efforts to reduce the massive budget deficit; however we also know that it is the intent of Congress to stimulate job growth. With this in mind, we urge you to reconsider the elimination of funding for the WIA system.

Your support of the business-led Workforce Investment Boards and the all programs and services that directly create jobs, support businesses and enhance economic growth is extremely important. Please feel free to contact me at [\(contact information\)](#) if you would like more information or examples of WIA at work.

Respectfully,