



LEGISLATIVE ALERT

July 8, 2014

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I write in support of the “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (H.R. 803)” scheduled for floor consideration this week. This legislation will improve our nation’s workforce development system and help countless Americans prepare for new jobs. The bicameral, bipartisan effort brings to a successful conclusion an 11-year effort to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998.

Providing greater access to training, education and employment services remains a top priority of the AFL-CIO and its affiliates. To improve the nation’s workforce development system we must focus on providing sufficient skill training to participants, rather than directing individuals into low-wage, low skill jobs that have little prospect of career advancement. H.R. 803 provides important new tools to take us in this direction.

The legislation strikes a delicate balance by maintaining the system’s core programs, while at the same time requiring them to meet a new set of common performance standards. Though the bill did not incorporate all the changes we recommended, important improvements were made in the Wagner-Peyser section of the bill, as well as in the Job Corps program. The bill also solidifies labor representation on the state and local workforce boards, and it includes a greater emphasis on career pathways, workplace-based career counseling, and sector partnerships.

The success of our nation’s employment and training system is a key factor in whether jobless workers can obtain gainful employment and high skill jobs. We urge you to vote for the “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (H.R. 803).”

Sincerely,

William Samuel, Director
Government Affairs Department