Bob Taft
Governor

OHIO
Job & Family
SERVICES

Tom Hayes
Director

30 East Broad Street • Columbus, Ohio 43215
www.state.oh.us/odjfs

September 27, 2004

Mr. Ken Casterline, Regional Office
Employment and Training Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
230 S. Dearborn
Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Mr. Casterline:

I am writing to give you an annual report on Ohio's progress in developing core products and services under One Stop Workforce Information funding during program year 2003. A major transition was the deliberate decision on the part of ODJFS to better align the Bureau of Labor Market Information (BLMI) with the One Stops and State and Local Workforce Investments Boards by having BLMI within the Office of Workforce Development (OWD). The transfer from the Office of Research, Assessment & Accountability to OWD occurred January 1, 2004. A major accomplishment noted below was going live with *Ohio Workforce Informer*, an Internet-based product providing access to the ALMIS Database.

1. ALMIS Database: Ohio has been updating and maintaining the database this year in version 2.2 for all appropriate geographies and for many historical periods beyond the minimum required. Data are being reported for Ohio counties, economic development regions, metropolitan statistical areas, the state, and the nation. A major accomplishment was the deployment of the Internet-based *Ohio Workforce Informer* (discussed in more detail in item 6). All core tables have been populated according to guidelines. Programmer Deborah Johnson, who had been maintaining many of the files, was transferred to Management Information Systems last summer, and was replaced by Karen Duffy in a researcher position. That transition has gone very well. Ms. Duffy attended the ALMIS Database Training sponsored by the LMI Training Institute in June 2004.

The database is being maintained through an interface with the remote hosting service in conjunction with the Internet application.   Many databases are being updated on a monthly interval while others are being maintained quarterly, annually, or biennially as appropriate. Annual average covered employment and payroll data for 2002 under NAICS was added, and for the first time quarterly data are being uploaded as they become available. Although not part of the CES data extract, seasonally adjusted data back to 1990 were

created from BLS records and added. Job outlook data for metropolitan areas were also added when the 2010 round of substate projections was completed. Occupational wage data, produced using the Estimates Delivery System (EDS) software, for the State, counties, metropolitan areas and economic development regions were updated for 2003 on the website. Workforce investment areas were realigned this summer and those new geographies were added to the database.

The Ohio LMI Bureau serves as the state coordinator for the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) surveys, which provide current completions data for postsecondary, structural training programs (of at least 300 class hours) - an important source of labor supply information (see the IPEDS web site, College Opportunities On-Line, at http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cool). Recent Ohio IPEDS census collection efforts achieved almost perfect Title IV response rates above 99% for the completions and institutional characteristics surveys. The database was updated with 2002 data.

Occupational licensing data were updated for 2002, and files were sent to the National Crosswalk Service Center in March 2004 and included in America's Career Information Network (ACINet) at http://www.acinet.org/acinet/lois_start.asp.

2. Produce and Disseminate Industry and Occupational Employment Projections:
Substate projections for 2010 were completed with the release of metropolitan area reports (http://jfs.ohio.gov/releases/rl111403.stm) in November 2003.

Staff attended Short-Term Industry training in October 2003, Long-Term Industry training in February 2004 and MicroMatrix training in March 2004 that enabled them to produce the new job outlooks. The statewide job outlooks for 2003-2005 and 2002-2012 were completed using the Projections Suite software. The ETA extracts were provided to the Projections Workgroup in June 2004. The occupational data are currently under review with products and reports under development for release in program year 2004. Extracts for the ALMIS Database were created.

Another related product that provides an overall outlook for employment for Ohio and each of the eight large metropolitan areas is the monthly *Ohio Leading Indicators* publication, available at http://lmi.state.oh.us/PROJ/LeadingIndicators.htm. These indicator series and their components were also inputs used in the analysis of short-term industry forecasts.

Larry Less continues as Technical Co-chair of the Technical Issues and Research Committee of the Projections Workgroup. He was a key member of the Long-Term Industry training team.

3. Provide Occupational and Career Information Products for Public Use:

a) A report on demand occupations entitled, "High Occupational Employment Prospects: Ohio and Economic Development Regions," was prepared and released on http://lmi.state.oh.us/PROJ/projections/EDR/HighOccupationalProspects_EDR.pdf in

October 2003. These complemented the outlook reports for economic development regions released earlier in the year. These reports on use the 2010 job outlook to present projected occupational demand by education and training level for occupations paying more than twelve dollars an hour and having a substantial number of annual job openings in the area. Although not completed in program year 2003, posters for specific industry sectors and a "Top Jobs" newsprint are being distributed this program year.

b) BLMI produced and edited occupational wage data, aged to 2003, using the Estimates Delivery System (EDS) for the state, metropolitan areas, economic development regions and counties that were made available on the web site in February 2004. These data were also uploaded to the ALMIS Database for display and query in *Ohio Workforce Informer*.

c) LMA Section Chief Mark Schaff serves as the coordinator for the Ohio Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System (IPEDS). The latest adjudicated data on labor supply from postsecondary educational institutions has been input into the ALMIS Database.

d) Occupational wages for 2003 and employment outlook data for 2012 were provided to the Ohio Department of Education for use in updating their "Ohio Career Resource" reports.

e) Job vacancy survey: BLMI had intended to initiate a pilot job vacancy survey for Cuyahoga County. The software had been downloaded and a sample had been drawn. However, efforts to contract for the collection and processing of the data fell short. We had been looking at either the State of Colorado or the Survey Center at The Ohio State University. We received word in the spring that the Survey Center at OSU was being shut down.   Colorado staff have had other commitments so we were not able to get this survey off the ground in program year 2003.

4. Provide public electronic access to the ALMIS employer database: Ohio records became available on the *Ohio Workforce Informer* website at the beginning of June 2004. This is in addition to the "Employer Locator" link on the Ohio Career Tabloid page, http://lmi.state.oh.us/Jobs/CareerTabloid.htm. BLMI purchased 350 sets of the ALMIS Employer Database CDs from *info*USA in program year 2003 to meet demand from the County JFS offices, One-Stop Employment and Training Centers, job development staff, and others including local and state offices of the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission. Access to this database, coupled with the occupation/industry matrix, has opened up the "hidden job market" of employment opportunities for job seekers.

5. Provide information and support to State and local Workforce Investment Boards and produce other State information products and services: A major transition that occurred in 2004 was the deliberate decision on the part of ODJFS to better align BLMI with the One Stops and State and Local Workforce Investment Boards by placing BLMI within the Office of Workforce Development (OWD). The transfer from the

Office of Research, Assessment & Accountability to OWD occurred January 1. As a result of this reorganization, BLMI will be doing more to assist in training One Stop staff in the preparation of business plans that will be required by the Governor's Workforce Policy Board.

a) At the request of the Governor's Workforce Policy Board, BLMI produced *The Ohio Economy and Labor Market: Understanding the Current Environment in Developing Workforce Strategies for the Future* in October 2003, available at http://lmi.state.oh.us/Research/Research.htm. A report on the high technology sector in Ohio, produced during the prior program year, was also made available on the website at the same time.

b) BLMI, led by LMA Section Chief Mark Schaff, has been analyzing wage records for about a decade. These efforts were recognized by publication of "Using wage records in workforce investments in Ohio," co-authored by Rich Gordon from Unemployment Compensation, Greg Shaw from the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission and Mark Schaff, in the May 2004 edition of the *Monthly Labor Review*, the premier periodical of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. An earlier version of the research findings had been presented at the national Wage Record Symposium held in July 2003.

c) BLMI continues to market our electronic products known as "The LMI Pro Suite." Applications of the LMI Pro Suite include the development of outplacement plans for down-sizing corporations and analyses of labor availability and costs to attract new firms. Requests for assistance in developing these plans have remained high since the recession of 2001. Executive summaries from some recent examples of these economic development plans are available upon request.

d) BLMI continued to partner with the One Stop System in helping them achieve their workforce goals. This was exemplified in our participation in an LMI Training Institute grant award called "LMI Marketing Pilot Project: From Theory to Implementation." Most of the planning and much of the work on the part of BLMI in support of this grant occurred in program year 2003. It resulted in the Cleveland/Cuyahoga Workforce Summit held on September 9, 2004 and *Inroads: Strategies for Economic Growth* (http://lmi.state.oh.us/research/Inroads.pdf) with reports on the construction, manufacturing and health care sectors plus small business.

e) BLMI supports the needs of Ohio's workforce systems in the national arena through my membership in the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) LMI Committee.

6. Improve and deploy electronic state workforce information delivery systems:

a) In June 2004, *Ohio Workforce Informer*, an Internet-based product providing access to the ALMIS Database (v. 2.2) at http://www.ohioworkforceinformer.org/, was officially

deployed (see attached announcement to local workforce investment boards). The LMI web site (http://lmi.state.oh.us) is now referred to as "Ohio LMI Classic" and we intend to gradually transition data to this new site to the extent accommodated by the ALMIS Database structure. It has been well received with site hits more than doubling from the testing phase to more than 50,000 hits and about 2,000 unique visitors per month and remaining around that level.

b) The *Ohio LMI Classic* website (http://lmi.state.oh.us) remains an important source of information for our customers and grew substantially in use compared to the previous year. The average monthly hits of more than 120,000 for program year 2003 was nearly one-third higher than the average from the prior program year. As a major new LMI resource for business, BLMI added the affirmative action data tutorial (see http://lmi.state.oh.us/Jobs/JobBanksSearch.htm). The top 3 demand areas were the job outlook, "Jobs and Careers" information, and data on local area unemployment statistics. Personal requests to BLMI either by phone, e-mail, or letter increased by eight percent, or an average of 20 per month more than during the prior program year. Both sites appear to be complementing one another with the *Ohio LMI Classic* website remaining popular and usage growing with the unveiling of *Ohio Workforce Informer*.

c) Mark Schaff participates as a member of the national occupational career video consortium. These approximately 400 occupational videos provide the most up-to-date information about work environments. Besides their availability provided through links on BLMI's website, they are incorporated in the LMI Pro Suite training and by the Department of Education through the Ohio Career Information System (OCIS).

7. Support State workforce information training activities: BLMI has been involved in an intensive long-term training schedule for the LMI Pro Suite products. Training modules at the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels have been tailored to meet a variety of staff needs. The LMI Pro Suite training curriculum is available for review at http://lmi.state.oh.us/Jobs/Curriculum.htm.

Demand remains high with more than 250 accounts at offices affiliated with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. During program year 2003, LMA Section staff presented 17 LMI Pro Suite 3-day training seminars where 138 participants received training. Major staff affiliation for those trained were County JFS and One Stop Center staff (more than half), and the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission. The principal trainers are LMA Section Chief Mark Schaff and Assistant LMA Section Chief Tom Buescher with training support from LMAs Erich Hetzel (northeast Ohio) and Don Wonnell (northwest Ohio).   In addition, twenty-six 1-day sessions were held for a total of more than 400 attendees.

In May 2004, Workforce Research Section Chief Larry Less and LMA Section Chief Mark Schaff presented "Labor Market Information: How Do I Make It Work for Me?" to 20 participants at the Ohio Job and Family Services Directors' Association conference. In addition, LMI resources were distributed to the 1,300+ participants at the convention.

In the spring of 2004, a joint effort between a local labor market analyst and One Stop staff resulted in a new LMI Employer workshop, entitled "Navigating the World of Workforce Information." This workshop was piloted to groups of employer's human resource professionals. A manual and handouts were provided. Five of these new workshops were held toward the end of the program year with 37 completers total. They received very favorable evaluations and more will be offered in program year 2004. BLMI is also working more closely with Local Operations in planning and coordinating training of staff assigned to One Stops.

Assessing Customer Satisfaction: The major effort in assessing customer satisfaction in program year 2003 was the "Brand Equity Survey" conducted in conjunction with the Cleveland/Cuyahoga County marketing grant. A brand equity measurement was taken to see if One Stop staff and WIB members value services provided by the LMI teams. Two groups were surveyed: one group that utilized the LMI training and one group that did not have training. On a scale of 1 to 10, four-fifths of stakeholders who participated in LMI training were very satisfied (8 ranking or above) with overall services provided by BLMI. For those that did not receive training, less than seventy percent ranked their satisfaction that high. Nine out of ten that attended training used the office 1-5 times per month, compared to only about one-fifth of non-training customers.

From feedback on ways that BLMI can improve services and/or products, about half of the suggestions were to provide more LMI training (or refresher training) and half were suggestions for product improvement. BLMI offers continuing workshops for both job seekers and employers promoting the awareness and uses of labor market information. When asked if LMI information helped support the job of WIB and staff, an overwhelming 99 percent agreed, whether they had taken training or not.

These results and positive feedback on the pilot workshops for human resource professionals led us to significantly expand our training efforts. We are working with Local Operations to provide more training throughout the State and to increase capacity. Also, results from the customer satisfaction survey for *Ohio Leading Indicators* conducted last year are being used to guide development of revised indicator series mentioned below in "Related Issues and Funding."

Summary: Overall, I feel that we have been very successful in achieving the desired outcomes outlined in the plan in a timely manner. At the same time, we have continued to remain flexible in responding to customers' needs. Aggregate expenditures have been somewhat less than allocated for the 2003 program year. There were also carry-over funds from the prior year. Less funds were spent this year because we were unable to get a pilot job vacancy survey started. Personnel expenses were lower than expected due to loss of staff and the time it takes to fill the vacant positions. Demand from the success of outreach and marketing, however, is expected to drive expenses higher in the future as we strive to meet more needs of our customers. The long-range plan is to invest more in distance learning which will have significant development costs.

Related Issues and Funding: BLMI contributed an additional $60,000 toward the LMI Marketing Pilot Project discussed in number 5 above. We also awarded a contract, beginning July 1, 2004 using Reed Act funds, to revisit the methodology, components and software to update *Ohio Leading Indicators*.

I am excited about our continued partnership with the One Stops and State and Local Workforce Investment Boards, and look forward to meeting challenges to better serve them in program year 2004. Should you desire additional information regarding the work that we are doing in Ohio in providing workforce information core products and services under One Stop Labor Market Information funding, please contact me at (614) 752-9494.

Sincerely,

Keith Ewald, Ph.D.
Bureau of Labor Market Information
Office of Workforce Development

Attachment: Announcement - *Ohio Workforce Informer*

c: Olaf Bjorklund, ETA National Office
   Donna Alvarado, Chair – Ohio Workforce Policy Board
   Tom Hayes, Director - ODJFS
   Bruce Madson, Office of Workforce Development
   Mark Birnbrich, Office of Workforce Development
   Steve Clayborn, Office of Workforce Development
   Rudy Wilkinson, Bureau of Labor Market Information
   Mark Schaff, Bureau of Labor Market Information
   Larry Less, Bureau of Labor Market Information