



BILL SUMMARY

EDUCATION & THE WORKFORCE COMMITTEE

THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2012 (H.R. 4297)

Note: Reflects changes included in the amendment in the nature of a substitute.

- ✓ **Streamlines Federal Workforce Development Programs.** The *Workforce Investment Improvement Act* consolidates more than 25 federally funded workforce development programs into a single Workforce Investment Fund, providing services to adults, unemployed workers, and youth seeking employment. States are required to reserve a certain percentage of funds to specifically target individuals with unique barriers to finding employment, including at-risk youth.
- ✓ **Strengthens a Dynamic, Employer-Driven Job Training System.** The *Workforce Investment Improvement Act* reinforces the role of America's job creators in our workforce investment system by ensuring two-thirds of state and local Workforce Investment Board members are employers.
- ✓ **Expands Decision Making at the Local Level.** The *Workforce Investment Improvement Act* eliminates more than 19 specific federal mandates regarding local workforce board representation, empowering locally elected officials to determine the composition of the remaining board members. Similar requirements are lifted for state workforce boards, as well. The local workforce boards will regularly conduct analyses of area workforce needs, including economic conditions, the knowledge and skills of workers, and existing workforce development activities to enhance support services for local workers and employers.
- ✓ **Improves Accountability and Transparency.** The *Workforce Investment Improvement Act* requires state and local leaders to set "common performance measures" for all workforce development programs to help eliminate waste and ensure taxpayer dollars are used effectively. The bill also requires an independent evaluation of training programs every five years.
- ✓ **Creates a Seamless Workforce Development System and Simplifies Reporting Requirements.** Similar to current law, the *Workforce Investment Improvement Act* allows states to submit a unified statewide workforce development plan to the federal government for all employment and training services and related programs. However, the bill allows governors to consolidate those programs into their state Workforce Investment Fund, providing greater administrative flexibility and reducing overly burdensome paperwork requirements. The bill strengthens the authority of governors to designate the location of workforce areas in their states, which will help ensure resources and support services are more readily available to workers and employers.

- ✓ **Encourages More Training to Meet In-Demand Job Opportunities.** The *Workforce Investment Improvement Act* requires local boards to designate a portion of resources to spend directly on training. It also eliminates arbitrary provisions under current law that prevent individuals from accessing training immediately, and streamlines the delivery of services to help individuals receive the support that best meet their needs. The measure allows states to determine the standards required for eligible training providers, simplifying the bureaucratic requirements that have forced many community colleges and other providers out of the system. The bill also requires service providers to contribute a portion of their resources to support the infrastructure of the One-Stop Career Centers, providing more resources to training and other efforts that directly serve workers.

- ✓ **Reforms the Job Corps Program.** The *Workforce Investment Improvement Act* restructures Job Corps to ensure that career and technical education and training is geared toward in-demand occupations and that disadvantaged youth receive a regular high school diploma and/or a recognized postsecondary credential that prepares youth for employment in the global economy. It establishes a new performance accountability and management system; and requires all grantees to re-compete for funding, ensuring that grantees are high-quality and have expertise in serving disadvantaged youth. Adopting a proposal included in President Obama's FY2013 budget, the legislation closes persistently low-performing centers, so that limited taxpayer dollars are invested in a more effective program. These changes ensure at-risk youth become more employable, responsible, and productive citizens.

- ✓ **Improves Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation.** The *Workforce Investment Improvement Act* also amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The bill increases the focus on delivery of basic literacy and math skills, and works to build this instruction into employment activities. The legislation also focuses on helping individuals with disabilities transition into employment. Both programs are required to meet the common performance measures outlined in the bill.

To read a summary of changes included in the amendment in the nature of a substitute, click [here](#).

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