



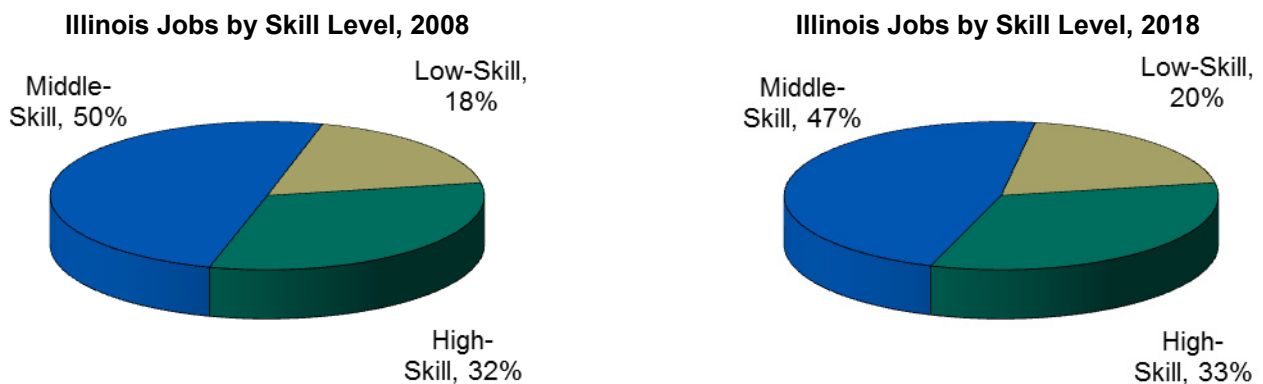
# Illinois

## Growing Illinois' Economy by Investing in the Forgotten Middle

Middle-skill jobs, which require more than high-school, but less than a four-year degree, make up the largest part of America's and Illinois' labor market. All too often, key industries in Illinois are unable to find enough sufficiently trained workers to fill these jobs. As a result, job creation and economic growth are stifled. We can't afford that—particularly now—in Illinois.

Years ago, our nation established a number of workforce development programs to meet this demand by preparing Illinois' workers for middle-skill jobs. But since then, our federal education and training policies have largely forgotten about these jobs, and investments in the programs that prepare middle-skill workers have plummeted. As a result, in Illinois too many workers struggle to find decent jobs and too many employers struggle to find skilled employees. Our federal policymakers—including Illinois' congressional delegation—must address the investment shortfall in the forgotten middle of the labor market. Illinois simply can't afford the lost jobs and productivity that complacency brings.

### Demand for Middle-Skill Jobs is Strong, Will Remain Strong in Illinois



Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security

### Middle-Skill Jobs are the Backbone of Illinois' Economy

Middle-skill jobs are key to our nation's health, its infrastructure and its economic growth. Many of these jobs cannot be outsourced: from the care of our sick and elderly, to the repair of our computerized cars, to the running and maintenance of our factories' advanced machinery, to the construction of our nation's bridges and buildings. Middle-skill jobs can provide good wages and career paths for America's and Illinois' workers.

| Examples of High-Demand Middle-Skill Jobs in Illinois | Industry                          | 2009 Median Annual Earnings* |
|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Air Traffic Controllers                               | Transportation                    | \$137,920                    |
| Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers                  | Protective Services               | \$69,900                     |
| Carpenters  | Construction                      | \$58,340                     |
| Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer              | Trucking                          | \$39,250                     |
| Automotive Mechanics                                  | Installation, Maintenance, Repair | \$36,380                     |

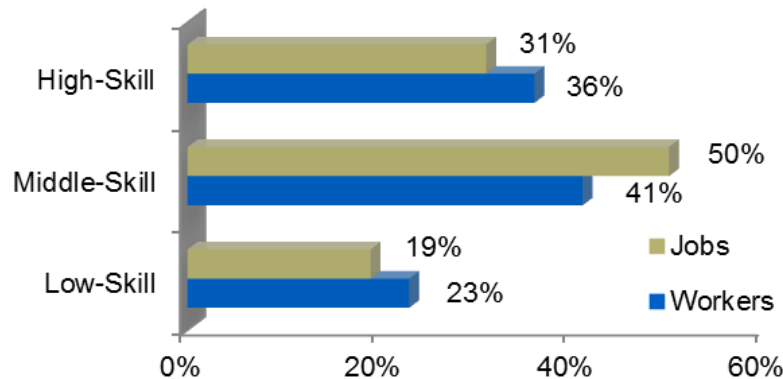
\* 2009 median annual earnings for all occupations in Illinois = \$34,830



## Illinois' Skills Mismatch: A Middle-Skills Gap

In 2009, about 50 percent of Illinois' jobs were in middle-skill occupations. But only 41 percent of the state's workers likely have the appropriate training for these jobs.

**Illinois Jobs and Workers by Skill Level, 2009**

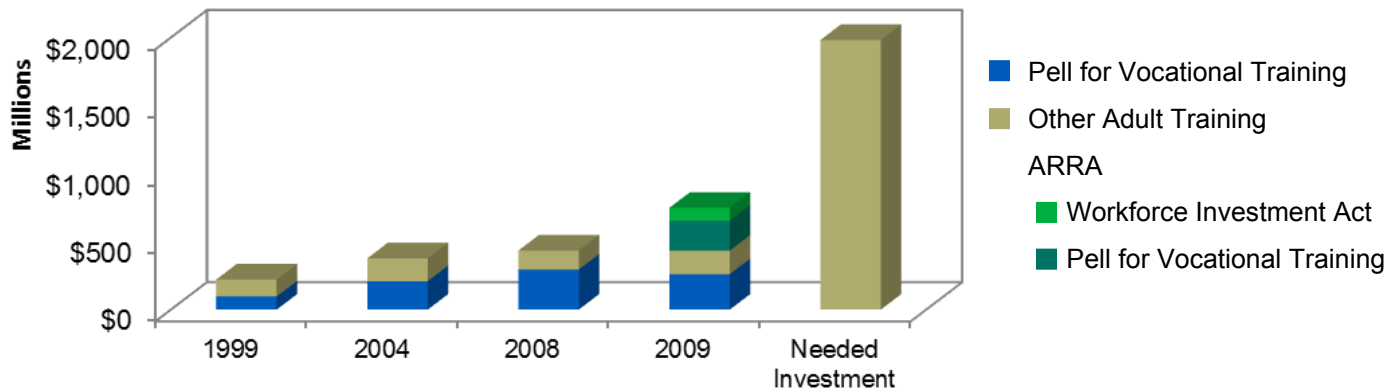


Sources: U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Bureau of the Census

## Illinois' Competitiveness Requires Federal Investments in Training for Middle-Skill Jobs

To maintain a strong economy, Illinois must address its middle-skills gap by investing in a skilled workforce. Training just another 5 percent of Illinois' workforce for middle-skill jobs would require a new investment, beyond existing state and federal programs, of at least \$1.5 billion or 4.6 times Illinois' current federal funding for all job training, adult education, vocational education, and financial aid for community college students.

**Illinois' Middle-Skills Investment Gap**



Sources: U.S. Departments of Labor and Education. Note: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Funds were a one-time investment in adult training programs, and include Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Pell Grant for Vocational Training funding.