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Coalition urges political action to improve work force

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DES MOINES, Iowa A coalition of business, education and civic leaders are challenging the state's politicians to deal with a looming crisis of skills in Iowa's workers.

With some studies predicting major shortages in the state's work force in the next several years, the Iowa Works Campaign has issued a report that urges immediate action. The coalition says officials must develop new tools for measuring the success of investment in worker training. The group also wants leaders to establish regional economic development partnerships and build closer links between education and job training. Robert Densen is president of Des Moines Area Community College. He points to studies showing there could be a shortage of up to 150 thousand skilled workers in the state by 2012. Densen says the response needs to be coordinated if Iowa hopes to keep businesses from moving away.

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