



Business Leaders United
for Workforce Partnerships

Business Leaders United (BLU) Employer Fly-in

January 14-15, 2015

Washington, DC

The 114th Congress

- Republican majorities in the House and Senate
- 74 new members of Congress: 61 new Representatives; 13 new Senators
- Critical moment for education and relationship building with new members and their staff

Skills Go Prime Time

- Bipartisan passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
- State of the Union and White House Summit on Long-Term Unemployed
- The Obama Administration's Job-Driven Training Action Plan
- 2015 State of the Union address – America's College Promise, American Technical Training Fund



Skills Go Prime Time

Meaningful employer involvement is at the center of each of these initiatives, thanks in part to the advocacy efforts of BLU



WIOA: How Did We Get Here

- WIOA is a product of a rare bipartisan effort on the Hill
- WIOA passed with overwhelming support in both the House (415-6) and Senate (95-3)
- The President signed WIOA into law on July 22, 2014



WIOA: Sector Partnerships

- In October 2013 BLU asked Congress to:
 - (1) identify dedicated support for sector partnerships;
 - (2) bring sector partnerships to scale; and
 - (3) include specific performance measures to ensure the quality of sector partnerships and meaningful employer engagement
- The final version of WIOA supports scaling sector partnerships and includes employer effectiveness performance measure
- Not perfect, but we've come a long way

WIOA is a “May” not a “Shall”

- In order to pass, could not make seismic changes to existing law
- WIOA will not, by itself, drive the type of change BLU employers have advocated for
- Creates lots of opportunities for change, but employer engagement during the implementation phase is critical

WIOA's Impact on Employers

- Maintains business majority on state and local Workforce Investment Boards and decreases the number of required members
- Promotes the use of sector partnerships, including by:
 - Requiring state boards to develop strategies to meet the needs of employers, particularly through sector partnerships; and
 - Requiring local areas to “develop, convene, or implement” sector partnerships

WIOA's Impact on Employers

- Establishes new performance measure on states and local areas' effectiveness in serving employers
 - New measure will be defined by DOL
 - Measure will not take effect until 2016 so there are opportunities for business to shape the definition



WIOA's Impact on Employers

- New focus on providing work-based learning opportunities for youth; particularly disconnected youth
- Local areas must support “earn and learn” activities such as pre-apprenticeships, paid and unpaid internships, etc. for youth



WIOA Passed in July...What Happens Now?

- WIOA authorizes funding levels through 2020 – but need to ensure Congress follows through
- The Departments of Labor (DOL) and Education (ED) are responsible for developing regulations
- States and local areas are moving forward with planning process
- Federal agencies, states, and localities need to hear from employers as implementation moves forward

Possible Congressional Activities in 2015

- Reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Act, supporting career and technical education
 - There may be an opportunity to link Perkins-funded programs to sector partnerships
- Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA), governing federal student aid
 - Pell Grants reauthorization could present an opportunity to secure Pell for shorter term occupational training programs
- Increasing Apprenticeship
 - President Obama's goal of doubling the number of apprentices by 2020
 - Bipartisan support in Congress for increasing apprenticeship opportunities

President Obama's Action on Skills



Obama Administration Sets Skills Agenda

- 2014 State of the Union address
- WH Ready-to-Work grant announcement featuring BLU
- National Job-Driven Training Action Plan



National Job-Driven Action Plan

Review identified steps the Administration can take to make federal employment and training programs more **“job-driven”**— employer led, connected to real jobs in local or regional labor markets, and resulting in skills and credentials that help individuals succeed in the labor market



National Job-Driven Action Plan

- Introduces new job-driven checklist for federal grantmaking includes that employer engagement and regional partnerships
- Strengthens collaboration across federal agencies administering job-training programs
- Establishes new Center for Workforce and Industry Partnerships (CWIP) at DOL
- Promotes practices to “upskill” incumbent front-line workers



Cross-Agency Collaboration

- Action plan touts increased collaboration between DOL and the Department of Commerce (DOC) to better align job training with economic development and promote apprenticeship
- CWIP, in partnership with DOC, is tasked with serving as a federal clearinghouse on sector partnerships: facilitating collaboration across agencies, promoting existing industry partnerships, and facilitating the creation of new partnerships



Commerce Acceleration Program

- DOC Economic Development Administration (EDA) *Accelerating Industry-Led Regional Partnerships for Talent Development* program – will establish learning exchange to identify, promote, and expand upon best practices for building local and regional job-driven industry partnerships
- DOC is seeking a national partner and is still early in the development phase
- Not yet clear how this effort intersects with WIOA, the CWIP, or other DOL activities



Upskilling Front-Line Workers

- Menu of employer actions to increase skills of low-to middle skill front-line incumbent workers
- Joint effort of the White House and the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE)
- WH and OCTAE want BLU employers to respond to this set of actions
- White House will host an employer summit in February to unveil the upskilling initiative



What to Expect Tomorrow

- White House/OCTAE: Employer response to upskilling proposal
- DOL/DOC: ensure their efforts to develop and expand sector partnerships are carefully coordinated, employer-driven, and define and measure success
- Capitol Hill: Congress recognized that federal job-training programs must be demand-driven. Congress must now fully fund WIOA to ensure employers have access to skilled workforce

