

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 29, 2007

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS and Education
Senate Committee on Appropriations
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Arlen Specter
Ranking Members
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS and Education
Senate Committee on Appropriations
156 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Specter:

We are writing to express our strong support for your fiscal year 2008 Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations bill as it moves toward conference. We particularly would like to commend you for your restoration of \$1 billion in cuts to Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs proposed by the Administration in its FY 08 budget request.

The Administration's funding request for WIA programs, which included a \$335 million rescission to current year WIA formula funding, would have devastated WIA and the employment service programs - a 19 percent overall cut. This year, over 13 million workers, almost one in ten workers nationally, will seek assistance from our nation's employment and training programs. We believe that a skilled workforce is essential to our nation's economic security and these proposed funding cuts would have seriously undermined our ability to compete in the global economy.

We are concerned that the House Labor, HHS, and Education bill contains the \$335 million WIA rescission originally proposed by the Administration. If enacted, this rescission will have a direct and immediate impact on the workforce system's ability to provide these critical services. At least 134,000 workers will not have access to critical job training and related services and a rescission will force One Stop Career Centers around the nation to close their doors.

As you move toward Conference on the Labor-HHS Appropriations bill with the House, we strongly urge you to maintain Senate funding levels for WIA programs and reject any rescission of WIA funding.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell

United States Senator



Susan Collins

United States Senator