Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 20, 2011

The Honorable Denny Rehberg
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services
and Education Committee
2358 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services
and Education Committee
1016 Longworth Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rehberg and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) provides critical funding for training and employment services across our nation and has effectively helped Americans find work since its inception in 1998. We respectfully support the President's recommended funding levels of $5,335,335,000 for the FY 2012.

The Workforce Investment Act provides formula grant funding for adults, dislocated workers and youth to states based on unemployment rate and labor force size. The funds are effectively administered by local Workforce Investment Boards, which consist of local businesses owners and community leaders. These funds support regional workforce development centers across the nation that help Americans find meaningful employment in a changing economy. One-stop workforce centers offer a wide variety of services from computer access to more in-depth career counseling and vocational training. WIA also provides formula grant funding for a variety of youth programs that offer tutoring, summer employment opportunities, internships and vocational skills training.

WIA funding directly supports a variety of popular programs such as Youthbuild, Job Corps and the Green Jobs Innovation Fund. These cost-effective programs are proven to help fill specific job-training needs in local communities. Job Corps provides valuable academic and vocational training to high-risk youth in a safe residential setting and Youthbuild offers young people hands-on training in the housing and construction trades. The Green Jobs Innovation Fund has proven to be so effective that the Department of Labor seeks to expand the Fund, from $40 million in FY 2010 to $60 million for FY 2012. This investment will enable the Department to continue its efforts to provide workers with the skills necessary to compete in a green energy economy.

With well over 14 million Americans currently unemployed in this country, we must continue to strategically invest in our workforce development programs that are helping to rebuild our fragile economy. That is why we respectfully request that the Workforce Investment Act receive $5,335,335,000 in FY2012. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

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