

Dear Region 2 Board Members,

In September the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (DOL), Region 5, conducted a review of Iowa's implementation of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). We are now in receipt of their written report with recommendations/mandates.

- DOL has mandated that substantial changes be made to the internal infrastructure of workforce services delivery in Iowa in order to effectively implement WIOA. DOL has determined that Iowa must redesign local workforce boards including the number, scope, operation and structure of those boards. DOL has determined the current structure is not in compliance with WIOA or federal law and in order for Iowa to be compliant, significant changes to the current structure must be made within the next few months. It is DOL's position that absent these substantial changes, it will be "impossible" for local boards to fulfill their duties under WIOA nor will they be able to effectively leverage available federal funding to meet the WIOA requirements.
- Because of the short time line DOL has imposed to complete these changes, the State Workforce Development Board will establish a committee to review Iowa's current configuration of 15 local workforce development areas at its meeting on November 20, 2017. The Committee will then make recommendations to the State Workforce Board as soon as practicable. The State Workforce Board will then act on those recommendations and to the extent possible, IWD will move to help local boards implement those changes.
- Working with the State Workforce Board, IWD will work very hard over the limited time allotted by DOL to mitigate the impact of these changes and provide support and assistance to the local boards navigating their way through the required changes. We ask that you keep an open mind and have patience as we all work to make the required changes to the infrastructure of our workforce service delivery system through our local boards in order to effectively implement WIOA.

This review will not result in the closure of any of Iowa's 15 comprehensive one-stop centers (which are also known as field offices).

We will discuss and release the report to the State Workforce Board at its next scheduled meeting on November 20, 2017. We will also email the report to you and all of our partners and stakeholders after the meeting.

I know that Iowa is a state that knows how to work together, and how to collaborate to solve problems. I have no doubt that together we will be able to meet this challenge from DOL. Unfortunately, what the report fails to acknowledge, is all of the hard work of our local boards, chief elected officials, IowaWorks staff and partners who, every day, provide the most effective and efficient workforce services in the country, in my humble opinion. As always I appreciate your support and look forward to solving the issues DOL has raised. We will keep you informed.

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