



**MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION
OF WORKFORCE BOARDS**

2025 FEDERAL PRIORITIES

IT IS THE MISSION OF THE MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF WORKFORCE BOARDS TO PROVIDE MINNESOTA WITH A SKILLED AND COMPETITIVE WORKFORCE THROUGH ENGAGED AND PROACTIVE LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS, WORKFORCE BOARDS, AND STAFF.

The Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB) supports critical investments in the workforce system which allow for data-driven, effective local solutions to meet workforce needs. Minnesota's current employment landscape still grapples with a statewide worker shortage and racial disparities, both of which were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. With Minnesota's low unemployment rate, there are nearly two job vacancies for every jobseeker looking for work. This worker shortage is taking a toll on Minnesota employers as they struggle to fill positions and retain talent.

Minnesota's workforce system is addressing these challenges but need increased funding and tools to meet the moment.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Reauthorization

MAWB advocates for the reauthorization of the nation's signature federal workforce law, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, while modifying the program to ensure effectiveness and broad service delivery to meet the needs of a rapidly evolving economy.

While WIOA sets the foundation for an operational, nationwide workforce development system, several modifications to the law should be considered by policymakers to broaden the positive impacts, including:

- Increased investment to provide more workers with access to skills training, educational opportunities, career counseling, and support services, aligned with high demand occupations.
- Dedicated funding for business services to effectively serve employers in a demand-driven workforce system.
- Replace the Infrastructure Funding Agreement cost-share requirement with a more equitable way to finance American Job Centers.
- Decrease/eliminate restrictions on categories of funding within WIOA law to develop strategies and programs that meet the needs of local communities and economies.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Investment

MAWB advocates that Congress adopt specific authorized funding levels for core Title I formula programs for at least \$15 billion on an annual basis– both to account for the erosion of WIOA funding over time and to meet new and emerging needs.

The House has proposed cuts to the WIOA Adult program and elimination of the WIOA Youth Program. Reducing WIOA funding will hinder access to career services for millions of people, end employment and training opportunities for nearly a half-million more and extinguish skilled talent pipelines employers depend upon.

Both programs boast high performance measures, including helping participants earn credentials, gain skills, increase wages, and obtain and retain employment.

Impact: A strengthened and fully funded WIOA program will increase labor force participation, ensure equitable access to resources, develop skills employers need for today and tomorrow, and lift more people out of poverty.