

☞ **07hr\_SC-LEUA\_Misc\_pt21f**



☞ July 8, 2008 ... Informational Hearing ... DWD Job Center Consolidation

(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

**WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ...  
PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS**

**2007-08**

(session year)

**Senate**

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

**Committee on ... Labor, Elections and Urban  
Affairs (SC-LEUA)**

**COMMITTEE NOTICES ...**

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

**INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL**

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)  
(**ab** = Assembly Bill)                      (**ar** = Assembly Resolution)                      (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)  
(**sb** = Senate Bill)                              (**sr** = Senate Resolution)                              (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

\* Contents organized for archiving by: Mike Barman (LRB) (November/2010)

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## Communities will lose job assistance programs in consolidation plan

By MARK PITSCH  
608-252-6145  
May 30, 2008

In a previously unannounced move, the state plans to consolidate its job assistance programs in 12 regional sites, pulling staff from dozens of smaller communities such as Monroe, Ladysmith and Richland Center and placing them in larger cities like Milwaukee, Madison and Eau Claire.

The action, which will start June 30 and take place throughout the year, will make it harder for veterans, people with disabilities, the unemployed and the underemployed to find jobs and get other services, advocates said.

"That's a huge deal," said John Keckhaver, a research analyst with the Council on Children and Families. "It's going to have a significant impact on low-skilled people in the state and other people who are going to need job services."

But Dick Jones, agency liaison for the Department of Workforce Development, which oversees the 78 job centers in the state that provide job-assistance services, said the changes will improve services to low-income job seekers even as the federal support that pays for the programs shrinks.

"The whole point is a more aggressive, more proactive effort that reaches out into the communities on an as-needed basis," Jones said. "What's going on is a good thing. Services will improve as a result."

State job assistance specialists will be mobile within a region to help people land jobs, he said. At the same time, the agency is creating a virtual job center, to be operational in September, that will be accessible from a computer 24 hours a day, he said.

But advocates said the population served under the state's job assistance programs often need personal assistance in reviewing job listings, filling out job applications, writing resumes and preparing for interviews. Many don't have access to a computer, they said.

"We're big believers in locally based services," said Lynn Breedlove, executive director of Disability Rights Wisconsin.

Advocates also said they weren't aware of the consolidation until

contacted by the State Journal.

### **Many services offered**

The 78 job centers across the state are overseen by DWD and are made up of a variety of service providers, including DWD, local community-based social services agencies, state technical colleges and state W-2 agencies.

The centers provide career planning and job-search aid; employment training; information on child care, transportation and other support services for workers; and other services.

Jones said the centers will still operate across the state.

But DWD is consolidating its 157 employees involved in the program at 12 locations: two in Milwaukee and one each in Madison, Janesville, Kenosha, Pewaukee, Green Bay, Menasha, Wausau, Superior, Eau Claire and La Crosse.

The centers rely on federal funding, and cutbacks require the consolidation, Jones said.

Up-to-date funding information wasn't available Friday, he said, but agency officials cited a 2004 study by the Center on Wisconsin Strategy at UW-Madison that showed a 56 percent drop in federal employment and training funding.

There will be no job cuts at the job centers, but Jones said he wasn't sure whether the state employees who will have to transfer have been notified. And he couldn't say Friday how the state planned to notify the job centers' clients of the change.

### **A call for transparency**

Advocates said DWD needs to provide more information about the planned changes.

"At a time like this, at such a difficult economic time, we need to be as transparent about this as possible," Keckhaver said.

David Chugg, a job placement specialist with Community Solutions for Wisconsin, a Janesville company that provides job assistance services for the state, said the changes will hurt people with disabilities.

"Unfortunately, sometimes the people who are least able to deal with these situations are hurt the most," he said.

Jim Golembeski, executive director of the Bay Area Workforce Development Board, a partner in the nine job centers in 10 northeast Wisconsin counties, said the changes could have a significant impact on veterans because some state employees specialize in providing job aid to veterans.

"We're at war right now and you start pulling veterans' staff out of these communities...that's not a happy place to be," Golembeski said.

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Wisconsin State Journal :: OPINION :: A11

Tuesday, June 10, 2008

Job Service offices will serve even more

Regarding the State Journal's May 31 article on changes in the state employment and training services, I support these improvements by the Department of Workforce Development.

DWD Job Service staff will be based in 12 regional hubs, but move throughout their regions visiting our centers, holding office hours and providing services. More importantly, they will do this in many other communities, and they will meet the needs of all who require services, including veterans and those with disabilities.

Our Web site ( [www.wdbscw.org/index.asp](http://www.wdbscw.org/index.asp) ) lists our job centers, their locations and hours. The state doesn't run our centers. The Workforce Development Board, with our partners, financially support and operate job centers throughout our region. They will remain open, with the help of our many partners, including the state.

This fall DWD will open a virtual job center, providing easy Internet access to information. Its features will include online posting of job resumes and job orders, and the ability to conduct job interviews and hold job fairs and workshops.

DWD has been planning the virtual job center feature for over a year. The new technology combined with a more efficient organization of staff teams is a solid response to continued loss of federal funding. DWD consulted us for input throughout their system development.

We believe it's time to do things differently. We live in an information age and compete in a global economy. We need a 21st century employment and training system, and the state's plan will take us in that direction.

- Pat Schramm, executive director, Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin

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**Original Story URL:**

<http://www.jsonline.com/story/index.aspx?id=761965>

## New steps for work force group

By TIM SULLIVAN

*Posted: June 14, 2008*

I strongly support the steps the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development is taking to improve state employment and training services. The improvements DWD is making will help meet the needs of job-seekers, workers and employers, not only in southeastern Wisconsin, but across the state. We are competing in a high-tech, fast-paced global economy, and we need a 21st-century employment and training system that works for urban and rural areas.

Wisconsin's job centers were created nearly 25 years ago with a \$10 million federal start-up grant. Since then, Wisconsin's federal employment and training funds have been cut by more than half. At the same time, we see an increasing need for skilled workers.

The state's shrinking resources and staff have been spread so thin that too little state support has been going into actually serving job-seekers and employers with skills assessment, career advising and training. State funds have been consumed with overhead such as rent, computer lines and publications. Whatever we can do to reduce such overhead expenses and invest in employment and training services will be to everyone's best interests now and in the future.

It is time for improvements, and as chair of the Wisconsin Council on Workforce Investment, I believe what DWD is doing will make better use of resources by providing higher quality services to job-seekers and employers.

By year end, DWD's job service and veterans staff will be assigned to 12 regional sites. Staff in southeastern Wisconsin will be assigned to two sites in Milwaukee and sites in Pewaukee and Kenosha. Based at those sites, they will circulate within our region, holding office hours in communities large and small, serving all job-seekers, including veterans, people with disabilities and dislocated workers.

Rather than wait for job-seekers to come to them, staff will reach out to customers at sites that include technical college campuses, community organizations and libraries. Employers should be better served with a proactive staff, reaching out to them and working to connect them with qualified job-seekers.

In recent years, more job-seekers are searching the Internet for jobs. DWD is developing an innovative, easy-to-use virtual job center. Job-seekers will be able to post resumes and get online job search assistance. Employers will be able to post job orders, screen candidates and conduct interviews. Online job fairs and conferences also will be possible. Staff and technical support will be available for visitors.



Our goal is for every job-seeker and employer to have access to the resources they need. With these changes, there will be no loss of state positions or services but rather a stronger employment and training system serving more communities, job-seekers and employers.

*Tim Sullivan is chief executive of Bucyrus International Inc. and chairs the Wisconsin Council on Workforce Investment.*

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June 15, 2008

## Officials worried about DWD offices

*By Shenandoah Sowash  
Central Wisconsin Sunday*

With Job Service offices in Adams, Marshfield, Stevens Point and Wisconsin Rapids, the Department of Workforce Development has a hearty presence in central Wisconsin, a presence some politicians worry might vanish.

DWD Secretary Roberta Gassman plans to consolidate Job Service offices and resources across Wisconsin by creating 12 regional sites. For most central Wisconsin residents, the nearest hubs will be Madison and Wausau.

Local leaders, including Sen. Julie Lassa, D-Stevens Point and Rep. Marlin Schneider, D-Wisconsin Rapids, are mainly concerned with accessibility.

"At a time when our community is experiencing economic challenges, including a downsizing paper industry and rising fuel costs, the people of central Wisconsin rely on the Job Service for assistance in finding new training and employment opportunities," Lassa said. "It is unreasonable to ask people to travel to Madison or Wausau to seek those services."

DWD officials say limited federal funding made it necessary to consolidate resources and they plan to fill in the gaps with a virtual job center capable of video job interviews, virtual job fairs and face-to-face job search assistance through web cameras.

Schneider says given destructive floods, a tough economy and industrial plants closing throughout the state, the timing of Gassman's decision couldn't be worse.

DWD Communications Director Jessica Erickson said the department has no intention of closing centers or eliminating staff positions. Rather, the department will focus on making staff members mobile to better serve the state.

"We're transforming our employment and training system to best meet the needs of employers ... in the 21st century," said Erickson.

Lassa and Schneider, as well as Reps. Louis Molepske Jr., D-Stevens Point, and Amy Sue Vruwink, D-Milladore, recently sent Gassman a letter, expressing their concern for constituents who may not have access to the Internet or transportation.

"We're committed to serving all communities ... Our commitment is as strong as ever," Erickson said.

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# New job service will benefit all

By **DON MADELUNG**  
and **JIM CAVANAUGH**

**W**e write to state our strong support for steps the Department of Workforce Development is taking to improve state employment and training services.

This will help us meet the needs of job-seekers, workers and employers throughout the six counties of our South Central Wisconsin Workforce Development area. We are competing in a high-tech, fast-paced global economy, and we need a 21st century employment and training program that works for all communities, urban and rural.

Wisconsin's job center system was created nearly 25 years ago with a \$10 million federal start-up grant.

Since then, Wisconsin's federal employment and training funds have been cut by more than half. At the same time, we see an ever increasing need for skilled workers.

The state's shrinking resources and staff have been spread so thin that too little state support has been going to actually serving job seekers and employers with skills assessment, career advising and training.

State funds have been consumed with overhead such as rent, computer lines and publications. It is time for improvements, and what DWD is doing will make better use of resources by providing higher quality services to job seekers and employers.

By the end of the year, DWD's job service and veterans staff will be assigned to 12 regional sites. While staff in our region will be based in Madison, they will circulate throughout the area, holding office hours in communities and serving all job seekers.

We appreciate that DWD is committed to serving every

community, large and small. Rather than wait for job seekers to come to them, its staff will reach out and serve customers through a variety of sites including technical college campuses, community organizations and libraries.

Employers should be better served with a proactive staff, reaching out to them and working to connect them with an expanded pool of qualified job seekers.

Another major development in recent years is the widespread use of computers, and the advent of the Internet.

More job seekers now search the Internet for jobs. DWD is developing an innovative, easy-to-use virtual job center with access statewide, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Job seekers will be able to post resumes and get online job search assistance. Employers will be able to post job orders, screen candidates and conduct interviews. Online job fairs and conferences will also be possible. Staff and technical support will be available to help visitors use these features.

Given the challenges we face and the opportunities DWD has presented, we are in strong support and pleased to work with DWD to improve Wisconsin's employment and training system.

Our goal is for every job seeker and employer to have access to the resources they need to be successful. We see no loss of state positions or services, but rather a stronger employment and training program serving more communities, job seekers and employers.

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Madelung is president of Herzog College and chairman of the Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin. Cavanaugh is treasurer of the WDB of South Central Wisconsin and president of the South Central Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO.





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2>[New Job Service Will Benefit All](#)

## Wisconsin State Journal :: OPINION :: A10

Thursday, June 19, 2008

By **DON MADELUNG** and **JIM CAVANAUGH**

We write to state our strong support for steps the Department of Workforce Development is taking to improve state employment and training services.

This will help us meet the needs of job-seekers, workers and employers throughout the six counties of our South Central Wisconsin Workforce Development area. We are competing in a high-tech, fast-paced global economy, and we need a 21st century employment and training program that works for all communities, urban and rural. Wisconsin's job center system was created nearly 25 years ago with a \$10 million federal start-up grant.

Since then, Wisconsin's federal employment and training funds have been cut by more than half. At the same time, we see an ever increasing need for skilled workers.

The state's shrinking resources and staff have been spread so thin that too little state support has been going to actually serving job seekers and employers with skills assessment, career advising and training.

State funds have been consumed with overhead such as rent, computer lines and publications. It is time for improvements, and what DWD is doing will make better use of resources by providing higher quality services to job seekers and employers.

By the end of the year, DWD's job service and veterans staff will be assigned to 12 regional sites. While staff in our region will be based in Madison, they will circulate throughout the area, holding office hours in communities and serving all job seekers.

We appreciate that DWD is committed to serving every community, large and small. Rather than wait for job seekers to come to them, its staff will reach out and serve customers through a variety of sites including technical college campuses, community organizations and libraries.

Employers should be better served with a proactive staff, reaching out to them and working to connect them with an expanded pool of qualified job seekers.

Another major development in recent years is the widespread use of computers, and the advent of the Internet.





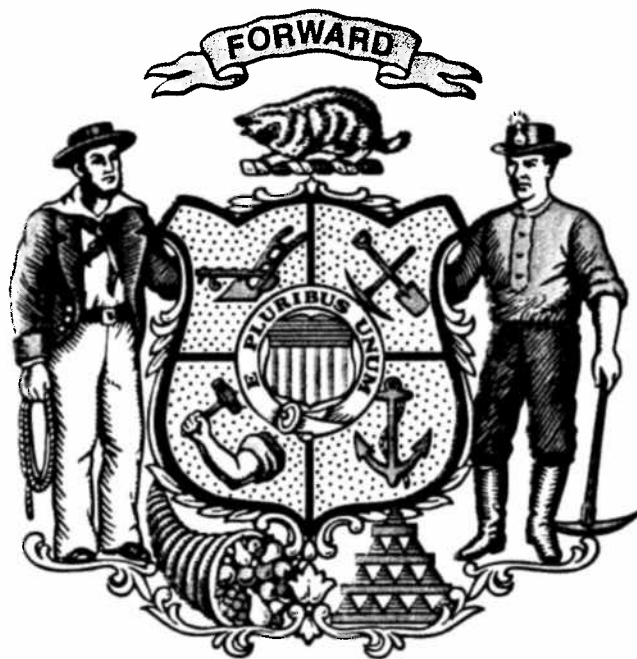




customer service they deserve.

Sally Cutler is the executive director of the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board in Wisconsin Rapids. Her e-mail is [scutler@ncwwdb.org](mailto:scutler@ncwwdb.org)

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# The Journal Times

## MAKE A CONNECTION

Friday, June 27, 2008

### Commentary

## DWD's new focus benefits Wisconsin's workforce

Print Page

BY CHRISTOPHER A. RUUD

Friday, June 27, 2008 9:47 PM CDT

I am writing to express my strong support for changes the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is making to improve state employment and training services.

These changes are necessary to meet the needs of job seekers, workers and employers not only in Racine, but throughout Wisconsin. We are competing in a high-tech, fast-paced global economy, and we need 21st Century employment and training services that work for all communities, urban and rural.

Wisconsin's job center system was created nearly 25 years ago with a \$10 million federal start-up grant. Since then, Wisconsin's federal employment and training funds have been cut by more than half. At the same time, we see an ever increasing need with definite shortages of skilled workers. We must be more proactive in our efforts to connect employers and workers with the right skills.

The state's shrinking resources and staff have been spread so thin that too little state support has been going to actually serving job seekers and employers with skills assessment, career advising and training. Funds have been consumed with overhead such as rent, computer lines and publications.

It is time for improvements, and the steps DWD is taking will make better use of resources by providing higher quality services to jobseekers and employers. As a businessman, and as a member of the Council on Workforce Investment, I strongly support the direction the department is taking.

I appreciate that DWD is committed to serving every community, large and small. Rather than wait for job seekers to come to them, its staff will reach out and serve customers through a variety of sites including technical college campuses, community organizations and libraries. Employers should be better served with a proactive staff, reaching out to them and working to connect them with an expanded pool of qualified jobseekers.

DWD is developing an innovative, easy-to-use virtual job center with access statewide, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Jobseekers will be able to post resumes and get online job search assistance. Employers will be able to post job orders, screen candidates and conduct interviews. Online job fairs and conferences will also be possible. Staff and technical support will be available to help visitors use these features.

Given the challenges we face and the opportunities DWD has presented, I strongly support DWD's work to improve Wisconsin's employment and training services. We all share the same goal — ensuring that every single job seeker and employer has access to the resources they need to be successful. I am encouraged that the revised vision and plan will result in a stronger employment and training program serving more communities, jobseekers and employers.

Ruud is the Executive Vice President of Ruud Lighting & a member of the Wisconsin Council on Workforce Investment.

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## **Senator Dale Schultz**

[www.senatordaleschultz.com](http://www.senatordaleschultz.com)

For release July 2, 2008

Information: Dale Schultz 800.978.8008

### **Doyle Plan Abandons Rural Job Seekers, Employers and Communities**

Madison.....Senator Dale Schultz wants to stop plans by Governor Jim Doyle's administration to force every Job Center in rural Wisconsin to close.

In a letter to Doyle's Secretary of the Department of Workforce Development, Roberta Gassman, Schultz said moving all Job Service personnel to 12 urban locations fails the needs of rural areas.

Schultz is asking the Doyle administration to start anew and develop a better plan that doesn't abandon rural Wisconsin.

"A better plan would be a responsive state government that collaborates on ways to provide more services to rural workers and employers in response to the current economic and flooding challenges in rural Wisconsin," Schultz said.

Schultz said the Doyle plan was not responsive to rural areas because it was developed without an effort to collaborate with rural community leaders, rural residents and the other partners that work with job seekers at rural Job Center offices.

Job Centers help workers obtain training and find jobs, and help employers find qualified employees and access training and hiring programs. Partners that make Job Centers possible include DWD Job Service, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, technical colleges, W-2 agencies, Workforce Investment Act service providers and regional, county and community agencies such as Community Action Program.

"Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development withdrawing staff and funding would force the Job Centers across rural Wisconsin closed, or, the partner organizations would have to come up with substantially more money to continue services and keep the Centers open," Schultz said.

**- More -**



### **Schultz- Job Center closure plan, add one**

Schultz said rural property taxpayers can't bear the burden if state resources are taken away, forcing rural Job Centers to close. He said the Doyle plan treats rural communities unfairly in part because incomes in rural areas are considerably less than in urban areas.

"Median household incomes are significantly lower in rural regions than in urban areas," Schultz said. "The result is that our current economic circumstances, including plant closings and mass layoffs, cause greater burdens on rural communities and workers than for urban areas. This past month's flooding disaster exacerbates the plight of rural folks."

Schultz said while the Doyle plan relies heavily on providing services through the internet, many rural workers lack computer skills and many rural areas don't even have broadband internet service to access job search and job training services.



**Employment & Training Services for All  
Wisconsin Workers, Employers & Communities**

**Secretary Roberta Gassman  
Department of Workforce Development**

July 8, 2008

**Senate Committee on Labor, Elections and Urban Affairs  
Informational Hearing**

## **Overview**

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- **Key Bottom Line Facts**
- **Workforce System Basics**
- **Workforce System Challenges**
- **DWD's Two-Phase Plan**
- **Packets & Q/A**

## The Bottom Line

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- **DWD is *NOT* closing job centers**
- **DWD is**
  - **Realigning DWD staff**
  - **Reducing overhead**
  - **Extending our services**
    - **Serving more communities**
    - **Improving our online services**
  - **Collaborating with our partners to provide better services**



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## The Bottom Line

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- **On-going DWD commitment to collaboration**
  - **Statewide Virtual Job Center Advisory Committee**
    - **State investment in technology, laptops**
  - **Statewide standards committee with Workforce Development Board (WDB) & tech college reps**
  - **Regional public listening sessions**
  - **Honoring long-term lease agreements**
  - **Directing future federal discretionary \$ to training**



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## The Bottom Line

### Why change employment & training services?

- Current workforce system not meeting employer needs or reaching enough workers
- Decreasing federal resources
- Current tools antiquated



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## Workforce System Basics

### Main DWD Job Center Programs – PY08

<b>Workforce Investment Act = primary \$ for workforce dev</b> Core services for all; intensive & training services for eligible adults, dislocated workers, youth 85% of \$ to 11 WDBs Requires one comprehensive job center in each WDA	<b>\$47.7 M</b> <b>federal</b>
<b>Wagner Peyser Act created in 1931</b> Established nationwide system of public employment offices Funds 113 FTE (state staff), technology, facilities Provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labor exchange to connect job seekers &amp; employers</li> <li>• Job assistance, referral &amp; placement for job seekers &amp; employers</li> </ul> No eligibility requirements for service	<b>\$13.4 M</b> <b>federal</b>
<b>Veterans Employment &amp; Training</b> 30+ state staff, case management, job placement	<b>\$3.0 M</b> <b>federal</b>

64.7  
 9  
 2.3

not providing services this ought to



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## Workforce System Basics: State Roles

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€ Federal law defines state role:

- 1) Oversight of system, Workforce Investment Act local plan approvals, Council on Workforce Investment & compliance
- 2) Collaboration with local workforce development boards in job centers through Wagner Peyser Job Service & Vets staff, DVR



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## Workforce System Basics: Reg'l Workforce Dev Bd Roles

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€ Federal law defines WDB role:

- Oversee local one-stop system
- Set local workforce investment policy
- Develop & submit comprehensive 5-year local plan to state
- Assist employers in meeting hiring needs
- Select local service providers
- Direct disbursement of local WIA funds
- Negotiate local performance measures w/ local elected officials & Governor



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## Workforce System Challenges

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### Changes Needed – For Job Seekers

Job center system created almost 25 years ago with one-time start-up federal \$

Too much current \$ goes to “bricks & mortar” – not training

More people using Internet for job search while state system outdated:

- 73% of those looking for a job this year used Internet – up from 44% in 2000

→ *monster.com*



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## Workforce System Challenges

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### Change Needed – For Employers

• #1 employer complaint:

Job center system not providing qualified candidates

- Must update system & online resources to successfully match job seekers & employers
- Workers do not have adequate skills

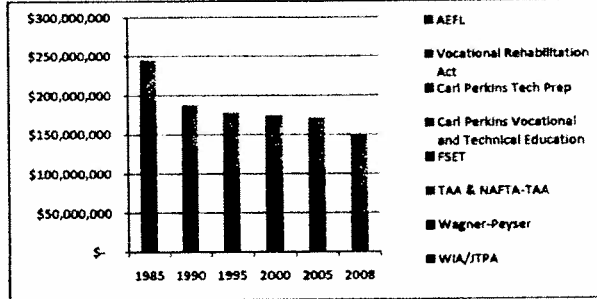


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## Workforce System Challenges

Federal funding for Wisconsin workforce development is shrinking

Chart 4: Federal funding for workforce development, by major program area, 1985-2008



- 73% decline in funding from 1985 through FY08, adjusted for inflation

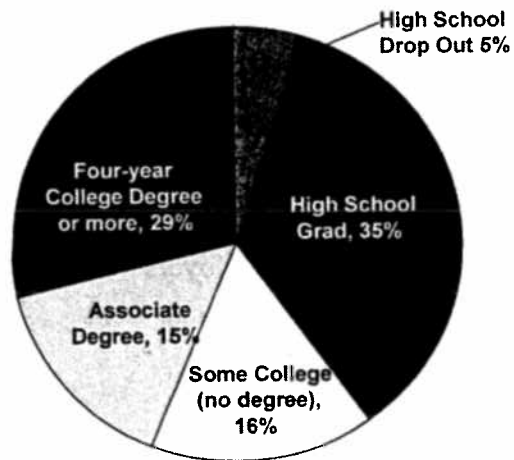
Source: Public Policy Forum



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## Workforce System Challenges

Wisconsin Workers Ages 26 & Over, by Education



Source: UW-Madison COWS, 2008



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## Workforce System Challenges

### Skills Shortages

- Time is now to get more people into training
- Recent publications & calls for action:
  - UW-Madison Center on Wisconsin Strategy
  - Office of Economic Advisors' forecasts:
    - "Average Annual Job Openings and Average Earnings"
  - Wisconsin Council on Children and Families report on need for access to tech colleges
  - Others



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## Workforce System Challenges

### How Most Citizens Access State Services Now

More users find state services via internet vs. in person

#### • Job seekers

- 10 million hits on JobNet a year
- Only 106,000 registered users in job centers a year
- COWS estimates 700,000 Wisconsin workers lack HS diploma or post HS training to compete in today's job market

#### • Employers

- Serve only 17% of employers (27,000 a year out of possible 160,000 statewide)

#### • Current state JobNet site

- Antiquated
- Limited functionality
- Needs major update to be useful



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*reach more people & employers  
better trained workforce*

## DWD'S TWO-PHASE PLAN

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- To achieve greater efficiencies
- To improve services
- To ensure that every job seeker & employer has access to the resources they need to be successful

### PHASE 1

- As of December 31, 2008 redirect DWD's Job Service and Vets staff to provide mobile services out of 12 comprehensive hub sites
  - Selection based on population, need, efficiencies
- Reduce fixed costs – rent & facilities
- Redirect savings to service improvements without cutting any staff positions



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*\* met w/ dozens  
dozens of people  
sent out more  
than 1200 communications*

*→ data from  
38 or 39*

## Agreements and Leases

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### PHASE 1

- DWD will honor long-term, legal obligations & seek ways to minimize costs
  - Sub-leases
  - DVR taking over space
  - Other creative strategies to reduce state costs



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## DWD'S TWO-PHASE PLAN

### Phase I: Job Service Staff Locations

WDA Hub	Current DET Staff	DET Staff Coming to Hub	Total Staff	Managers
Kenosha	7	7.3	14.3	1
Milw SE	13	2.5	15.5	1.5
Milw NE	4.9	8	12.9	1.5
Pewaukee	6	1.6	7.6	1
Menasha	6	6	12	1
Green Bay	8	8.4	16.4	1
Superior	3	2.5	5.5	1
Eau Claire	5.7	4.2	9.2	1
La Crosse	7.5	1	8.5	1
Madison	10	5	15	1
Janesville	8.5	5.8	14.3	1
Wausau	4	4	8	1
Totals	83.6	56.3	139.2	13



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*Population, need, & efficiency based*

## DWD'S TWO-PHASE PLAN

### PHASE 2 – With regional partners

Create new state-funded, easy-to-use virtual job center available everywhere, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Serve every community, large or small, rural or urban, with mobile staff, outreach, network of community office hour sites

Increase connections to tech colleges, employers, citizens, including vets, dislocated workers, those with disabilities

Establish baseline measures, service targets, evaluation standards



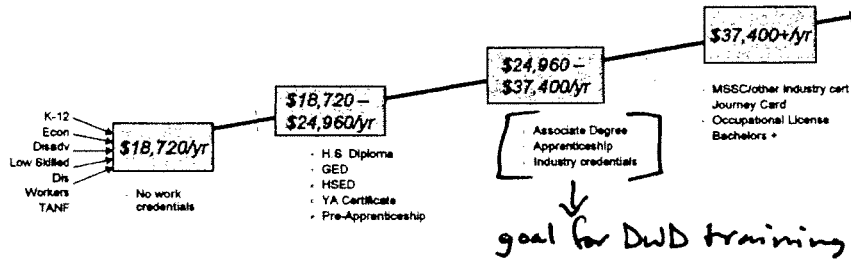
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*new virtual job center*  
*list resumes online for employer review*

# DWD'S TWO-PHASE PLAN

## PHASE 2

Move More Workers Up the Pathway to Skills, Better Jobs & Earnings



- Background materials & stakeholder comments
- Pleased to answer any questions

Thank you!





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## State will rethink cut in job centers

By Jason Stein  
608-252-6129  
July 9, 2008

State officials have taken a step back from their plan to pull staffers who help the unemployed out of dozens of job centers around the state.

Officials have said the move would more efficiently use shrinking federal dollars to serve more workers in need. But the plan drew heavy criticism at a legislative hearing Tuesday from lawmakers and local leaders who said the move could hurt unemployed people in rural and poor communities facing mounting economic woes.

"I want to do some more work with our regional work force partners and our staff to identify some additional options for meeting our shared fiscal pressures as well as our commitment to serve more workers and more employers," Department of Workforce Development Secretary Roberta Gassman said in an interview Wednesday.

The original plan would have consolidated 113 state job-service staffers who help the unemployed find work from 38 job centers statewide into 12 of the sites in bigger cities such as Madison and Milwaukee. It called for having state employees drive back to visit job and community centers in those areas instead of being permanently stationed there and for turning to more high-tech tools such as the Internet to serve workers.

Sen. John Lehman, D-Racine, who questioned the proposed change and sought to delay it, praised Gassman for reconsidering it.

"There 's not been a lot of communication and I 'm very happy that the secretary is willing to sit down with the (local) partners," Lehman said. "This is exactly what we asked her to do and I 'm happy she 's taking this step."

Under the original proposal, Racine, which has one of the highest unemployment rates in the state, would have seen about three state staffers redeployed from its job center to one in nearby Kenosha, according to figures from DWD spokesman Richard Jones.

The proposed changes would have helped save the state \$500,000 to \$1 million a year on overhead costs such as rent, Gassman told lawmakers at the Senate committee hearing. The changes also reflect the fact that job centers have 106,000 registered users a year, compared to 10 million hits each year at the state 's JobNet Web site. Gassman called that site a "dinosaur" compared to private sites such as Monster.com.

Gassman said the state was also reconsidering its plan in part because of new offers of free or reduced rent in job centers and said her agency would continue to look at the question of costs.

Before and at the hearing, lawmakers from both parties and local leaders expressed concern over the effects of the proposed changes on unemployed workers who don 't have Internet access and who can 't afford to drive long distances to get help seeking a job.

Wisconsin Rapids Mayor Mary Jo Carson said she was concerned about the proposed transfer of job center staff right after the recent closing of the Domtar Papers mill in nearby Port Edwards, which affected 500 workers. Carson said she worried local workers and businesses might lose help "in their hour of need. "

Other work force experts such as Laura Dresser of the UW-Madison Center on Wisconsin Strategy praised the proposed changes as difficult but necessary given the decline in federal money to support the job-service programs.

Sen. Dale Schultz, R-Richland Center, a critic who said the proposed changes would harm his rural southwestern Wisconsin district, said he was pleased with Gassman 's decision but that he would need to see the possible options before commenting more.

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