



## WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STAFF MEMORANDUM

Memo No. 1

TO: MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON BUILDING WISCONSIN'S  
WORKFORCE

FROM: Jessica L. Karls and Scott Grosz, Staff Attorneys

RE: Potential Recommendations Submitted for Consideration by Committee Members

DATE: September 16, 2008 (Revised September 23, 2008)

This Memo compiles potential recommendations for legislative proposals and specific issues for further committee study, as submitted by the members of the Special Committee on Building Wisconsin's Workforce. Members were invited by Legislative Council Staff to submit potential recommendations following the August 18, 2008, committee meeting.

The potential recommendations are categorized into nine areas with an effort made to place each potential recommendation in the most appropriate category. The name of the committee member who submitted the potential recommendation follows each recommendation.

### A. SYSTEM

1. Provide state support for the regional job centers and existing workforce development system. [Golembeski]
2. Study the utilization of state and federal waivers to improve the coordination and delivery of workforce services, with particular attention to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET), and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs. [Kessenich]
3. Enhance workforce planning through workforce data collection in the licensure process. [Warmuth]
4. Create a process for ongoing workforce planning in Wisconsin. [Warmuth]

5. Discuss whether the committee should recommend an audit of the Department of Workforce Development programs that deal with workforce training. [Chair Strachota]

## **B. COORDINATION**

1. Support the mission of the University of Wisconsin (UW) System and Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) in providing potential employees with the education and job training that employers need. [Sen. Wirch]
2. Support/push postsecondary institutions toward training and schooling that is relevant to the needs of employers and to the enrollment behavior and needs of workers and future workers. [Keckhaver]
3. Foster greater postsecondary opportunities by requiring an annual report to the Legislature on cooperation efforts. [Keckhaver]
4. Create a system that aligns K-12, WTCS, UW System, and the business community to ensure that Wisconsin citizens are prepared for the ever-changing economy. [Thillman]
5. Address and connect regional sectoral development, including connecting education, workforce development, labor demands, and emerging industries. [Wagenson]
6. Provide Wisconsin's PK-16 Leadership Council with a mandate and incentive to meet a deadline to develop clear high school to post-secondary pathways for students in the state's most important career areas. [Wilken]
7. Review business collaboration with educators in setting education goals so that educators understand the skills that students need to succeed in the workforce. [Chair Strachota]

## **C. K-12**

1. Facilitate or improve the "career pathways" efforts to connect high school students with skilled job/career opportunities. [Sen. Darling]
2. Provide ways to ensure that the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and guidance counselors expose students to all avenues after graduating from high school, whether it is university, technical college, or certain fields, such as health care or industrial trades. [Rep. Honadel]
3. Implement the career clusters model in 100% of Wisconsin's schools. [Golembeski]
4. Create a program that guarantees that every high school graduate does not need remedial coursework when he or she enters a university or college. [Thillman]
5. Consider special funding for high schools that offer rigorous programs that build the workforce in high-demand, high-wage careers, such as health care, engineering, entrepreneurship, or information systems. [Wilken]

6. Study ways to make the Youth Apprenticeship Program more effective, including increased business participation. [Chair Strachota]
7. Review DPI initiatives and programs that were discussed by Superintendent Burmaster at the committee meeting on August 18, 2008. [Chair Strachota]

#### **D. POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION**

1. Ensure financial aid availability and eligibility. [Keckhaver]
2. Provide incentives for students entering a university, college, or technical college to pursue studies in areas of high demand (i.e., engineering, nursing, welding, etc.). For example, if these students complete their studies, get a job in the field of study, and stay in Wisconsin, the state could provide an income tax credit over the course of a few years to offset the tuition and fees paid for the degree. [Thillman]
3. Provide real credit transfer between the UW System, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and WTCS. [Thillman]
4. Research how to ensure that colleges and universities have the future capacity to admit a greater number of qualified students in the career pathways of greatest importance to Wisconsin. The result of this research should include a plan to reprioritize resources to those key areas. [Wilken]

#### **E. INCUMBENT WORKERS**

1. Provide public investment in incumbent worker training. [Golembeski]
2. Provide statewide tax credit incentives for businesses that pay for their employees' training, especially for the skills that are in high demand. [Thillman]
3. Study the role and impact of small businesses and central city businesses in providing employment opportunities and their capacity to train and develop their incumbent workforce. [Kessenich]
4. Implement Lifelong Learning Accounts. [Chair Strachota]

#### **F. UNEMPLOYED AND UNDEREMPLOYED**

1. Study the utilization of a large scale transitional employment program as a strategy to bridge skills gaps and to mitigate both temporal and chronic unemployment and underemployment, particularly in the state's urban communities, areas experiencing economic hardships, and areas with an unusually high level of or concentrated unemployment. [Kessenich]
2. Study local, state, and national sector development strategies with special attention to career pathway models that provide realistic access and funding strategies to connect and advance unskilled and unemployed workers into careers. [Kessenich]

3. Provide support for a system that provides basic soft skills and work-readiness certification for the underemployed and unemployed. [Wagenson]

### **G. OTHER WORKERS**

1. Continue the development of programmatic opportunities for low-credentialed workers (bridge programs). [Keckhaver]
2. Study the impact of an increased summer employment program for youth. [Kessenich]
3. Study the investment and coordination of workforce funding directed toward individuals returning from incarceration. [Kessenich]

### **H. HEALTH CARE AND LONG-TERM CARE**

1. Address the nursing shortage. [Sen. Wirch]
2. Address pay and other retention issues for workers who provide long-term care. [Sen. Wirch]
3. Address labor force shortages in health care, particularly in the long-term care occupations. [Wagenson]

### **I. FUNDING**

1. Explore ways to streamline or consolidate access to job training funding. This may include creating a “one-stop” resource for job training funds. [Sen. Darling]
2. Study the possibility of “braiding funding” or some level of integration of funding across federal and state funded workforce development initiatives. [Kessenich]
3. Review how the tax code impacts and should impact job training and educational attainment. [Keckhaver]
4. Ask that appropriate state agencies update the committee about their budget requests for the 2009-11 budget. [Chair Strachota]