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November 20, 2008

Senator Jim Sullivan  
Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Audit  
Room 15 South, State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53701

Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz  
Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Audit  
Room 314 North, State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53701

Dear Senator Sullivan and Representative Jeskewitz:

On behalf of the Joint Legislative Council's Special Committee on Building Wisconsin's Workforce, we write to ask that the Joint Committee on Audit direct the Legislative Audit Bureau to conduct an audit of the state's workforce development programs.

As you are aware, the Audit Bureau recently completed Audit Report 06-9, relating to the state's economic development programs. Subsequently, the Legislature responded to the Audit Bureau's recommendations via 2007 Wisconsin Act 125. Generally, it appears that the Legislature and the public agree that this process was an excellent use of the Audit Bureau's resources.

During the course of its meetings, the Special Committee on Building Wisconsin's Workforce reached the conclusion that the state's workforce development programs are in need of a comprehensive audit. One must look back all the way to 1994 to find a comprehensive audit of workforce development programs. We see strong parallels between the status of current workforce development programs and economic development programs prior to 2007 Wisconsin Act 125. Accordingly, it is our expectation that an audit of workforce development programs will lead to success on par with the results of the audit of economic development programs.

The need for an audit of the state's workforce development programs could not come at a better time. A better understanding of workforce programs is necessary for Wisconsin to best plan and react in these times of substantial economic uncertainty. In particular, most experts in the field agree that major revisions to the federal Workforce Investment Act will take place in the near future. An audit of Wisconsin's workforce development programs will place the state in the

best possible position to react to changes in federal workforce development programs.

Generally, the Special Committee on Building Wisconsin's Workforce recommends a two-pronged approach to assessing workforce development programs in the state. First, we recommend a comprehensive audit of workforce development programs across all state agencies, considering the coordination of labor supply and demand in a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy, as well as the state's ability to meet employer and employee needs now and in the future. Additionally, we recommend a focused audit of Department of Workforce Development programs related to incumbent worker training, to be completed in the short-term as the comprehensive audit continues.

Thank you for your attention to this audit request.

Sincerely,

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Representative Pat Strachota, Chair  
Special Committee on Building  
Wisconsin's Workforce

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Senator Robert Wirth, Vice Chair  
Special Committee on Building  
Wisconsin's Workforce

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