

Lake County, IL Workforce Development Federal Funding Request Workforce Investment Act Reauthorization



SUPPORT REQUEST

The federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was enacted in 1998 with an original five-year lifespan. Since 2004, Congress has passed one (1) year continuances. It is vitally important that Congress pass WIA Reauthorization to ensure continuance of the federal funds made available for retraining and education efforts.

Reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act is being supported nationally by workforce board, workforce development and educational associations. Major proponents include: the National Association of Workforce Boards, the National Workforce Alliance and the Community College Association. Within Illinois, reauthorization is supported by the Illinois Workforce Partnership (the association comprised of representatives from the 26 workforce areas across the State) and the Chicago Jobs Council. Locally, the Lake County Workforce Investment Board has supported reauthorization efforts

PROBLEM

The entire budget for the Lake County Workforce Investment Board and the Lake County Workforce Development Department (WDD) are supported by the federal funds made available under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Should Congress not reauthorize WIA or annually appropriate workforce development funding, then all services provided would be terminated pursuant to County Board policy regarding termination of federal funding.

Due to the continuing economic crisis, and the types of businesses in Lake County and the surrounding region that are now laying off employees, the Job Centers are increasing seeing individuals with professional backgrounds.

The impact of any action/inaction on the part of the federal government will be felt nationwide. Within Illinois, the efforts that local staff has made are being replicated by workforce development and workforce investment board staffs that comprise the 26 workforce areas within the State. In addition, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity has taken an active role in supporting reauthorization efforts. Local staff has participated with both the State and other localities efforts.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- For every \$1.00 Spent on WIA in Lake County over the past three years, \$1.79 was earned.
- For the first eight months of 2011, over 15,700 individuals have made use of public use computers at the Waukegan and Grayslake job centers.
- Almost 4,470 people used the Waukegan Job Center's Resource Room from May to July 2011.
- 3,254 job orders were posted for jobs in Lake County on Illinois Skill Match (a state job posting website) from Jan. 2011-Aug. 2011.

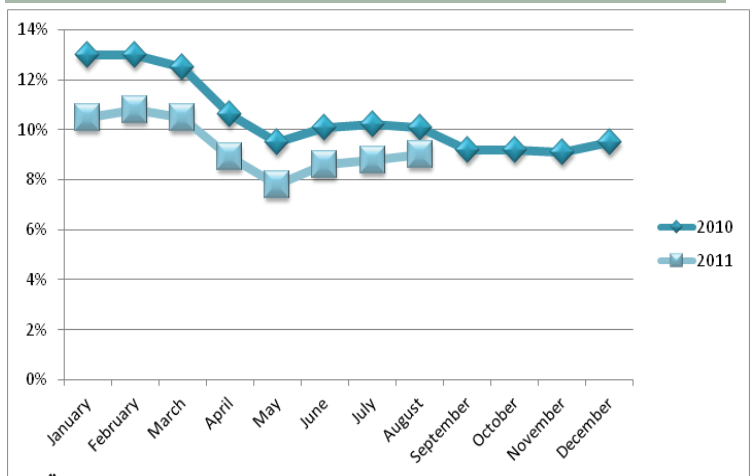
Congressional Districts

Districts 8 & 10, Representatives Joe Walsh, Robert Dold

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UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (2010 -2011)



* 2011 RATE FOR SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER NOT AVAILABLE

BACKGROUND

Due to the economic crisis and the number of individuals who are unemployed, the services made available through the WDD and the WIB provide much needed support for individuals and businesses. Stakeholders, i.e. those who make use of the Job Centers' services and programs encompass the entire spectrum of individuals – from those with no discernable job skills to professionals including lawyers and engineers. In terms of education, individuals making use of the Job Centers may be illiterate to individuals with advanced professional degrees.

During August 2011 over 1,700 individuals used the Waukegan Job Center's computers. Approximately 70 people attended a workshop while almost 80 individuals attended orientation sessions.

On the national level, WIA programs served over 9 million workers this past year, a 248% increase over two years ago. Despite 4.6 jobseekers for every available job, over half of WIA participants gain employment. For the first three (3) quarters of Program Year 2010 (July 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011), there were approximately 1,140 individuals enrolled in programs and services offered through the Lake County Workforce Investment Department. An additional 390 young people were enrolled in in-school and out-of-school programs. Despite the continuing downturn in the economy, one (1) person in three (3) exiting the local system had gotten a job.