

## IMPACT AREAS



Labor Force Participation



Increased Wages



Equitable Access to Resources



Skills Development

Surveys among business leaders in Michigan show long-term concerns about hiring and training, with 81 percent of businesses citing a lack of applicants with necessary **skills development** as a top challenge to business growth. Michigan's **labor force participation** rate remains at 59.9%, lower than the national average of 62.4%. Additional investments in workforce development can address these challenges, instilling confidence for Michigan business growth or relocation, while ensuring **equitable access to resources** and **increased wages** for workers.

### Wagner-Peyser Employment Services



**Action:** The Michigan Works! Association advocates to maintain Michigan's flexibility in delivering best-in-class workforce services through local merit staff under the Wagner-Peyser Employment Services Act, while opposing the Department of Labor's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Wagner-Peyser staffing that would overturn decades of precedent and result in a significant reduction of services.

**Overview:** In April 2022, the U.S. Department of Labor issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing (Docket No. ETA-2022-0003). The proposed rule as written would remove Michigan's flexibility and authority over its workforce system delivery model, and overturn decades of precedent. Since Michigan's existing workforce delivery model was put into place in 1998, data has shown the state consistently outpace the national median when considering employment rates and median earnings for program participants. Most significantly, Michigan residents who are most vulnerable - including refugees, immigrants, veterans, and youth - would encounter a forced discontinuation of critical workforce services.

**Outcome:** Labor Force Participation, Increased Wages, Equitable Access to Resources, Skills Development

### WIOA Reauthorization



**Action:** The Michigan Works! Association 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.

**Overview:** While the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 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 and educational opportunities aligned with high-demand occupations
- Dedicated funding for business services to effectively serve employers in a demand-driven workforce system
- Dedicated funding for apprenticeships
- Eliminate the Infrastructure Funding Agreement cost-share requirement to help encourage value-driven community-based partnerships with service providers

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## Pell Eligibility Expansion



**Action:** The Michigan Works! Association supports federal efforts to expand Pell eligibility to students enrolled in short-term training and skills development programs.

**Overview:** Investing in short-term training and skills development programs is one of the best ways policymakers can ensure workforce and education providers are able to address immediate labor market needs in the private sector, while providing quality pathways to individuals hoping to achieve upward economic mobility. A handful of federal efforts would focus on aligning Pell eligibility with the realities of today's students and job seekers, where 37 percent of all postsecondary students are 25 years or older, and 64 percent work part time or full time while attending school. Additionally, this legislation would ensure Pell grant recipients are receiving high-quality postsecondary credentials directly related to the needs of employers in state and local economies, with the ability to transition quickly into the labor market.

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## TANF Reauthorization



**Action:** The Michigan Works! Association supports aligning federal workforce programs to ensure seamless service delivery at the local level.

**Overview:** More than 80 percent of today's jobs require postsecondary education and training, but less than 10 percent of adult TANF recipients have education beyond high school. By updating TANF to expand access to high-quality training and education, TANF recipients will be better prepared to enter the workforce in high-demand occupations, increasing employment outcomes for program participants. Modernizing TANF can also include expanding the list of allowable activities to include high school equivalency programs, apprenticeships, and career & technical education.

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## Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Reauthorization



**Action:** The Michigan Works! Association advocates for the reauthorization of the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program.

**Overview:** Since 1974, the TAA program has provided training, income support, employment and case management services, job search and relocation allowances to eligible worker groups whose job losses or wage reductions are a result of global trade and offshoring. While funding for TAA was temporarily extended for an additional year by an omnibus package in early 2023, Congress has yet to issue a full reauthorization of the program to ensure nearly 100,000 workers nationwide will continue receiving support through the program annually. In Fiscal Year 2021, more than 4,200 workers in Michigan were covered by TAA, with 78 percent of impacted workers finding new jobs as a result of the benefits under the program.


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