

MAJORITY MEMBERS:

GEORGE MILLER, CALIFORNIA, Chairman
DALE E. KILDEE, MICHIGAN, Vice Chairman
DONALD M. PAYNE, NEW JERSEY
ROBERT E. ANDREWS, NEW JERSEY
ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT, VIRGINIA
LYNN C. WOOLSEY, CALIFORNIA
RUBEN HINOJOSA, TEXAS
CAROLYN MCCARTHY, NEW YORK
JOHN F. TIERNEY, MASSACHUSETTS
DENNIS J. KUCINICH, OHIO
DAVID WJ. OREGON
RUSH HOLT, NEW JERSEY
SUSAN A. DAVIS, CALIFORNIA
RAÚL M. GRIJALVA, ARIZONA
TIMOTHY H. BISHOP, NEW YORK
JOE SESTAK, PENNSYLVANIA
DAVID LOEBSACK, IOWA
MAZIE HIRONO, HAWAII
JASON ALTMIRE, PENNSYLVANIA
PHIL HARE, ILLINOIS
YVETTE D. CLARKE, NEW YORK
JOE COURTNEY, CONNECTICUT
CAROL SHEA-PORTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE
MARCIA L. FUDGE, OHIO
JARED POLIS, COLORADO
PAUL TONKO, NEW YORK
PEDRO R. PIERLUISI, PUERTO RICO
GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLÁN,
N. MARIANA ISLANDS
DINA TITUS, NEVADA



COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
2181 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6100

MINORITY MEMBERS:

HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON, CALIFORNIA,
Senior Republican Member
THOMAS E. PETRI, WISCONSIN
PETER HOEKSTRA, MICHIGAN
MICHAEL N. CASTLE, DELAWARE
MARK E. SOUDER, INDIANA
VERNON J. EHLERS, MICHIGAN
JUDY BIGGERT, ILLINOIS
TODD RUSSELL PLATTS, PENNSYLVANIA
JOE WILSON, SOUTH CAROLINA
JOHN KLINE, MINNESOTA
CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS, WASHINGTON
TOM PRICE, GEORGIA
ROB BISHOP, UTAH
BRETT GUTHRIE, KENTUCKY
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
TOM McCLINTOCK, CALIFORNIA
DUNCAN D. HUNTER, CALIFORNIA
DAVID P. ROE, TENNESSEE
GLENN THOMPSON, PENNSYLVANIA

May 8, 2009

The Honorable Hilda Solis
Secretary of Labor
U.S. Department of Labor
Frances Perkins Building
200 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Solis:

We are writing to express our strong concern over the Department of Labor's recent proposal to require that State Employment Service (ES) employees, or State "merit" staff, be the only staff allowed to administer the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program reauthorized under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA).

As you know, the bipartisan TAA law, enacted in February of this year, included a bipartisan, bicameral compromise that excluded House-passed language that would have required State merit staff to administer TAA. It is clear from the exclusion of this language in the compromise that the Congressional intent was to allow States to continue to choose the staffing arrangements that they feel can best administer TAA within their own State.

It is our understanding that, based on 2007 Department data, 23 States and Puerto Rico have opted to allow a variety of state and local government employees and contractors, including non-profit and community-based providers, to administer TAA. This has allowed for a high degree of integration of the services provided through TAA and the One-Stop Career Center system, mandated under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). It is also our understanding that TAA customers co-enrolled in WIA receive more in-depth services, including assessment, counseling, case management, and post-training assistance and that TAA customers served through State ES staff are more likely to receive assessments that are limited in scope and depth.

Instituting a mandate for the single-source administration of TAA would require these States to change their current method of operation at a time when their primary focus should be on ensuring

The Honorable Hilda Solis

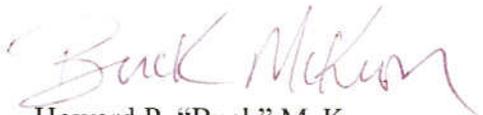
May 8, 2009

Page 2

that dislocated workers receive the training and essential services that they need to regain employment. In effect, the Department's proposed mandate to the States would have an adverse impact on their overall administration of the TAA program, potentially jeopardizing the ability of workers and their families to recover from the economic downturn.

We strongly believe that States should be given the flexibility to make the decision about how to administer the services under TAA and encourage the Department to withdraw its proposal. We look forward to receiving your response to this matter.

Sincerely,



Howard P. "Buck" McKeon
Senior Republican Member
Committee on Education and Labor



Brett Guthrie
Ranking Republican Member
Subcommittee on Higher Education,
Lifelong Learning, and
Competitiveness