

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20062-2000
202/463-5310

May 7, 2012

The Honorable John Kline
Chair
Committee on Education and
the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable George Miller
Ranking Member
Committee on Education and
the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC, 20515

Dear Chairman Kline and Ranking Member Miller:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, supports H.R. 4297, the "Workforce Investment Improvement Act of 2012."

Reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) is long overdue and the Chamber believes H.R. 4297 would be an important step toward updating and improving America's workforce and training system.

Specifically, this legislation would begin to address the problem of too many duplicative federal training and employment programs. By consolidating programs and providing additional state and local flexibility for the delivery of these services, the Chamber believes more adults and dislocated workers would receive the services they need in order to become – and stay – employed.

This legislation would also ensure the system is employer-driven by requiring both state and local workforce boards to have a two-thirds business majority. These boards would also be required to increase their engagement with the business community, as well as coordinate with economic development agencies to ensure training is relevant to the needs of local and regional economies.

In addition, H.R. 4297 would begin to address the troubling fact that under the current WIA system, far too little training is actually taking place. The bill would require local boards to reserve a percentage of funding specifically for training based on an analysis of the needs of the local area. The Chamber is also pleased that the legislation retains current law provisions that ensure competition among training providers and enable individuals to have maximum choice in selecting a provider.

The Chamber supports H.R. 4297 and looks forward to working with you on your efforts to strengthen our nation's workforce and training system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Bruce Josten". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "R." being the most prominent.

R. Bruce Josten

Cc: The Members of the Committee on Education and the Workforce