

Well, that could be really good news for the United States of America and U.S. manufacturing because those are great middle-class manufacturing jobs. But guess what. Those jobs are not secure. The Brazilians want to build airplanes. The Europeans already build airplanes. The Chinese want to build airplanes. They are all competing for that rising middle-class market that is demanding new airplanes. They all want to get in the action of having manufacturing jobs in their states.

So we need to make sure we implement the Export-Import Bank, which is about to expire on September 30 of this year. Without the Export-Import Bank, we are going to be hobbling businesses across the United States of America and not giving them these tools.

The Export-Import Bank has created thousands of jobs in the United States of America. It has increased exports by \$37 billion and helped small businesses and created jobs. It also helps us pay down the Federal deficit. It has generated over \$1.057 billion returned to the U.S. Treasury. So it has actually helped us pay down the Federal debt. So my colleagues who are now all of a sudden either having amnesia on why they supported the Ex-Im Bank or not coming forward to support it now need to remember what a vital tool this is to the U.S. economy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Ms. CANTWELL. I ask unanimous consent for another 30 seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. CANTWELL. I want to close by saying that other countries use these same financial tools. So a lot of my colleagues can see that other countries, for the same reason, when the marketplace does not provide a private sector financial tool to securitize these products—it is important that the United States stay competitive with everybody chasing global market opportunities.

Let's not hobble U.S. manufacturing. Let's get the Export-Import Bank out of committee and reauthorized.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions is discharged from further consideration of H.R. 803 and the Senate will proceed to the measure, which the clerk will report by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 803) to reform and strengthen the workforce investment system of the Nation to put Americans back to work and make the United States more competitive in the 21st century.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 2:30 shall be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, for the next several hours we will be moving to a bill that the Senator from Washington, Mrs. MURRAY, and the Senator from Georgia, Mr. ISAKSON, have had the principal role in fashioning. They will have a chance to talk about that. In just a few minutes the chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, Senator HARKIN, will proceed with the bill. But before that happens, I wish to take 3 or 4 minutes to talk about the importance of what is happening here.

In 1998 Congress passed a sort of "GI bill" for workers. The idea was to do what is at the top of every Governor's agenda in every State right now: How can we help more Americans get the job skills to fit the jobs?

When I was home in Granger County last weekend, the concern of Tennesseans was that it is too hard to find a job; it is too hard to keep a house; what can I do to get a job?

This legislation we are dealing with today, for the first time since 2003, reauthorizes \$9.5 billion in funds that will be spent through local workforce boards, through community colleges, and through State governments to help individuals in North Dakota, in Washington, in Tennessee, in Georgia get the job skills to find a job. This bill will make it easier for them for them to achieve that goal. It has the great advantage of not mandating how they do it from Washington but creating an environment where people can do this for themselves.

Our former Democratic Governor Phil Bredesen said to me that when he first became Governor and went to find out about the \$145 million of federal workforce development funding that comes to Tennessee, he just threw up his hands. He said: It is too complicated. I cannot do anything with it.

So he told his cabinet members: Do the best you can.

Well, working together with the House of Representatives, Senator MURRAY and Senator ISAKSON and a group of us here have taken this law that was passed 16 years ago and made some dramatic changes to it. They will tell you more about that. They will be talking about how we have taken many of the 47 work-training programs that exist in the Federal Government and simplified them, eliminating 15 programs that were ineffective or duplicative, eliminating 21 Federal mandates, streamlining multiple plans into a single State plan that reduces time spent on paperwork, streamlining reporting requirements, giving Governors more flexibility, giving local workforce boards more flexibility, and most importantly, giving the individuals who need jobs more opportunity to say: This is what I would like to do, and this is what I choose to do.

This has been no easy task. Senator MURRAY and Senator ISAKSON deserve a lot of credit from all of us because many Congresses have tried to reauthorize this law before. I am going to come back after about an hour and deliver a little more extensive discussion on this, but the 108th Congress, the 109th Congress, and the 112th Congress—all tried to do this but could not get a consensus about how to move forward. Finally, Congresswoman VIRGINIA FOXX produced the SKILLS Act in the House of Representatives. The House passed this bill in March of 2013. It came over here to the Senate. The Senate HELP Committee passed its bill last July. Led by Senator MURRAY and Senator ISAKSON, the Senate began working with the House, came up with an agreement, and, working with a number of Senators, we have reduced the number of amendments that actually have to be voted on today to two. So we will have two amendments to be voted on and then will vote on final passage. Then we will send the bill back to the House. Hopefully the President will have a chance to sign it.

I would like to say that I hope that in the midst of what is too much dysfunction in the Senate, this will be an example of what can happen when we put our minds to it.

The members of the HELP Committee, on which I am the ranking Republican, and Senator HARKIN, the ranking Democrat—we have some pretty big philosophical differences. Ideologically, we are not the same. But we have passed 19 bills out of the HELP Committee. 13 have become law this year. That is a record of accomplishment we are proud of. It shows that Senators with different opinions can come to a consensus and come to a resolve.

So let me step aside now and let those who have really done the most work on the bill speak—the Senator from Washington and the Senator from Georgia. I will be back in about an hour, and then we will be voting a little later this afternoon. This is good news for the workers of America, for the Governors who felt hamstrung by Washington, for the workforce boards who have been limited in their ability to meet the needs of local employers and workers, and for Senator COBURN, who has been a real leader in pointing out how many duplicative work programs we have. We have gone a long way in the direction he wanted us to go. I congratulate all of those Senators for the result.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

AMENDMENT NO. 3378

(PURPOSE: IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE)

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, as provided under the consent agreement, I now call up the substitute amendment No. 3378.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Washington [Mrs. MURRAY], for herself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. ENZI, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. SCOTT, Mrs. FISCHER, and Mr. BROWN, proposes an amendment numbered 3378.

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask unanimous consent that all after the first vote at 2:30 p.m. be 10 minute votes and that upon disposition of H.R. 803, the time until 4:30 p.m. be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, just last month I joined seven of my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats from the House and the Senate, to introduce a critical piece of legislation called the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. It is a bill to reauthorize and dramatically improve the Workforce Investment Act, or WIA, which authorizes a number of critical workforce development programs in all 50 States.

This legislation is something I have been working on for several years with a number of our colleagues. It is something that is long overdue—for more than a decade. Since we introduced a compromise deal last month, we have been working feverishly with our colleagues on both sides of the aisle and both sides of the Capitol to iron out any issues they might have and make a few small technical fixes. We have made sure that every single Member of the Senate and their staffs have had the time to look through this deal, ask questions, and propose amendments. Now, today, we are one final step away from sending this tremendous bipartisan deal to the House of Representatives and then hopefully to the President's desk.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a list of over 100 organizations supporting this bill, including business groups, labor, educators, Governors, mayors, and countless others.

Improving our Federal workforce programs is, as I said, something I have been working on for more than a decade. During that time, I have heard from so many workers and businesses in my home State of Washington and across the country who tell me how important effective workforce programs are for themselves and their communities. Business owners, large and small, have told me that while existing programs help, it has become harder and harder to find workers with the skills they need to fill new jobs in the 21st century. Workers who want to ad-

vance their careers or get back on the job after being unemployed have told me that it is more and more difficult to get the education and skills they need to compete for the new jobs.

I am thrilled that we have reached this important step in the process. The reason this agreement was even possible is the incredible bipartisan process we have had over the last 2 months to reach a compromise on which we could all agree. So today I thank my coauthors of this bill in the Senate for all of their hard work through the process and their work to rally support for it today: Senator TOM HARKIN, a Democrat from Iowa, the great chairman of the Senate HELP Committee; Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER, from whom you heard, a Republican from Tennessee and the esteemed ranking member of the HELP Committee; and finally, my very close partner in this process, Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON from Georgia.

Senator ISAKSON and I are the co-authors of the Senate version of this bill to reauthorize WIA. Throughout this process it has been an absolute pleasure to work across the aisle with him to get this done. His integrity and his commitment have been key to making this a reality.

Senator ISAKSON's office is right next door to mine. Whether it was on the phone or while the two of us were walking over here to the Chamber to cast votes, we must have had hundreds of conversations on how to reach this point. So it means a lot for me to be here with him today.

I also thank a few other Senators whose commitment to improving our workforce systems has been remarkable.

First of all, I thank Senator ENZI, our colleague from Wyoming. Senator ENZI and I have been working for a very long time to reauthorize WIA. More than once, we would be at the White House for meetings, and regardless of the topic, wherever we were, he would tell President Bush and now President Obama: This should be a bipartisan effort we can all agree on. I think today's actions are proof that he was right all along.

Second, I wish to recognize and thank Senator SHERROD BROWN from Ohio for his years of leadership on these issues. Senator BROWN's understanding of the changes in the American economy and our places of work is unparalleled. The State of Ohio should be very proud to have him represent them in the Senate.

In particular, Senator BROWN's work on the issues of skills, manufacturing, economic competitiveness, and education reform have been critical. In crafting this deal, we were fortunate to be able to draw on his SECTORS Act and weave the concepts of that throughout this bill. In fact, it is because of Senator BROWN's strong advocacy that we were successful in requiring SECTOR initiatives at both the State and local levels, as well as in-

cluding them in plans and functions and reports. I know that in my State of Washington, we use SECTOR strategies in everything from aerospace industries to maritime, health, construction, gaming, finance, renewable energy, and viticulture. They all work to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our workforce system. I am very proud that we have included sections in this bill and have worked with Senator BROWN closely and have benefited from his knowledge and leadership.

I also thank Senator KAY HAGAN from North Carolina for her work on this legislation. Her America Works bill provided us with a great framework to think about skills and certification and credentials and the need to be closely aligned with employers. Because of her leadership and her vision, this bill requires that training that leads to recognized postsecondary credentials receive a priority, meaning that both workers and employers benefit from the training provided through this act.

We also require that all States and locals report on the number of credentials offered, meaning that the entire workforce system will be more closely aligned to the needs of employers and workers and will yield more direct value in and for the marketplace.

I also wish to mention that Senator HAGAN worked hard to ensure that we focused not just on initial credentials but credentials that are industry-recognized and both portable and stackable.

Finally, I thank Senator FRANKEN from Minnesota, who represents the same State as the late Senator Paul Wellstone, who was my Democratic predecessor lead on this bill.

True to Senator Wellstone's legacy, Senator FRANKEN has shown a deep understanding of the needs of job seekers, workers, and employers, as well as a passion to help them all advance and succeed.

I was very pleased to work closely with him on this legislation and ensure that a number of his priorities were included. Lead among his priorities was building closer ties with our community colleges, and we worked hard to make sure that happened.

I am also pleased that we benefited from a truly innovative program in Minnesota, Twin Cities RISE!, which has been a pioneer in pay-for-performance models for many years and which helped to inform our inclusion of pay-for-performance provisions in this bill.

So it is clear this bill is the product of many authors. And while we know that nobody gets everything they want, I think at the end of the day we can all proudly say this bill will help our workers, our businesses, and our economy for years to come, because Federal workforce programs have proven time and again that the best investment we can make as a country is an investment in our American workers.

I have seen firsthand in my home State of Washington workers who were

laid off who were able to get new training, new skills, and new jobs. I have seen so many Washington State businesses—from our aerospace companies to video game design firms—that were able to access workers with the new skills they needed to grow and compete.

But with millions of new jobs that would require postsecondary education and advanced skills in the coming years, we will fall behind if we do not modernize our workforce development systems and programs now. We have to make sure that when high-tech jobs of the 21st century are created, Americans are ready to fill them, and that is exactly what we have all done in this bill.

We have doubled down on the programs that work, we have improved the programs that have become outdated, and we have created a workforce system that is more nimble, adaptable, better aligned with what our businesses need, and more accountable so that they can continue to make it better.

We started with a House proposal, a Senate proposal, and we all met in the middle. That is exactly what the American people sent us here to do, to work together to help our workers and help our economy grow.

This is an all too rare opportunity for all of us to get behind a strong, bipartisan, bicameral bill.

I urge all of our colleagues to support the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and send it to the House for a vote.

I thank my great friend and partner, who has spent innumerable hours getting us to this point. I thank him, his staff, and all of our staffs who have worked hard to find a compromise and not to find a fight.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT—INVESTING IN AMERICA'S COMPETITIVENESS

LIST OF KEY SUPPORTIVE ORGANIZATIONS

1. ACT
2. AFL-CIO
3. AFSCME
4. American Association of Community Colleges
5. American Federation of Teachers
6. America Forward Coalition
7. The American Legion
8. American Library Association
9. The Arc
10. Associated Builders and Contractors
11. Associated General Contractors of America
12. Association for Advancing Automation
13. Association for Career and Technical Education
14. Association for Talent Development (formerly ASTD)
15. Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs
16. Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs
17. Association of University Centers on Disabilities
18. Austin Chamber of Commerce
19. Bipartisan Policy Center's Governors Council

20. Business Leaders United
21. Business Roundtable
22. California Workforce Association
23. Center for Law and Social Policy
24. Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce
25. City of Seattle
26. Colorado Municipal League
27. Commercial Vehicle Training Association
28. Consortium for Citizens With Disabilities
29. Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy
30. Dallas Regional Chamber
31. Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce
32. Easter Seals
33. Georgia Municipal Association
34. Goodwill Industries International
35. Governor Terry Branstad (IA)
36. Governor Chris Christie (NJ)
37. Governor Mary Fallin (OK)
38. Governor Rick Scott (FL)
39. Governor Rick Snyder (MI)
40. Governor Tom Corbett (PA)
41. Greater Baltimore Chamber of Commerce
42. Greater Cleveland Partnership
43. Greater Ft. Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce
44. Greater Houston Partnership
45. Greater Louisville Inc.
46. Greater Memphis Chamber
47. Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce
48. Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce
49. Greater Spokane Incorporated
50. IBM
51. Independent Electrical Contractors
52. International Economic Development Council
53. International Union of Painters and Allied Trades
54. Jobs for the Future
55. Knowledge Alliance
56. The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
57. Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
58. Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation
59. Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce
60. Massachusetts Municipal Union
61. Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce
62. Minnesota Workforce Council Association
63. Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce
64. National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
65. National Association of Counties
66. National Association of Development Organizations
67. National Association of Manufacturers
68. National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium
69. National Association of State Workforce Agencies
70. National Association of Workforce Boards
71. National Association of Workforce Development Professionals
72. National Center for Learning Disabilities
73. National Coalition for Literacy
74. National Conference of State Legislatures
75. National Council on Independent Living
76. National Council of La Raza
77. National Council of State Directors of Adult Education
78. National Education Association
79. National Federation of the Blind
80. National Governors Association
81. National Job Corps Association
82. National League of Cities
83. National Metropolitan Business Alliance
84. National Restaurant Association

85. National Retail Federation
86. National Roofing Contractors Association
87. National Skills Coalition
88. National Youth Employment Coalition
89. New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals
90. North America's Building Trades Unions
91. North Carolina Technology Association
92. Opportunity America Jobs and Careers Coalition
93. Oregon Bioscience Association
94. Paralyzed Veterans of America
95. Rural Country Representatives of California
96. San Diego Chamber of Commerce
97. San Francisco Chamber of Commerce
98. San Jose Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce
99. Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce
100. Service Employees International Union
101. Siemens Corporation
102. Society for Human Resource Management
103. Spokane Area Workforce Development Council
104. St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association
105. Tennessee Municipal League
106. Twin Cities Rise
107. United States Chamber of Commerce
108. United States Conference of Mayors
109. United Way Worldwide
110. Washington Roundtable
111. Year Up
112. YouthBuild USA

Mrs. MURRAY. I yield for Senator ISAKSON, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. I have to say first and foremost that it has been a real privilege to work with Senator MURRAY from the State of Washington. We are across the hall from one another. We see each other coming and going and coming back to the floor and from the office.

We have worked hard, our staffs have worked hard, and finally today lightning has struck. We are about today—in the Congress of the United States—to reauthorize the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and address one of the significant challenges that face America today.

As we sit in this Chamber and talk about this bill, there are 10.6 million Americans who are unemployed. There are also 4 million jobs waiting to be filled by people who need specific skills. This bill deals with the skills deficit in America, and it is going to match some of those unemployed with some of those jobs to lower our unemployment rate and raise the rate of prosperity in American families. This is an important bill.

A lot of people who have watched the Senate over the past few years might have said: How in the world did you reach an agreement on anything? You always seem to be fighting, you always seem to be arguing.

I want to tell a brief story. About 1 month ago Senator MURRAY and I joined a few other Members of the Senate—Senator HARKIN, Senator ALEXANDER, a couple of Members from the

House: Representative FOXX of North Carolina and Representative KLINE, the chairman of the Education & the Workforce Committee in the House.

We didn't sit around a table and say: What is it that divides us? We said: What is it that unites us?

What unites us is the fact that the American people are looking for leadership from us to deal with the unemployment issue and the training issue. We have been languishing to try to authorize this bill for 12 years. So we sat down and identified what we agreed on. We identified what the problems were. We worked with the Members of the House who opened up and said: Well, we passed the SKILLS Act, but we will sit down, listen to your side, and try to find common ground.

After a few days, really—not weeks—we found common ground on 80 percent of the issues that confront us in workforce and investment areas. There are a few places where we found disagreement, sure—and so did those stop us? No, because the perfect should never be the enemy of the good, and this bill is the good of the Senate in terms of dealing with issues.

I want to brag about a few people in this body, if I can, besides Senator MURRAY. I want to talk about Scott Cheney for a second, her loyal assistant. He sat in my office with me—about a week and a half ago—side-by-side, staff and Senator, working out some of the details on this bill.

I thank Tommy Nguyen on my staff who has worked countless hours for countless years to make this happen.

David Cleary, the aide to the committee, the aide to Senator ALEXANDER, has done a yeoman's job. In fact, he did probably as much of the hand-holding in the past couple of weeks over amendments as anybody I know.

I thank Senator ENZI from Wyoming, who is my mentor in the Senate. When I was first elected to Congress, I was appointed to a Web-based education joint commission between the House and the Senate. MIKE ENZI was the Republican Senator who was appointed to that commission. I was the Republican Congressman. I didn't know MIKE ENZI, but I watched him work. I watched him find solutions to problems. I watched his quiet, patient work to find a solution, and I said: That is the guy I want to be like.

He is the guy who really got Mrs. MURRAY and myself to this point today, because he has forged ahead when nobody else would.

When Chairman Kennedy was chairman of the committee before his tragic loss, MIKE continued to work with Senator Kennedy and said: Let's try to find a way to do workforce innovation and opportunity.

I am glad we are doing it today, and we are doing it in large measure because of Senator ENZI.

Senator TIM SCOTT, who did yeoman's work, introduced the SKILLS Act that was passed in the House and

Senate. He could have folded his arms and said: I am going to be recalcitrant, I am not going to cooperate. But he said: What can I do to help? There are some things I want to make sure we do, but one thing I want to make sure we don't do is not address the problem of unemployment and training.

ROB PORTMAN was of tremendous help to us too. We had so many Members whose ideas have been incorporated in this bill to deal with the issue of skill and deal with the issue of unemployment. I am so appreciative of each and every one of them, and I think the American people will appreciate them too.

I want to highlight a couple of features in here that are most important. Unlike most of what government does, we have scaled down the size of workforce investment boards in the States and in the local communities so they are working numbers, not numbers that are so big they can't work.

We put more money into training and less into bureaucracy. We scaled down a number of workforce programs and consolidated them to maximize the Federal dollar to benefit the State level. We gave the State level the local authority to determine the curriculum of what was best for Washington or best for Georgia.

Washington is not a one-size-fits-all town, and workforce development is not a one-size-fits-all issue. Through the labor departments of the various States, we now are going to empower them to train people for the jobs they need in their State, not the jobs Washington might think they might have needed in their State. That is a tremendous advance forward in this legislation and equally very important.

Some people will sit on the floor and say: Well, did we get all we wanted? No, we didn't. Nobody did.

Did you get enough?

We got plenty.

There are a lot of labor commissioners and Governors who are going to be celebrating. In fact, I have had two calls this morning from Governors' offices or from labor department offices saying: Thank you, you are finally giving us the power to address what we need to do in our State to address unemployment and address job training.

It has been a privilege for me to work with Senator HARKIN, Senator ALEXANDER, and Senator MURRAY.

To close, before I turn the floor over to Senator HARKIN—who I think will be next on the floor—I commend Senator HARKIN on his leadership as the chairman. He and Senator ALEXANDER gave us the encouragement that we could get a bill done. They didn't insist on something they wanted in the bill to be there exactly like they wanted it.

As we all know, Senator HARKIN is a champion for those with disabilities. The disability section in this bill is outstanding to provide training, opportunity, and rehabilitation for those who operate with developmental disabilities; and that is what we should be

doing on the workforce, because their contribution is as important as the contribution of any other single American.

Today is a great day for the Senate. It is also a great day for the workforce in America. It is a great day for training and for the skills.

We want to fill the 4 million jobs that are vacant in America with 4 million of those 10.6 million who are unemployed in America—to raise prosperity, raise opportunity, and raise hope in America.

With that said, I yield the floor for the distinguished Senator from Iowa, Senator HARKIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. I am pleased to join with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in both Chambers today in taking up the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act that is a reauthorization of what we always called the WIA bill, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

As the chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, I can say we have worked on this bill, the one that we have here now, for 5 years. This is the first reauthorization since 2003 of the Workforce Investment Act.

I especially express my appreciation to Senator ISAKSON, Senator MURRAY, and Senator ALEXANDER for their great working relationship and sticking to it for all these years when we didn't know if we were ever going to make it.

I see that our former ranking member Senator ENZI is here, who started with it when he was ranking member. I thank him also for all of his work to get to this point.

What is that old saying? Slow cooking beats fast food any day.

This is kind of slow cooking, home cooking. It took a while but some of these things do take time. They take time to work out and get ironed out. I understand that.

But, again, I can't express my appreciation enough to my colleagues: Senator ISAKSON, Senator ENZI, Senator MURRAY, and Senator ALEXANDER, for their stick-to-itiveness, never giving up, and making sure that we got to this point.

I also thank my House colleagues who worked closely with us over the last several months: Representatives KLINE, MILLER, FOXX, and HINOJOSA. During those months of negotiations, we reached a compromise between the reauthorization bill the House had passed last year and the bill we passed out of committee in July of last year.

Again, with the great work of Senator MURRAY and Senator ISAKSON, working with our House colleagues, we have a very good bill. It has the broad support—broadly—from employers, to mayors, to Governors, to organized labor. Everybody is now supporting this bill. I suppose, as with any piece of legislation that comes through the Senate, each one of those entities probably didn't get everything they wanted, but that is the art of compromise

and the art of getting good legislation through.

It couldn't come at a better time and a more needed time for reauthorization. As our economy continues to recover from one of the worst economic recessions in our history, it is more critical than ever that we stand with our Nation's workers, our businesses, our young people, citizens with disabilities, and with a commitment to help them prosper in the new jobs of the future.

Our economy has undergone substantial changes since the first Workforce Investment Act bill of 1998. In fact, over the past 40 years, America's backbone—the middle class—has been finding it harder and harder to make ends meet as wages have stagnated and costs have risen.

Quite frankly, a lot of the jobs of the past are gone. A lot of those jobs aren't coming back. We have a new economy that we are now entering, and so a lot of people need to be trained, a lot of people need to be retrained, and skills upgraded for these new jobs of the future.

That is what this bill does. It is part of the solution to this challenge facing our middle class in America. Access to education, training, and employment services is critical to helping our workers secure good jobs, gain access to the middle class, and become economically self-sufficient.

This new bill includes provisions that support our State workforce development systems in providing employment and training services for adults, dislocated workers, and youth through State grant programs and the public employment service. It also supports disconnected youth through programs such as an updated youth program focused on out-of-school youth who need a second chance, such as Job Corps and YouthBuild.

It provides for employment and training activities for Native Americans, migrant, and seasonal farm workers. It supports adult learners through adult education and literacy programs, including services for English language learners.

This bill includes innovative approaches to providing workforce development activities, including industry and sector partnerships, on-the-job and incumbent worker training; transitional job strategies for those who have poor work histories, but who would like to have more steady and upgraded jobs; and workplace learning advisers who can help educate colleagues about services available in the workforce system.

One of the most important parts to me of this bill is a much-needed update to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

I am particularly pleased that the bill addresses the disproportionate burden of unemployment and underemployment experienced by people with disabilities in our country. Despite the enormous progress we have made in ensuring that disabled people

have the same rights and opportunities as all Americans, the sad fact is that the unemployment rate among people with disabilities in America is twice as high as people without disabilities, and their workforce participation rate is less than half that of the general population.

We have, quite frankly, failed to ensure that people with disabilities meaningfully participate in the workforce. This bill makes major steps to correct this injustice. It will help a new generation of young people with disabilities to prepare for, obtain, and succeed in competitive integrated employment, not substandard subminimum wage dead-end jobs but in jobs in which people with disabilities can learn and grow to their maximum potential. That is what this bill would do, ensure that young people with disabilities, let's say, who are in high school and they have an IEP, Individualized Education Program, and they get through high school, are prepared for transition into the workplace.

This bill includes things which will give them those experiences, such as part-time work, summer jobs, internships, workplace skill development, and preparation for jobs that are in high demand. Basically, we are going to give persons with disabilities the same supports and experiences everyone else expects and receives and which they haven't had in the past.

Through school as part of the IDEA Program, they have their IEPs and as soon as they quit they are dropped. That is the end of it or maybe they go into subminimum wage jobs, and that is where they stay and they never get skills upgrading, but we know from experience that people with disabilities, whether it is intellectual or physical or a combination of both, can learn and train and their skills can be upgraded just like anybody else so they can perform at their maximum potential.

Again, this bill requires State vocational rehabilitation programs to work hand in hand with secondary schools, ensures that employers will have the information necessary to recruit, hire, and retain people with disabilities, and the bill focuses the efforts of State vocational rehabilitation on youth, requiring that 15 percent of their funds be dedicated to transitioning young people into competitive, integrated employment.

I hope these efforts will directly address the high unemployment rate among people with disabilities, smooth the transition of young people with disabilities into the competitive integrated workplace, and help employers to support their employees with disabilities.

I thank my colleagues for working to make this bill one that will address the outrageous status quo facing people with disabilities with regard to employment. More and more employers are finding that with a small bit of support or maybe a modification of the workplace, people with disabilities can

do those jobs and sometimes do them better than people without disabilities. More and more employers are finding that out. In our former Workforce Investment Act bills, we didn't get to focus on it that much. This bill now puts a major focus on it, and that is why I am so proud of this bill and why I think this bill is such a major step forward in all its regards.

This bill represents the best of what Congress can accomplish when we work together. We have worked diligently to find areas of agreement in our committee where we can advance legislation on a bipartisan basis.

I heard Senator ALEXANDER earlier mention this, and it is true that on our committee we probably have the widest divergence of philosophical views than any committee in the Senate, but we work together, both on a Senate level and on a staff level.

When this bill passes the Senate, it will mark the 18th bipartisan HELP Committee bill to successfully move to the Senate and this Congress, and—assuming the President will sign it—it will be the 14th bill passed out of our committee this Congress to be signed into law by the President.

The House leaders have indicated that if the Senate acts swiftly to pass this bipartisan, bicameral bill without substantial changes, they will do the same, and we will be able to advance this bill to the President's desk in very short order.

It is a major victory for our workers, our businesses, and our economy. I urge all my colleagues to join us in supporting this bill and in voting yes on final passage.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I thank my colleague from Wyoming for allowing me to jump in for about 5 minutes.

This became an issue as we faced the greatest recession we have ever had and, at the same time, we had GAO looking at how we are spending our money.

For just a little history so everybody will know, when GAO did their first report we had 47 separate job training programs run by nine different agencies, and that year they looked at we spent \$18.5 billion. What we found is only two had metrics on them, and we weren't even paying attention to the metrics to use them.

I applaud the work of the HELP Committee, Senator ENZI, Senator ISAKSON, Senator ALEXANDER, Senator MURRAY, and Senator HARKIN, for bringing the bill to the floor. It is an improvement over what we are doing, but I wish to offer a couple of points I think the American people ought to know. We are not going anywhere far enough, not anywhere close to where we need to go.

The SKILLS Act coming out of the House markedly changed job training in this country. Now, this is a big modification to the SKILLS Act, but

the SKILLS Act actually paid attention to the Government Accountability Office. What they did is consolidate a lot of programs and put real metrics and real competition into job training.

There are two critical flaws in this bill that I think are a mistake—and I know this bill is going to pass, so it is moving the ball down the road. No. 1, there is no metric in the job training program to say: Did somebody get a job in the area that they were trained for?

So it doesn't matter how many people we train. If there is no job and they got no job for what they trained, we have wasted the money. So that is not anywhere in the bill.

The second thing is the vast majority of money in this country that is spent on job training is Job Corps. When we ask behind the scenes why we didn't have major reform to Job Corps, it is because of all of the parochial people they employ. In Oklahoma, it is over 1,000. Most of the Job Corps programs in Oklahoma are highly inefficient and failing to do what we want them to do, and they are not going to be held accountable with this bill.

So these are two really disastrous things that, had they been added, would have made a real difference. And let me say why I can speak to that. When the GAO put out their report on all the job training programs, I had every one of my staffers in Oklahoma go to every job training, State and Federal, in Oklahoma. Let me tell you what we found.

What we found was the Federal programs were totally failing. We were very good at employing people in job training programs with Federal money, but when we looked for the outcome of whether we gave somebody a skill that gave them an ability to have a life, we failed.

Contrast that to Oklahoma's Career Tech system and their own State-funded training programs, where they were 90-percent effective in giving somebody a life skill.

So I am disappointed that the SKILLS Act didn't come over here and get voted on because that was what was in the SKILLS Act and it is really accomplishing the goal.

My colleagues have been great with me in working on this bill to try to attest to and to accommodate my desires to see some changes. But there are these two critical flaws, and it speaks to the lack of courage in our country today that because we have people employed in Job Corps programs, we are not going to really shake that system up and make it do what it needs to do.

I will never forget. I had a town hall meeting in Guthrie, OK, the largest Job Corps training in Oklahoma, and I wrote a report that was highly critical of it. They all came here, and I faced them down and said: Do you really want Federal Government money spent on your salary that doesn't accomplish the goal of giving somebody a life skill? They couldn't answer yes. They had to answer, no, they really didn't want that.

But that is what Job Corps still is in this bill, and that is by far the biggest job training program we have.

So I applaud the changes that we have made, the movements that have gone forward. But when there is no metrics on whether the skill that was trained for got a job, we don't have any idea what we are going to be measuring after this bill goes through.

No. 2, if we have not fundamentally gutted the present Job Corps system and changed it to where it is responsible to actually accomplish a goal and hold them accountable—like we need to be holding the VA accountable—if we don't do that, we haven't really fixed anything.

This bill has no CBO score on it. It is at least \$58 billion over the next 6 years—at least. And we are going to vote on a bill again that doesn't have a score.

So the intentions of my colleagues are pure, but I think they are missing two critical provisions if they really want to fix job training. I thank them for their work. I appreciate their accommodation. I know this bill will pass and it is an improvement, but it is not going to fix the fundamental problems.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. I ask unanimous consent that, following my speech, Senator BROWN from Ohio be allowed to speak next.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I rise today to speak in favor of the reauthorization of Workforce Investment Act.

I first thank Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON of Georgia, Senator PATTY MURRAY of Washington, Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER of Tennessee, and Senator TOM HARKIN of Iowa for their hard work on this bill. We can see from that list of Senators alone that this has been a truly bipartisan effort to reauthorize this Workforce Investment Act.

Of course, we have heard through the course of this discussion how on the House side KLINE, MILLER, FOX, and HINOJOSA worked on it, which is bipartisan on that side of the building. And the two have been working together, which is bicameral. That doesn't happen a lot around here, but on bills that make it through to the President's signature it does happen, and it has happened on this one.

I thank the many Senators who have had suggestions for this bill. A lot of those suggestions have wound up in here. Some of them had amendments that we will have to continue to work on in the future, and they were very gracious in revising some of those so that they would fit what we are doing and still get the bill done. I know TIM SCOTT could have taken a lot more credit for what he did in the House and when it came over here, but he has been extremely cooperative in using his knowledge of the bill to further the

bill. Senator PORTMAN is another critical Senator in working on it, and as we can tell by the passionate speech by Senator COBURN, there are things that could be done and will need to be done in the future to make it an even better bill. But it is something that all of government ought to be doing—not just the workforce.

This is a day of elation for me. We have been working to improve this program for over 11 years. For 11 years this could have made a big difference in our country's jobs. The Workforce Investment Act has been due for reauthorization for 11 years. Who says the Senate works fast? Who says the Senate works slow? Hopefully, the Senate works and gets it right.

I am hopeful that now is the time we are able to get this important piece of legislation renewed and provide some much-needed help to American workers and businesses through the new profile it provides.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will transform the sometimes bureaucratic Federal job training system into a streamlined program that can help many more people learn the skills they need to get meaningful jobs. The reauthorization will eliminate 15 programs identified as ineffective or duplicative—we don't do that very often—and 21 Federal mandates on State and local workforce boards. That is what we need to be doing throughout government.

This bill would apply common performance measures for all programs with the focus on employment outcomes and employer satisfaction with the trained workers. This will provide stronger accountability for taxpayer dollars. These are all changes that are long overdue.

This piece of legislation also gives authority back to the State governments and equips them with tools to help small businesses. This bill provides Governors and State workforce directors what they told us they needed in hearing after hearing. They wanted flexibility to use the money where it was most needed. There were stovepipes where we required them to do certain things with the money even if they didn't have customers that needed that part of the stovepipe, which meant that some of the money went begging. So by actually eliminating some of the stovepipes, making the money more effective in this program, it increases the value of the money that is there.

With this reauthorization States will better be able to meet the regional economic demand and provide training for jobs in which quality workers are in short supply. We can help people get back to work by offering training for the skills and services needed in their community. State and local officials are in the best position to determine the labor and job training needs of communities across the Nation. The workforce and opportunity act will help improve our current stagnated

economy and foster economic development for private sector job creation. If it works as it should, hundreds of thousands of people will be able to move into available jobs that are vacant because folks don't have the right skills.

I remember the New York Times sent reporters out to see if there were any jobs available in the New York area. They came back and reported there were thousands of jobs, there just weren't people trained to be able to do those jobs. That is what this bill is designed to do. Local businesses will finally be able to find workers who live in their communities who have a particular skill set that they need for their business. The job training program that is included in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is what would get our economy going again.

Job training programs are especially important to small-population States such as Wyoming where skilled workers are in high demand and the supply is short. We recently broke ground on the Wind River Job Corps Center in Riverton, WY. The seven-building center will house 300 students and be the first of its kind in Wyoming. When the center opens in the next year or so, my constituents will be able to get the job training they need to succeed in their careers. This project would not have been possible without the determination of the people of Wyoming, the cooperation of the communities around there to provide facilities, the land that was necessary, and legislation like the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

I particularly want to thank Senator HARKIN for his recognition as part of the Appropriations Committee that Wyoming and New Hampshire were the two States that didn't have job corps centers and the help he gave us in being sure there was money set aside to be able to do that job corps center. I also appreciate the emphasis on the youth bill that is in there where young people can work during the summer to actually learn a trade while they improve their community.

On a broader scale, America is facing an economic climate that threatens our ability as a nation to compete in the global marketplace. This bill sends a clear message that we are serious about helping our American workers and employers remain competitive and that we are serious about closing the skills gap that is putting America's long-term competitiveness in jeopardy.

I have been on the floor recently discussing articles that declared that our current Congress could be the worst ever and that negotiating political agreements is a lost art. More often than not this year Senators have had no opportunity to weigh in and dissenting opinions are rarely considered. But the HELP Committee has broken through the logjam and produced a bipartisan bill with a bicameral effort that is going to get through the Senate without cloture, without filling the

amendment tree, or any of the other procedural tricks. That is a testament to the hard work of Senators HARKIN, ALEXANDER, MURRAY, ISAKSON, and their staffs and others who have worked on this bill. Their efforts are an example all of us should keep in mind in thinking about how we can and should operate. Almost half of today's sitting Senators have been here less than 6 years, so they haven't seen many times when the Senate has worked as it should, as it could, as it did. I urge them to keep this Workforce Investment Act bill in mind.

The HELP Committee had the first opportunity to shape the legislation. Members were able to iron out unintended consequences and input there. That is how committees work. Then Senators HARKIN, ALEXANDER, MURRAY, and ISAKSON gave all 100 Members of the Senate the opportunity to improve the legislation.

It is important to note this isn't the first time the HELP Committee has followed this process. A few months ago we passed the community development block grant for child education after it went through committee and after amendments were offered. I am glad the full Senate is finally considering reauthorization of this important piece of legislation.

I urge my fellow Senators to pass this bicameral, bipartisan agreement based on commonsense policies that will stimulate growth and the economy. The education and job training programs provided by this Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act are too important to working families, businesses, local communities, and our Nation's economy to delay it.

I yield the floor for the Senator from Ohio.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Madam President, and thanks to Senator ENZI who is one of the most cooperative Members of the Senate on so many levels. He and I cochaired the Air Force caucus together and he has been good to work with. When I sat on the Health, Education, Labor and Pension Committee, he was a member known then, as he still is, as one you can reach out to and who would get things done.

Special thanks to Senator ISAKSON who is on the floor and to Senators HARKIN and MURRAY who did so much to work with our office on our SECTORS ACT and the whole litany of workforce investment issues. I am indebted to them.

Passing this legislation would reauthorize and improve the Workforce Investment Act which first was established some 15-plus years ago. It includes critical workforce development programs that have helped thousands of Americans get on their feet. It provides streamlined one-stop services that empower adults and students and gives them the tools, skills, and the resources they need to find a new career

and improve their current skills. All of this helps to meet the needs of employers looking for trained, skilled workers.

The Cuyahoga Works Career Center in Cleveland is one of those programs. It is run out of The Cuyahoga County Library, known as one of the best library systems in the country. The center told me of a few success stories I wish to share.

A teacher was laid off from Cleveland Public Schools 3 years ago, substitute teaching while she worked with a Cuyahoga Works career counselor. The counselor showed her how to use social networking and LinkedIn more effectively. As a result she connected with an administrator in a local school district that invited her to discuss her job search. During this meeting the teacher learned that although she had a strong background, she could benefit from taking a couple computer classes. The Cuyahoga Works career counselor directed her to the library's Google workshops along with a few other computer courses. Shortly afterwards the teacher let her career counselor know she had accepted a long-term position in one of the local school districts.

Let me share another Cuyahoga Works success story. While visiting the new Cleveland casino, a Cuyahoga Works career counselor was stopped by an employee who had worked with this counselor on her job application. The customer was extremely grateful and went so far as to introduce the counselor to her supervisor explaining, "This person is the reason I got this job."

It is clear that legislation such as this works. We know that to compete globally we need workers who can quickly adapt to new technologies in business processes. So our workforce training programs must be able to keep up with the times. That is what the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act does. It builds on existing success and updates it for the 21st century workforce. Part of this improvement means we take a sector-based approach.

Since 2007, I have held some 250 roundtables around my State. From the beginning of the first one at the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce through a whole host of these in agriculture, with farmers and veterans and small businesspeople, workers and others, what I hear over and over is despite high unemployment, too many employers are having a hard time finding workers with the skills necessary. As a result, job openings in high-growth industries—health care, energy, bioscience, even manufacturing—are going unfilled.

The skill gap exists, especially for careers in high-tech fields and for jobs that require more than a high school degree. But often the skills gap exists with people with less than a college degree. This gap denies workers new opportunities they deserve. It undermines our Nation's economic competitiveness

and limits our ability to attract new jobs and businesses. To close the gap, we need to create industry or sector partnerships to ensure that workers have the right skills to get hired in high-tech emerging industries with good-paying jobs. It means local communities—local community colleges, local workforce investment boards, local labor unions, local small businesses—decide what they need to put these workforce training programs together regionally in community after community, whether it is in North Dakota, the Presiding Officer's State, or whether it is in my State of Ohio, driven by what kinds of jobs are available.

That is why I introduced the Strengthen Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success—or SECTORS Act—back in 2008. I reintroduced this legislation with Republican Senator COLLINS from Maine this year. I am pleased that provisions in today's bill are based on our bipartisan SECTORS bill. This modernization bill requires sector-based partnerships to ensure workforce training programs are developed with industry input, with labor input, with local community investment, workforce investment boards, with local businesses, whether it is in Chillicothe or Akron or Toledo or anywhere in my State.

Given the difficulty of negotiations, I am grateful for Chairman MURRAY's dedication to this bill, for her prioritization of these partnerships, because we know from experience how important they are. With too many Americans still unable to find work, we should do all we can to ensure our workers are fully qualified to fill available jobs. That is what the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act does, and that is why I encourage my colleagues to support it.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. Thank you, Madam President.

I also thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in both Chambers of Congress for their efforts on this important piece of legislation that is before us. I especially thank Senators ISAKSON, MURRAY, ALEXANDER, and HARKIN for their leadership on this issue and for working together with our colleagues in the House to craft this compromise. I am pleased that Congress has come together in a bipartisan manner to address the most pressing issue we face in the country, which is the need to restore our country's economic health.

We have a responsibility here in Washington to ensure that the needs of American workers, businesses, and job seekers are all being met. I believe we need a two-pronged approach to this problem: first, a full-fledged effort to grow the economy and create new jobs; and second, a temporary safety net that helps people unable to secure a job in this current economic environment. The bill now in front of us is a much-

needed effort to reauthorize and streamline the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, which is the primary Federal law concerning job training and workforce development programs. The services offered through the WIA Program—job search assistance, career counseling, skills training, and on-the-job training—are a critical part of the effort to grow our economy and to ensure that workers are prepared for the job market.

Importantly, these programs are coordinated at the State and local levels to ensure that the unique needs of our communities are appropriately addressed.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act takes some long overdue steps to modernize our workforce investment system. It eliminates 15 programs that have been identified as duplicative or ineffective. It removes 21 burdensome Federal mandates on States and local workforce boards. It promotes State and local control and improves flexibility so we can better respond to changes in our workforce or the economy. It also improves accountability and transparency measures to guarantee that these programs are operating efficiently and effectively.

Given that this law has been due for reauthorization for more than 10 years, providing States and local communities the flexibility they need is vital to ensuring economic stability. We clearly cannot depend on the Federal Government to provide workers and businesses with timely solutions to help our workforce, so I am pleased this legislation puts much of that control back where it belongs.

The need to reauthorize these important programs is perhaps no more apparent than in my home State of Nevada. Our State is one of the States hit hardest by the economic downturn, and although we are slowly recovering, we still have a long way to go. Industries that thrived for many years suddenly stalled, leaving thousands of workers out of jobs. Nevada had a double-digit unemployment rate for 4½ years, unfortunately topping the charts at nearly 14 percent for several months.

Over the past few years, I have spoken with employers and job seekers in Nevada to look for ways to restore the health of our economy and get Nevadans back to work. Surprisingly, I heard from many employers that they have job opportunities available, they want to hire more employees and grow their businesses, but they are having difficulty finding workers with the necessary skill sets.

The skills gap problem isn't unique to Nevada. In fact, there are millions of unfilled jobs throughout the country. With nearly 10 million Americans still unemployed and looking for work, we must take steps to connect job seekers with employment opportunities in in-demand sectors.

I was proud to join Senator JOE DONNELLY from Indiana in introducing the Skills Gap Strategy Act to develop a

solution to this particular issue, and I am glad the manager's amendment before us today also reinforces some of these principles.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is a bipartisan, bicameral piece of legislation that represents real efforts to get our economy back on track. Although no bill is perfect and the nature of compromise means not everyone gets everything they want, I am grateful for the work my colleagues have done in writing this bill. Although I would have preferred to include efforts to provide stability for unemployed job seekers by temporarily extending unemployment insurance benefits, I also recognize that these job training and workforce investment programs are essential in getting Americans back to work.

I still firmly believe that our economic recovery needs a two-pronged approach that grows the economy and provides stability for job seekers, and this bill is an important part of that equation.

While the Senate is in session, I call constituents back in my State and ask them to join me for a telephone town hall meeting. During one of the calls just last night, I asked Nevadans if they felt as though the economy was improving. Of those participating, 26 percent said yes, they do think the economy is improving; 13 percent said they were unsure; and 60 percent said no, they do not think the economy is getting any better. On a ratio of 2 to 1, Nevadans feel that the economic growth is lagging.

We need to fix this and pass policies to help turn this economy around. In the meantime, we cannot forget about the most important safety net available to Americans. Make no mistake. I have every intention of continuing to work with my colleague from Rhode Island to temporarily extend unemployment benefits for those who are seeking to work.

I was proud to once again team up with the Senator from Rhode Island yesterday to reintroduce a new unemployment extension bill that would provide 5 months of benefits with retroactive eligibility.

We will continue to work with our colleagues here in the Senate, the House, and this administration to pass this legislation to ensure that we continue to provide this temporary safety net while still looking for work.

Again, I thank my friends in both the Senate and the House for their work on this much-needed legislation. This compromise effort proves that Congress is capable of working together on legislation to help our economy. I am hopeful this experience will encourage all of us to continue to work together to pass more bills, grow our economy, and create new jobs for people in Nevada and for all of the United States.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I am proud to rise today in support of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act. I want to thank Chairman

HARKIN, Ranking Member ALEXANDER, Senator MURRAY, and Senator ISAKSON for putting together a strong reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act. I am happy that we were able to come together in a bipartisan, bicameral way to reauthorize this bill.

As our Nation continues to look at how to best create, sustain, and support high-paying jobs, we must look at how best to educate our workforce and how best to provide needed resources to fill jobs in high demand. WIA does just that. It helps people learn new skills and increases their chances of succeeding. This bill before us today is a major step toward improving WIA and helping our Nation remain competitive globally.

This bill allows local workforce boards to tailor services based on regional employment and workforce needs. This means that workers will get access to education and training for the skills needed to fill jobs, including professional development. It helps ensure that Federal workforce and training programs are working together by bringing together multiple programs and providers into a unified State plan to break down barriers and improve efficiency and effectiveness. This bill also ensures that all WIA programs are held to one set of common performance measures. This will help integrate case management and reporting systems while strengthening evaluations. Finally, this bill ensures that youth with disabilities will be provided the services and support they need to be successful in competitive, integrated employment.

I am particularly proud that this bill takes an in-depth look at nontraditional occupations. These are jobs where a gender makes up less than 25 percent of the workforce for that occupation. Women currently represent half of our Nation's workforce, but two-thirds of women are concentrated in 21 of 500 occupational jobs. Except for nursing and teaching, most of these jobs are among the lowest paid, including work in retail, service, and clerical jobs. Less than 16 percent of women who go through federally funded workforce programs receive any training. Most only get a "needs" assessment and receive help in finding a job. The economic recovery is leaving women behind. Of the 1.3 million jobs gained in the United States, nearly 90 percent went to men. Men have since regained 19 percent of jobs lost while women have only regained 6 percent. The incomes of women in the workforce are too often not adequate for a decent standard of living to support a family. This bill would require one-stop career centers to provide info to individuals, including women, on opportunities in fields that are nontraditional. It requires reporting related to job-placement services for participants, including the number and percentage of participants who enter a nontraditional occupation. It also requires all programs to make an effort to develop

programs that increase employment opportunities for those that are interested in nontraditional work.

The Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act supports our workforce in providing education and training for millions of America's workers. It ensures that local workforce boards have the flexibility needed to meet their regional needs. It encourages better coordination between Federal workforce and training programs and State and local efforts to attain economic development. It requires all programs to be accountable, and it provides more opportunities for youth with disabilities. This bill is a downpayment on our middle class and our Nation's future. It is my hope this bill be passed in a swift, expeditious, and uncluttered way and continue to work with Members on both sides of the aisle and across the dome to improve our workforce system.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3381 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3378

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I call up managers' amendment No. 3381.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. HARKIN] for Mrs. MURRAY, for herself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. HARKIN, and Mr. ALEXANDER, proposes amendment No. 3381 to amendment No. 3378.

The amendment is as follows:

On page 6, after the item relating to section 504, insert the following:

Sec. 505. Report on data capability of Federal and State databases and data exchange agreements.

On page 6, redesignate the second item relating to section 505 as the item relating to section 506.

On page 16, line 4, strike "134(c)(2)" and insert "134(c)(2)(A)(xii)".

On page 55, strike line 5.

On page 55, line 9, strike the period and insert "; and".

On page 55, between lines 9 and 10, insert the following:

(vi) how the State's strategy will improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).

On page 116, line 19 strike the semicolon and insert ", and improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable);".

On page 222, line 22, insert "allotted under section 127(b)(1)(C), reserved under section 128(a), and" before "available".

On page 232, line 8, strike "may" and insert "shall".

On page 248, lines 6 through 8, strike "less than the greater of" and all that follows through "(aa) an" and insert "an".

On page 248, line 11, strike "; or" and insert a period.

On page 248, strike lines 12 through 18.

On page 293, line 4, strike "may" and insert "shall, consistent with clause (i)".

On page 329, line 9, insert "information regarding the entity in any reports developed by the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Labor and" before "the entity's".

On page 338, strike lines 13 through 18 and insert the following:

(A) significant improvements in program performance in carrying out a performance improvement plan under section 159(f)(2);

On page 338, strike lines 21 and 22 and insert "such as an emergency or disaster, as defined in section 170(a)(1)".

On page 339, between lines 6 and 7, insert the following:

(3) DETAILED EXPLANATION.—If the Secretary exercises an option under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall provide, to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate, a detailed explanation of the rationale for exercising such option.

On page 339, line 7, strike "(3)" and insert "(4)".

On page 384, line 25, strike "to pro-" and all that follows through line 5 of page 385, and insert the following: "to award grants, on a competitive basis, to entities with demonstrated experience and expertise in developing and implementing programs for the unique populations who reside in Alaska or Hawaii, including public and private non-profit organizations, tribal organizations, American Indian tribal colleges or universities, institutions of higher education, or consortia of such organizations or institutions, to improve job training and workforce investment activities for such unique populations.".

Beginning on page 398, between lines 17 and 18, insert the following:

(7) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Not later than 30 days after the date the Secretary transmits the final report as described in paragraph (6), the Secretary shall make that final report available to the general public on the Internet, on the Web site of the Department of Labor.

On page 398, line 18, strike "(7)" and insert "(8)".

On page 399, line 3, strike "(8)" and insert "(9)".

On page 759, between lines 9 and 10, insert the following:

SEC. 505. REPORT ON DATA CAPABILITY OF FEDERAL AND STATE DATABASES AND DATA EXCHANGE AGREEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall prepare and submit an interim report and a final report to Congress regarding existing Federal and State databases and data exchange agreements, as of the date of the report, that contain job training information relevant to the administration of programs authorized under this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) list existing Federal and State databases and data exchange agreements described in subsection (a) and, for each, describe—

(A) the purposes of the database or agreement;

(B) the data elements, such as wage and employment outcomes, contained in the database or accessible under the agreement;

(C) the data elements described in subparagraph (B) that are shared between States;

(D) the Federal and State workforce training programs from which each Federal and

State database derives the data elements described in subparagraph (B);

(E) the number and type of Federal and State agencies having access to such data;

(F) the number and type of private research organizations having access to, through grants, contracts, or other agreements, such data; and

(G) whether the database or data exchange agreement provides for opt-out procedures for individuals whose data is shared through the database or data exchange agreement;

(2) study the effects that access by State workforce agencies and the Secretary of Labor to the databases and data exchange agreements described in subsection (a) would have on efforts to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act, and on individual privacy;

(3) explore opportunities to enhance the quality, reliability, and reporting frequency of the data included in such databases and data exchange agreements;

(4) describe, for each database or data exchange agreement considered by the study described in subsection (a), the number of individuals whose data is contained in each database or accessible through the data agreement, and the specific data elements contained in each that could be used to personally identify an individual;

(5) include the number of data breaches having occurred since 2004 to data systems administered by Federal and State agencies;

(6) include the number of data breaches regarding any type of personal data having occurred since 2004 to private research organizations with whom Federal and State agencies contract for studies; and

(7) include a survey of the security protocols used for protecting personal data, including best practices shared amongst States for access to, and administration of, data elements stored and recommendations for improving security protocols for the safe warehousing of data elements.

(c) **TIMING OF REPORTS.**—

(1) **INTERIM REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall prepare and submit to Congress an interim report regarding the initial findings of the report required under this section.

(2) **FINAL REPORT.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall prepare and submit to Congress the final report required under this section.

On page 759, strike line 10 and insert the following:

SEC. 506. EFFECTIVE DATES.

On page 763, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

(d) **DISABILITY PROVISIONS.**—Except as otherwise provided in title IV of this Act, title IV, and the amendments made by title IV, shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to rescind the quorum call.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, while the Senator from Iowa is still on the floor, I wish to compliment him. The committee which he chairs—of which I am the ranking member—has produced 19 bills this year for this Congress, 10 of which have become law. No

other committee has produced as much—this will add one to that—and that is not because we agree on everything.

The truth is we disagree on a lot of things, but we have found a way—when there is a chance to get a result—to come together.

Senator HARKIN has helped to create an environment in which Senator ISAKSON and Senator MURRAY, and a group of other Senators, have finally brought this Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to a conclusion, and a lot of other Senators have tried, and it has taken a long time to do it. Our focus today should be on the workers of America and people who need jobs.

I think it is important to point out that when the Senate tries to do it this way and allow everybody to have a chance to have a say, we can get a pretty good result. This is \$10 billion, and for our State—I say to the Senator from Iowa—it is \$145 million for the single biggest issue in our State: How do I get a better job? It is not a matter of Washington telling you how to do that. This is a bill that empowers States to enable people to get the skills they need so they can get a better job.

I thank the chairman for the way he has worked on this, and I wanted to say that while he was on the floor.

Madam President, I urge my colleagues to support this act today. It is a jobs bill. I was home in Grainger County in East Tennessee this past weekend working with the Clinch-Powell Cooperative. It is a great organization which helps people with home foreclosures and helps them to find a job.

The worry they have is that it is too hard to find a job. The worry of the National Federation of Independent Business Leaders—whom I talked with in Knoxville—is that it is too hard to create a job. We all have our reasons for that. On our side of the aisle, we think there are too many taxes, rules, regulations, and mandates from Washington that make it harder for a person who wants to create a job to do that.

I had one Tennessee small business man tell me he was looking at new employees as a liability more than an asset. He said: I hate that. I want to think of every one of my employees as an asset. When I hire them, I have to think about this health care cost or this tax cost or this regulatory cost, and all these extra costs, and they become, in my eyes, a liability and that discourages me from hiring anyone. That is one reason why so many Americans are having a hard time finding a job. Another reason is—and the reason we are working together today on this bill—because the skills don't fit the job.

We have a very good Governor in Tennessee whose name is Bill Haslam. I think his priority is the same as every other Governor whom I know in the country, which is he is trying to grow and attract jobs. What he hears

from every employer is: We have the jobs, but the employees don't have the skills.

Our Governor is working hard, for example, to create a program with Bridgestone Corporation—the big tire maker headquartered in Tennessee—at the community college and technical institute level, where the institute would train people with the exact skills that Bridgestone needs. So many of the new jobs today require more skills than they used to.

I was Governor when the Nissan plant came to Tennessee, and it was a surprise to a lot of people. Automobile plants used to have 20,000 or 30,000 people, but the Nissan plant only had 3,000 or 4,000 or 5,000 people there. Now it has a few more, but it is the largest automobile plant in North America—and the most efficient. I imagine it is as profitable as any automobile plant. But the jobs at the Nissan plant have a lot higher standards and a lot higher skills for the employees.

It is the same today as it was 30 years ago—the biggest challenge they have is finding Tennesseans, or other people, who have the right skills for the right jobs.

What can we in Washington do to help with that?

Well, we could sit here and in our wisdom write a lot of rules and prescriptions about just how to do that. In fact, that is what has been happening with the Workforce Investment Act. It started out in 1998 as sort of a GI bill for workers. The idea was we would make it easier for people to find jobs. We would create work councils in the States, give Governors flexibility, allow them to make arrangements with community colleges, such as the one I just described with Bridgestone. But then the old Washington disease set in, and you know what it is: I have a good idea, let's make everybody do it. Pretty soon we had 47 workforce programs, and according to a Government Accountability Office report, 45 of them were duplicative.

Well, the Senator from Oklahoma, who is retiring this year—which I regret very much—Senator COBURN, has led the charge. He asked for that report, and he pointed out to us that we are wasting money and not helping people when we spent \$9.5 or \$10 billion through the Workforce Investment Act, which is just a few of those programs, in such a complicated way.

I mentioned on the floor of the Senate a while ago what our former Democratic Governor Phil Bredesen said. Governor Bredesen was a very good Governor and businessman. He likes to get results. He took a look at the Workforce Investment Act programs that were coming to Tennessee from the Federal Government through a dozen or more work councils, and he just threw up his hands.

He said: I told the commissioner of employment security to just do what you can with it. There were too many well-intentioned rules and regulations

from Washington that caused these programs to be such a maze that Governors and work councils could not deal with them. The work councils were massive. There were 50 or 60 people who required someone up here saying: This is who you have to have. There were duplicative proposals. Instead of allowing people who wanted a job to say, I would like to have this kind of job with these kinds of skills, we were telling them what kind of skills they needed to have. This was not working.

The House of Representatives passed something called the SKILLS Act, which suited most of us on the Republican side of the Senate better because it eliminated more programs, eliminated more mandates, gave more discretion to Governors, and decentralized the program.

The Senate passed a bill through our committee that we didn't like nearly as well because it still had too many Washington rules and mandates in it.

Senator ISAKSON, who is on the floor, and Senator MURRAY from Washington, led a group of Senators who worked with the House—led by Congressman Klein and VIRGINIA FOXX and others—and we resolved our differences. Basically, what we have done is we moved a long way from where the House of Representatives bill was. I will be specific about what the bill does that I think makes a difference.

It eliminates 15 programs that were identified as ineffective or duplicative. It eliminates 21 Federal mandates on State and local workforce board compensation. In other words, we are saying to Tennessee, which I think has 13 workforce boards: OK, we don't think we got a lot smarter flying to Washington this morning. You can decide more about who is on your workforce board because we assume you know more about what is going on.

It replaces multiple State plans for multiple Federal programs that have to be submitted to Washington with a streamlined single-State plan that will reduce time spent on paperwork.

We are going to spend \$10 billion of the taxpayers' money—nearly 10—so we ought to have some accountability, and we ought to know what is happening, but we don't need everybody spending more time filling out forms than they are helping people find jobs.

This bill also streamlines reporting requirements, and it focuses on real outcomes, such as job placement, retention, earnings, credentials, and employer earning satisfaction.

The second broad thing the bill does is support local and State decision-making and flexibility. In that sense it is like a block grant. It reinstates the authority of Governors to reserve up to 15 percent of formula funds for innovative State and local programs. I like that.

I used to be a Governor. I used to think that the Governor of our State—and I still do—knows more about how to make job training work in Ten-

nessee than anybody up here because he is there, not here, so let him or her be in charge of a large part of that. It gives local workforce boards the freedom to transfer up to 100 percent of funds between the two largest formula programs serving adults and dislocated workers.

In other words, if the money we have allocated doesn't really fit Hohenwald, TN, as well as it does New York City or Madison, WI, or Atlanta, GA, then the local workforce board can transfer money from this program to that program. That just makes common sense. It gives States the ability to incentivize and award performance.

It allows people who want a better job, people who want job training, people who are out of a job to choose the career and training service that best meets their needs, and it empowers Governors to recognize or consolidate local areas that are low-performing in order to better meet regional needs.

Finally, it tackles the accountability issue which we all care about. It authorizes consistent measures of quality, including a 5-percent reduction in funding for poor-performing programs. It requires the U.S. Department of Labor to conduct independent evaluations of programs at least once every 4 years.

This is a good piece of work on the No. 1 subject in this country. Whether one is a Democrat or a Republican, jobs is the issue. It is too hard to find a job. It is too hard to create jobs. We have some differences of opinion about what to do about it, but I think we agree that matching the job skills to the job is a solution for millions of Americans.

I believe and I suspect most of us believe that in the Internet age specially, what we should be doing rather than mandating so many answers from here is empowering Governors and empowering local leaders on workforce boards to enable people who want a better job or a job at all to choose what they want to do and to do it. So in Tennessee Governor Haslam will now have much more freedom and \$145 million a year to spend on helping Tennesseans get a better job at Bridgestone or at the Nissan plant or start their own work because we are enabling, we are empowering. We are not mandating. We are doing less telling. And from the taxpayers' point of view, we are avoiding the waste of a lot of money by avoiding duplication.

I wish to thank Senators on both sides of the aisle for working together so well on this, particularly on our side of the aisle. I know Senator HARKIN and Senator MURRAY worked well with the Democratic Members. We appreciate their patience as we worked through this.

We had a number of Republican Senators whom Senator ISAKSON and I worked with, and I would like to acknowledge their role, starting with Senator ISAKSON. He was the majority leader of the Georgia—well, I guess he was the minority leader of the Georgia

Senate. He was the Republican leader. At that time, they didn't have a majority; they just had a few Senators. But he learned the skills of negotiation and compromise in order to get a result, while still sticking to his conservative principles, and I like to see that skill. So on our side of the aisle he gets most of the credit for the result we are getting.

Right up there with him is Senator MIKE ENZI of Wyoming, who worked on this, Senator ENZI says, for nearly 10 years. Now, that may seem hard to do, but this bill was supposed to be reauthorized after 2003, and this is 2014. So Senator ENZI brought it a long way, and we are grateful to him.

In addition, Senator COLLINS and Senator MURKOWSKI are cosponsors of the bills.

Senator SCOTT from South Carolina played a great role by picking up the SKILLS Act from the House and bringing it over to the Senate and reminding us that we needed to get rid of this maze of regulatory problems and go as far in that direction as we could possibly go. So in his first year in the Senate, Senator SCOTT has played a major role in the passage of a very important piece of legislation.

I have mentioned Senator COBURN before. We all acknowledge there is no one on either side of the aisle who is more relentless in looking for waste, fraud, and duplication than Senator COBURN. Through his work and his staff's work, he put the spotlight on the fact that 44 of our 47 workforce programs were duplicative and wasteful. That is not him saying that; that is the General Accountability Office saying that.

Senators LEE and FLAKE worked with us, and they will be offering amendments today.

Senator PORTMAN made significant contributions to the legislation, and we thank him for that.

Senator HATCH and Senator MCCONNELL made important contributions, and Senator TOOMEY and Senator COATS did as well.

There are a number of other Senators who did something we would like to see more of around here; that is, they didn't insist on every right they had. We are a body that operates by unanimous consent, so if we all insist on all the rights we have, we don't do anything, which is where we find ourselves sometimes. But there were a number of Senators who had good ideas, who had proposals they would like to see adopted. Many of those we were able to incorporate in the manager's amendment, but then some we just couldn't. So they stepped aside and they thought it was more important that we go ahead and come to a consensus and get a result.

In conclusion, let me say this: The other night the Senator from Georgia and I were at the home of the Australian Ambassador to the United States. He was talking about this body. The Australians love the United

States—especially Kim Beazley, the Ambassador. He is a Labor Party member. In our country, that would be called a Democrat. But he is a big pro-American former Minister in Australia.

He said: You know, we envy the U.S. Senate. It is the greatest tribunal in the world. We all wish we had it.

It made us all stop and think. Are we really living up to the respect for this body that people around the world have for the U.S. Senate when it is operating the way it should?

Well, today it is operating the way it should, but a lot of the time it does not.

How should it operate? The Senate is different because it is the single legislative body in the world that is designed for extended discussion of an important issue until it comes to a consensus, and then we cut off debate and then we get a result, if it is possible. That is how we get a civil rights bill. That is how we get Social Security. That is how we get a workforce investment act. We have extended discussion and debate and amendment and vote on an important issue until we come to a consensus.

Why is a consensus needed, which means 60 votes instead of 51 much of the time? Because we govern a complex country by consensus. We don't do it by order or edict or any partisan way.

This is a very complicated bill. It brought here today by unanimous consent, but that is only because we have debated it for an extended period of time here in the Senate and we have come to a consensus about it. We have given up on a lot of ideas we had. If we had our way, we would pass the SKILLS Act in a minute—almost every single Republican would—but that is not what the Democrats would do. So we have come to an agreement in the Senate, and we have come to an agreement with the House. That is the consensus. As a result of that, Governors, such as the Bipartisan Policy Center's Governors' Council, have praised this result. I believe our Governor in Tennessee, Governor Haslam, will be delighted with it. I think our former Governor, Governor Bredesen, who threw up his hands when he saw the maze he had to work with a couple of years ago, will welcome what we have done.

I thank the Senators on both sides of the aisle who have done this. My hope is that this is a disease that is infectious and that we see a little bit more of this kind of legislating in the Senate.

I would like to extend my deep thanks and sincere appreciation to the dedicated staff that worked on this bill to reauthorize the 16 year old Workforce Investment Act for the past several years. Without their hard work and tireless effort we wouldn't have been able to reach the successful conclusion on the passage of this important bipartisan bill.

I would like to thank Scott Cheney on Senator MURRAY's staff, who has been working on this reauthorization

effort for many years, as well as Evan Schatz.

Senator ISAKSON's staff worked hard with Senator MURRAY and our Republican offices throughout the Committee process and in coming to this final agreement, including Tommy Nguyen and Brett Layson.

I would also like to thank some former staff who put a lot of time into this reauthorization effort in the 112th Congress, including Glee Smith who worked for Senator ISAKSON, as well as Beth Buehlmann and Kelly Hastings who worked for Senator ENZI on the HELP Committee.

The Chairman of this committee has an outstanding staff that are very capable and dedicated, particularly Crystal Bridgeman, Michael Gamel-McCormick, Lee Perselay, Mildred Otero, and Derek Miller.

Our partners in the House of Representatives deserve great thanks for their willingness to come to the table and negotiate a pre-conferenced agreement, including Rosemary Lahasky, Brad Thomas, James Bergeron, Amy Jones, Leticia Mederos, Michele Varnhagen, and Jacque Chevalier on the majority and minority staff of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Many of our Senate Republican offices deserve thanks for their work with the HELP Committee on amendments and other technical fixes to the bill, including Denzel McGuire and Katelyn Conner on Senator MCCONNELL's staff, Christopher Toppings and Natasha Hickman on Senator BURR's staff, Leila Kimbrell and Kate Williams on Senator MURKOWSKI's staff, Laura Pence on Senator COBURN's staff, Kristin Chapman on Senator ENZI's staff, Nick Butterfield and Pam Thiessen on Senator PORTMAN's staff, Christy Knese and Wendy Baig on Senator LEE's staff, Chandler Morse on Senator FLAKE's staff, Diane Browning and Katie Neal on Senator HATCH's staff, Dimple Gupta on Senator TOOMEY's staff, Casey Murphy on Senator COATS' staff, and Lizzy Simmons on Senator SCOTT's staff.

We know these bills don't just suddenly appear. The Senate Legislative Counsel staff work long hours on the bill and then on the amendments, so I would like to especially thank Liz King, Amy Gaynor, Chelsea Koester, and Kristin Romero.

And we always rely on the experts at the Congressional Research Service to give us good information in a timely manner, so I extend our thanks to David Bradley and Benjamin Collins.

Finally, I would like to thank my staff. They have put a lot of time and effort in to make this a process that the Senate and American people can be proud of and I appreciate their efforts and late nights on this bill. So, my thanks go out to Patrick Murray, Bill Knudsen, Peter Oppenheim, David Cleary, Diane Tran, Jim Jeffries, Margaret Atkinson, and Liz Wolgemuth.

I thank the Chair.

I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3379 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3378

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 3379.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arizona [Mr. FLAKE] proposes an amendment numbered 3379 to amendment No. 3378.

Mr. FLAKE. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

In section 116(g)(2), strike subparagraph (A), and insert the following:

(A) IN GENERAL.—If such failure occurs for a program year, the Governor shall take corrective actions, which shall include development of a reorganization plan through which—

(i) the Governor shall—

(I) prohibit the use of eligible providers and one-stop partners identified as achieving a poor level of performance; or

(II) take such other significant actions as the Governor determines are appropriate; and

(ii) the Governor may require the appointment and certification of a new local board, consistent with the criteria established under section 107(b).

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I am pleased to have the opportunity to offer this amendment today, and I appreciate my colleague, the ranking member of the HELP Committee, working with my office to make this possible.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act the Senate will vote on today establishes a performance accountability system for adults and youth core programs provided for within it. This bill also establishes sanctions for both States and localities that fail to meet the established accountability measures.

My proposed amendment works to increase accountability in local training programs and one-stop providers.

As the bill currently stands, a Governor can only take corrective action if a local area fails to meet performance accountability measures for 3 years in a row. That is a long period of time. My amendment moves the timeframe that a Governor can get involved in failing programs lacking corrective actions from 3 years to 1 year. I think that makes sense, certainly. Simply put, if training providers and one-stop partners are identified as "poor performers" after 1 year, the Governor

should be required to remove them from the list of eligible providers. This amendment is simply common sense. Why should poorly performing programs continue to miss performance accountability measures for 3 years in a row before a Governor can get involved and take corrective action?

In addition, under this amendment a Governor could replace a local board if necessary after just 1 year, but that wouldn't be required.

My hope is that if we are going to do these kinds of things—if we are going to provide these funds—States and localities should work together to make these programs as successful and beneficial as possible.

I believe this amendment will provide an additional level of oversight of these programs, and I ask my colleagues to support this amendment.

Shifting now from this specific amendment, I now wish to talk a little bit about the amendment process in general and the position we find ourselves in today in this body.

At their core, amendments offered on the floor serve as an opportunity to not only thoroughly debate an issue. We all know that legislation is often brought to the floor having only had the benefit of input from just a few Members. What amendments do is provide individual Senators the chance to change and often improve legislation. They are a right in this body, not a privilege.

I believe in this fundamental process so strongly that I have supported controversial cloture motions and other motions to proceed on underlying bills even if I did not support that legislation, simply on good-faith assurances that amendments would be offered and that amendment debate would be allowed. Even though I did not support the bill as it stood, I would at least have the opportunity to make it better through an open legislative process. That is how I felt on a number of pieces of legislation that have moved through this body.

Unfortunately, many of these assurances were not met and my fear is this body will continue to pass legislation with little to no amendment consideration.

Since last July, Republicans have only had 11 rollcall votes on amendments, including the 2 we will see today. By comparison, in the other body, House Democrats have had over 160 votes on amendments during that same period—160 for the minority party in the House of Representatives. That is more than 14 times the votes Senate Republicans have had.

As my good friend from Kentucky pointed out earlier, Representative SHEILA JACKSON LEE has singlehandedly received more amendment votes than all Senate Republicans, given that she has had 15 votes on her amendments since last July in the House of Representatives.

Some who lionize this Chamber—and I am one of those—as the world's most deliberative body often take a dim

view to the practices of the House—I am not one of those; but this is supposed to be the more deliberative body with open amendments and open debate—they will cite with trepidation the restrictive and structured approach to debate in the House and, with a shudder, the very fact that the House has the dread Rules Committee that picks and chooses which amendments will be offered. I can tell you from experience, when it comes to the ability to offer amendments, I now long for those days in the House.

During my service in the House, between the 107th and 112th Congresses, I personally offered—this is offered; not filed, but offered on the floor of the House of Representatives—239 amendments. In fact, in the last four Congresses, I offered between 30 and 70 amendments per Congress.

Outside of the sheer volume, one could reasonably chuckle at my amendment batting average since very few of my amendments passed. But I actually had more amendments adopted in the past two Congresses each than we have had rollcall votes on Republican amendments in the Senate since July.

Under both Republican and Democratic leadership in the House, my right to offer amendments, particularly during the appropriations process, was respected. They were respected by both parties, even when I was offering dozens of earmark-limitation amendments that most of my colleagues preferred not see the light of day.

Many of my colleagues here in the Senate served with me in the House. They all remember those times. Nobody wanted to vote on Flake amendments. These earmark-limitation amendments were not popular. They often did not get many votes. But, in fact, in all but one of the 140 earmark-limitation amendments I offered, they failed—all but 1. But I think we can all agree that joining with a small handful of my colleagues to spotlight precisely what was going on in these appropriations bills ultimately aided in the current earmark moratorium that is in force by both Houses. That is a good thing.

While I prefer to have my amendments prevail, that certainly should not be the test for whether I am afforded the ability to offer them.

Unfortunately, in my short time in the Senate, I have filed 85 amendments to improve underlying legislation and to address issues faced by my constituents. It is worth noting that this will be my first amendment that will be voted on by my colleagues.

During last year's NDAA consideration, I filed an amendment that would simply ask DOD to report on OCO spending. The amendment would have required an accounting of OCO funds appropriated during fiscal year 2013 and requested in fiscal year 2014 and would have withheld 10 percent of the budget for the Office of the Secretary of De-

fense until the report was received. This amendment is not a fundamental policy change; it is simply a reporting requirement that all of us would benefit from.

Last week, I filed 30 amendments to the minibus appropriations bill, but not one is likely to see the light of day. With no disrespect to my colleagues, and having served on the Appropriations Committee in the House myself, I think we can all agree that spending bills benefit from a good scrubbing by this entire body before they move through the legislative process.

For example, one of those amendments would have reduced the USDA Single Family Housing Direct Loan Program from \$560 million to \$360 million—the same amount as is in the President's budget. I think most of us would be surprised to learn that the Department of Agriculture has a Single Family Housing Direct Loan Program and that we are funding it to the tune of \$560 million. The President wants to move that down to \$360 million. I agree with the President. We ought to. At least we ought to be allowed to debate it and vote on it.

This is not an outlandish amendment. It would simply reduce funding levels to the President's request and, more importantly, give this body the opportunity to discuss the merits of the program.

I know some of my colleagues will disagree and will ultimately oppose many of these amendments and others if they come to a vote, and that is fine. What is not fine is the fact that we in the U.S. Senate cannot even have that debate.

To be clear, this is not just a Republican concern. A recent article in the Hill mentioned how my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are seemingly just as frustrated with the current amendment process. The article included a quote from a Democratic Senator who said: "I've never been in a less productive time in my life than I am right now, in the United States Senate."

So apparently I should count myself lucky to get a rollcall today on this amendment because there are many on the other side of the aisle who have not been afforded the same luxury.

Both Democrats and Republicans are getting shut out of this process, and it is a very dangerous precedent. I urge my colleagues to encourage thoughtful, open debate from here on out. I also encourage support for my commonsense reform to the accountability provisions of this legislation we are debating today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Arizona for his input, and I want to acknowledge his remarks with regard to the amendment process.

One of the reasons we have a bill which is on the floor today—the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act

is here—is because it is one of the few bills where we have had a process in working toward a final passage where we have had a lot of amendments.

This bill has a lot of input from a lot of people. We did that. The fact that he is having his first vote, after offering 85 amendments, is a testimony to the reason we ought to have more voting on amendments, more debate on the floor, and we will pass things and be more productive in our process.

So I thank the Senator for his leadership. I thank him for helping us as we brought this legislation forward and encourage him to continue to offer amendments and work to perfect legislation coming before the Senate.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, could the Presiding Officer inform us as to the time remaining on both sides?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia controls 2 minutes and the Senator from Connecticut controls 45 minutes.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I wish to ask unanimous consent that the majority side yield an additional 10 minutes of their time to the minority side in order for Senator PORTMAN to make his speech.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I yield for Senator PORTMAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I thank my colleague from Georgia and appreciate his work on this legislation. I know that he and the Senator from Tennessee have been talking about the legislation earlier today. I understand that Senator ALEXANDER talked about some of the work we have done together to try to make sure this legislation does not just reauthorize an existing program but improves that program to give more focus on how to take our Federal worker retraining program to make it work for America's workers at a critical time.

We just learned that the economy, in the first quarter, grew even less than we had thought. I think it now has been readjusted to almost minus 3 percent—minus 2.9 percent growth. We have big problems in terms of our economy getting moving. One of the problems we have is we do not have the trained workers for the 21st century jobs that are out there.

I rise today as the Senate is on the verge of passing this first comprehensive reform of our Nation's primary workforce development programs in about 16 years, to say that I appreciate,

again, the fact that Members on both sides of the aisle have worked with me and others to put some reforms into this program to ensure it works better for our workers and for our competitiveness and for our ability to actually get this economy moving again.

We do have this weak economy. And sometimes we are sort of numb to it. We forget that this is not just a typical recovery; it is a very slow recovery. In fact, by measures of growth in economy or unemployment or other measures, it is the weakest economic recovery we have had since the Great Depression. We have become numb to some of the disappointing news.

Almost 20 million Americans are out of work, 317,000 of our friends and neighbors in Ohio are now unemployed, and millions more have given up looking for work. In fact, the number of people who have given up looking for work is growing, so it is a high percentage. As to those who have given up looking for work, you would have to go back 34 years ago, to the 1970s, to find similar numbers of people as a percentage of the workforce.

For men, they say it may go back to the 1940s when we started keeping track of this. So we have problems. We have problems that can be solved in part by closing what is called the skills gap. In other words, there are a whole bunch of jobs that are open, but they cannot be filled because people do not have the skills to take those jobs.

By the way, you do not have to take my word for it. Will.i.am of the Black Eyed Peas is someone I do not often have an opportunity to quote on the floor of the Senate, but he was at the White House recently. In addition to his work in the music industry, he is also known for his work with kids back in his hometown of Boyle Heights, CA. A lot of that is focused on job training, skills training. During an event at the White House a couple of weeks ago, I saw that he said the following: There are so many jobs in America we can't fill because people aren't brought up to speed with the skill sets that are needed.

Will.i.am is right. The numbers back him up, by the way. Today, 4.5 million jobs remain open and unfilled in America. Yet we have these high levels of unemployment and all of these people who have left the workforce altogether. What is going on? Part of it is that we do not have the skills to be able to fill those jobs.

In Ohio today, if you go to the OhioMeansJobs Web site, you will see 140,000 jobs advertised. Yet we have about 317,000 people out of work. If you look at these jobs, a lot of them require advanced manufacturing skills, information technology skills, and medical and bioscience skills for health care workers. We have to do better in terms of filling that gap so that American workers are able to meet the demands of the 21st century.

There is a skills gap report by the Manufacturing Institute that came out

recently. Based on a poll they did, it said that 74 percent of manufacturers are experiencing workforce shortages or skill deficiencies that keep them from expanding their operations and improving productivity. Seventy-four percent say they are looking for better skills to be able to fill those jobs.

We could be doing so much better than we are to close that skills gap. For too many Americans, the only jobs available are those that they do not have the skills and qualifications to be able to fill.

The Federal Government spends a lot of money on this. This is not for lack of funds. The Federal Government spends between \$15 and \$18 billion a year on these Federal worker retraining programs. As some of you know, there are 47 different programs spread over 9 different departments and agencies. We need to do more to try to consolidate and improve these programs, but in the meanwhile let's do what we can. That is what this legislation does.

The Government Accountability Office or GAO—which looks at all Federal agencies and decides how they are doing, spent a lot of time looking at this. They have said that some of that money—the \$18 billion I talked about of our taxpayer money that does provide the funding for these 47 different programs over 9 departments and agencies—they are not working very well. They say 45 of the 47 programs overlapped with at least 1 other program. Only five have conducted an impact study of their efforts since 2004, meaning that the assessments of outcomes or performance you would expect are not being done. Only five have conducted an impact study of their efforts since 2004.

GAO concluded that “little is known about the effectiveness of most of these programs.” But actually we do know something about the effectiveness because these millions of unfilled jobs are an indictment of the program. In other words, we should be doing a better job of getting the skills we need to fill these jobs if we are spending \$15 to \$18 billion of hard-earned taxpayer money on it.

I hear this story all across Ohio, and I know my colleagues hear it across their States. I hear from workers, from businesses, from educators. People are frustrated, and there is good reason for it. I think the way Washington has handled workforce development is simply inefficient. It is not working well. I think it is unfair to employers who have open positions because they cannot find qualified candidates to fill them. It is certainly unfair to taxpayers who send their money to Washington believing that their government will be good stewards of those funds and that we are going to use them effectively for worker retraining, getting the money into the hands of people to train them for jobs that are actually out there. I think it is unfair to, of course, millions of Americans who would like to build a better life for

their families and find that the Federal resources allocated to them are not getting the job done.

Because we believe we can do better, this Congress is going to act today. The Senate and the House are working together on this issue, which is good. It is bicameral. It is bipartisan.

I have joined with Senator MICHAEL BENNET of Colorado on what is called the CAREER Act. The CAREER Act is included, in most part, in this legislation. The CAREER Act first calls for a reduction in the wasteful and inefficient overlap in the system.

I am pleased to see that the legislation before us today trims 15 programs from our Nation's workforce development program. I think that is a good start. I also think we can do even more. Understanding that there were a lot of constraints, different points of view, we need to consolidate further, in my view.

Second, we called for an increased focus on helping unemployed workers attain high-quality credentials that give them a leg up in the local job market. I am pleased this bill includes our provisions that require those local boards, the workforce investment boards, to give priority consideration to programs that lead to credentials that are in demand in their local area.

We worked hard to include a provision requiring the State and local boards to provide specific strategies for helping folks attain high-quality credentials. These are industry-recognized credentials that are in demand, that are portable—they can move from State to State—and that help them move up the career ladder. That is important because we know that these credentials, based on all the research, are critical to getting people into these jobs.

Third, we call for a new and innovative accountability program in the system called Pay for Success. Currently, the workforce development programs provide funding regardless of performance so long as certain rules are followed and input requirements are met—not output but input. This has resulted in this unaccountability the GAO talked about and many complacent programs that have fallen short. Pay for Success turns this model on its head by linking payments to outcome, to actual performance measures. Job-training service providers who do well will be rewarded under this model. Those who fail to deliver results are going to be held accountable.

I am pleased that again this underlying legislation—the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act—before us today includes these Pay for Success provisions that allow local workforce boards to use their formula to engage in Pay for Success contracts. That is a step in the right direction. I would like to go even further, but I think it is historic and it is very important.

Finally, we call for access to better data to make it less difficult and expensive for State and local officials to

assess the effectiveness of their training activities in real time. I am pleased this legislation includes the provisions for a study on how to access better data that can help the system deliver better results for taxpayers and the unemployed. That is part of the CAREER Act.

These four reforms can help change lives and turn around our economy. They are the kinds of reforms that can empower millions of Americans to get the kinds of jobs that do fund retirement, that do buy homes, that do pay for college educations. These reforms are long overdue.

We live in a dynamic and ever-changing economy, no question about it. We have to be sure our workforce is also dynamic and ever-changing to be able to meet the demands. We should not be held back by a workforce development system that has not been reauthorized since 1998. For reference, that is the year Google was first incorporated as a company. So I strongly support the underlying legislation.

Again, I commend my colleagues on both sides of the aisle—I see some of them here today on the floor—for their work. I thank them for working with Senator MICHAEL BENNET and me to incorporate some of the bipartisan CAREER Act provisions.

At a time when the two parties in Washington have been at odds on how to finally get our economy moving again, this is a jobs bill that is win-win. It is a win for everyone, especially those Americans who are still looking for jobs and those businesses that are desperate to fill the skills gap they see.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I rise in strong support of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This legislation represents a long-overdue upgrade to our workforce investment system. I wish to commend the bipartisan work of Chairman HARKIN, Senator MURRAY, Senator ALEXANDER, and Senator ISAKSON in negotiating this compromise legislation that will move our job training and adult education systems forward.

The need to improve our workforce investment system has crystallized during this recovery from the great recession. My home State of Rhode Island continues to struggle with high unemployment—the highest rate in the Nation. Many of our unemployed workers have been out of work for an extended period of time. Yet employers tell me they have open positions they cannot fill because they cannot find workers with the skills they need today. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act takes important steps to help address the skills mismatch that keeps jobs open and potential workers unemployed.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act streamlines the current workforce development system by requiring a single comprehensive plan that incorporates all of the core pro-

grams and is aligned with economic development plans for the States. It also establishes shared performance metrics that apply to all of the programs in the system. In other words, it makes sure that employers, educators, and the workforce system are all on the same page.

The legislation before us today makes some tough choices, eliminating 15 programs. However, it also maintains and strengthens vital national programs such as Job Corps and Youth Build, which have made a difference for so many young people in Rhode Island and across the Nation.

I am particularly pleased that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act strengthens the partnership between our workforce investment system and our public libraries. Libraries are where people go when they need help or information. They are a critical part of the delivery system for adult education and job training.

In fiscal year 2011, the Institute of Museum and Library Services reported that there were 1.52 billion visits to public libraries across the Nation. Senator COCHRAN and I introduced the Workforce Investments through Local Libraries Act to harness the potential of public libraries to expand the reach of the workforce investment system and ensure that job seekers and adult leaders had the opportunity to develop the critical digital skills necessary for today's economy. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act includes many of the provisions of this legislation. I was very pleased to work with Senator COCHRAN and have great gratitude for Senators ALEXANDER, ISAKSON, HARKIN, and MURRAY for incorporating some of our ideas.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act also strengthens adult education and includes many of the provisions of the Adult Education and Economic Growth Act that I introduced with Senator BROWN.

For 2012, data from the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies show that an estimated 52 percent of adults age 16 to 65 in the United States lack the literacy skills necessary to identify, interpret, or evaluate one or more pieces of information. These are critical skills for postsecondary education and the workplace. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will help address this critical need for adult education and literacy by ensuring that adult education programs are aligned with job training and postsecondary education, supporting the professional development of adult educators, offering technical assistance for adult education providers, and strengthening the research and evaluation of best practices in adult education.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is an example of what is possible when we work together to solve problems and strengthen the tools available to our communities to

improve the quality of life. We have libraries. We have adult education programs throughout this country. What I think the sponsors of this legislation so creatively did is pull them together, so the sum of the parts is much greater and will have a much more effective impact on the employment opportunities for Americans and our productivity as a nation.

In that regard, I would like to discuss for a moment a new bipartisan bill I have introduced with Senator HELLER to restore emergency benefits for job-seekers for 5 months. What we have done here is we have addressed the issue of training, but we still have an issue with people who are desperately looking for work and need the assistance of the unemployment benefits to do that.

I think this legislation will help us make the case because one of the legitimate reasons that were raised with respect to the extension of benefit was, well, we do not have a job training program, so we are not preparing people for jobs. That is what we should be doing. Well, this bill goes a long way to do that. I think it helps us in trying to make the case.

As we know, in April we voted on a bipartisan basis to send the bill to the House. Unfortunately, it languished there, and then ultimately the time expired. Our new plan would provide prospective emergency benefits—just going forward—for those eligible job seekers who lost their benefits on December 28. They would essentially pick up where they were on December 28.

This is something that, hand in hand with this new job training bill, will give people both additional advantages of training and resources to make it through the training period, pay the rent, have a cell phone so they can call for a job, do those things that are necessary to get by. It is fiscally responsible. It is offset. We are waiting for an official score from CBO, but our intention is to make it a bill that is fiscally responsible. Madam President, 3.1 million Americans lost these benefits—that number grows by approximately 72,000 a week. We can do better. We must do better.

We are doing a lot to try to get people back to work. I commend this legislation. It is an important step forward.

It is an important step forward, because as so many of my colleagues have noted, one of the things that is amazing in this recession—and I have mentioned it previously—is to go into Rhode Island to companies even with the state unemployment rate of 8 percent—and have the owners say they are desperately looking for four or five workers. They can't find them.

Why is that? The skills that 20 years ago got someone a good job in Rhode Island and for the past 20 years kept them working, after this downturn slowed their company or pushed them out, those skills are out of date. Good workers, long work history, they need not only the help to retrain, but they

also certainly need the help to get from day to day until they can get back in the workforce.

With that, let me again commend and thank the sponsors and authors of this legislation.

I yield the floor.

Mr. ISAKSON. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. I ask unanimous consent that if the final vote on passage is successful, the statement of the managers for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act be printed in the RECORD immediately following the text of the Senate-passed bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ISAKSON. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ISAKSON. How much time remains on the Republican side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 1 minute remaining.

Mr. ISAKSON. I ask unanimous consent that 5 additional minutes be extended from the Democratic side to the Republican side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. HARKIN. How much time remains on our side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 25 minutes remaining on the Democratic side.

Mr. HARKIN. Sure, absolutely.

Mr. ISAKSON. I yield the balance of our time to the Senator from Utah, Mr. LEE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3380 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3378

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3380 to amendment No. 3378.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Utah [Mr. LEE] proposes an amendment numbered 3380 to amendment No. 3378.

Mr. LEE. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require that evaluation reports are due every fourth year, to establish a reservation of funds in a fiscal year in which a report is due, and to establish a reduction in funds if a report is not submitted)

Beginning on page 395, strike line 20 and all that follows through line 24, and insert the following:

(B) PERIODIC INDEPENDENT EVALUATION.—The evaluations carried out under this paragraph shall include an independent evaluation of the programs and activities carried out under this title. A final report containing the results of the evaluation shall be submitted under paragraph (5) not later than June 30 of 2018 and every fourth year thereafter.

On page 399, between lines 6 and 7, insert the following:

(9) RESERVATION AND REDUCTION IN FUNDS FOR FAILURE TO SUBMIT EVALUATION REPORTS.—

(A) RESERVATION OF FUNDS.—At the beginning of a report year or a succeeding year, the Secretary shall reserve 5 percent of the funds appropriated and made available to the Office of the Secretary.

(B) RETURN OF FUNDS.—If, by the end of the report year or succeeding year, respectively, the committees described in paragraph (6) do not receive the corresponding report, the funds reserved in subparagraph (A) for the year involved shall be returned to the Treasury of the United States.

(C) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

(i) REPORT YEAR.—The term “report year” means a fiscal year in which a report is due under paragraph (1)(B).

(ii) SUCCEEDING YEAR.—The term “succeeding year” means each succeeding fiscal year, after a report year in which a report is due and not received as described in subparagraph (B), if the report remains unsubmitted on the first day of that succeeding fiscal year.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, Federal job training programs are seldom evaluated to determine whether they are meeting their intended purposes.

However, when the United States is \$17.5 trillion in debt, we as representatives of the American taxpayers should do a better job to ensure that the programs we are funding are actually working and we are working with them.

We should pay particularly close attention to programs that receive billions of dollars every year from the Federal Government when their authorization lapsed over one decade ago.

The Murray-Isakson-Harkin-Alexander substitute amendment takes important steps to ensure title I State and local programs are more accurately evaluated, meaning performance measures and held accountable for unmet goals and resubmitted reports.

More specifically, the bill would sanction State and local programs should they continually fail to meet their performance measures or fail to submit required reports. The substitute amendment does not hold the Department of Labor to similar standards.

The Department is required to conduct evaluations and to submit separate reports to Congress. I was very pleased to work with Senators ALEXANDER and HARKIN to include in the managers' amendment a provision that would require the final evaluation reports to be made public and available

to the public. In my opinion, requiring the Department to post these reports to the Department's Web site is a commonsense step toward improving transparency in the WIOA job training programs.

In addition, I worked closely with the HELP Committee chairman and ranking member to further discuss a procurement provision within the Job Corps section of the bill. While I believe there are still some outstanding concerns that we should continue to discuss, I believe everyone's goal is to ensure that the best Job Corps operators are able to compete for these sites.

Today I would like to offer an additional good governance measure that would subject the Department of Labor to similar sanctions as the States. It would help tackle the problem of the Department of Labor delaying congressionally mandated evaluations, which routinely has been abused by both Republican and Democratic administrations.

It is a shame that Congress passing a law requiring the completion of an evaluation by a certain date is not enough to get the job done. My amendment would remedy this problem by reducing the budget of the Department of Labor's Office of the Secretary by 5 percent in the year a report is due, should the agency fail to conduct and release the independent evaluation as required by this bill. This reduction of funds would continue each year until the report is finalized.

WIOA authorizes \$9 billion each year for the next 5 years, and title I represents half of that funding. Therefore, ensuring an independent evaluation of title I programs is conducted and made publicly available for review and scrutiny by Congress and the American public. It is critically important for any future modification, renewal or elimination of programs.

I would appreciate the support of my colleagues for the passage of this amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, we worked very hard on this bill to make sure we had good, strong, independent evaluations and reporting requirements. Therefore, I am pleased to rise and speak in opposition to the amendment.

We included in the bill requirements for an independent evaluation to be conducted every 4 years, which includes what we call the gold standard impact evaluation, the first of which is due in 2019.

Our House colleagues on both sides of the aisle agreed with and supported these provisions in a bipartisan, bicameral process. What the Lee amendment would do would be to inappropriately penalize the Secretary of Labor if the Secretary does not submit a report by an arbitrary date.

I understand the intent of the amendment. We all want to see reports filed

in a timely manner. However, the Lee amendment does not give any allowance for factors that might be outside of the Secretary's control and then would penalize the Secretary for the failure of others over whom the Secretary has absolutely no control—and that is why I oppose the amendment.

As the name suggests, independent evaluations are run by objective, independent third parties. Sometimes the evaluations encounter delays that are far beyond the control of the Department.

For example, data may not be available in a timely manner; alternatively, followup with States, local areas or programs participating in the evaluation may be necessary. On some occasions, legal challenges may arise. Any of these factors could delay a comprehensive report of this nature.

Then to say, however, we are going to penalize the Department for failing to meet an arbitrary deadline I think is inappropriate and inequitable, because they may not have control over that. So the Lee amendment would disregard any and all of these reasons a report might be delayed even by 1 day.

I wish to make it clear that all of us who worked on this bill believe in the value of independent evaluations and the information they can provide policymakers and consumers, but we also believe they should be done right, without undue pressure of arbitrary deadlines and no room for corrections.

I would also note the underlying bill does strengthen evaluations and reporting in the right way. This is something we all worked on and we have all worked on it in a bipartisan bicameral nature.

Again, the House has been very clear that we work this out. They would not be accepting of this amendment, so I hope all Senators would join with us who worked so hard on this bill in a bipartisan manner to oppose the Lee amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. If I could respond very briefly, I think it is important to point out that, yes, there may come a time when in any government office—whether it is an elected government office or appointed office—when someone who is new to the office might be affected by something that did or didn't happen during the predecessor's time in office.

But even were that to occur in the case of the Secretary of Labor, this is a position that could easily enable, could easily empower the new Secretary to come in and within a matter of months make sure our contractor gets a report done and make sure that report gets submitted.

It is also worth noting that when we entrust a Federal agency with the power to spend \$9 billion of the American people's hard-earned taxpayer money, hard-earned resources, we should expect them to stand accountable, and they should certainly have the ability to have a study conducted

and have that study released to the American people.

If we don't trust them to be able to issue that report and make it public, then we should have some reason to be concerned about giving them \$9 billion.

But I think this is a reasonable requirement, and therefore I ask my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. HARKIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in proud support of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and to urge my colleagues to support it.

This is an extremely important piece of legislation, and one I was happy to work on in the HELP Committee. It is also long overdue. We haven't reauthorized the Workforce Investment Act since 1998, and it is clear that the law isn't working for the 2014 economy. We know it isn't working because we have a large and growing skills gap.

Now, what is the skills gap? Recent studies have shown that between one-third and one-half of manufacturers in my State have at least one job they can't fill because they can't find a worker with the right skills. That is the skills gap in Minnesota. Of course, it isn't just Minnesota, it is a nationwide phenomenon, and any colleague I talk to on the floor says that is the case in his or her State.

A 2011 survey by Deloitte found that there were 600,000 manufacturing jobs nationwide that were unfilled because of a skills shortage. I just met with Bob Kill, the president and CEO of Enterprise Minnesota, a terrific organization that studies manufacturers in my State of Minnesota, and as he likes to say, "we've been admiring this problem for a long time."

And it is not just manufacturers. There is a skills gap in information technology, in health care, and in other sectors that have jobs sitting there waiting for skilled workers to fill them. There are more than 3 million jobs in this country that could be filled today if there were workers who had the right skills. With too many Americans unemployed, we have to find a way to fill those jobs.

The thing is, we know how to solve this, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will help us do that. I have been to the floor of the Senate a number of times to talk about the strategy. I have talked about it with the Presiding Officer. I am excited about this, as the Presiding Officer very well knows. These are partnerships between businesses and community and technical colleges that are training workers and getting them into

high-skilled, high-demand jobs right away.

A number of these partnerships are up and running in Minnesota and have employers fighting over graduates—and sometimes the fight starts even before the students have graduated. That is good for the student. Bob Kill told me about the top student in one of these programs at Alexandria Technical and Community College—by the way, a community college which has been doing this for a while and doing a great job. This student had 14 job offers before he graduated. All 14 employers said they would pay him to get his engineering degree. I bet if we asked most recent graduates from 4-year or even graduate degree programs, they would be jealous of that kind of eagerness from employers.

So that is a program that is working, and with good reason; employers were involved in the program from day one, so they helped to shape the curriculum to their needs. This is obviously more effective than a training program with no connection to the needs of employers or, as Labor Secretary Tom Perez calls it, “train and pray.” Our education system needs more of this focus on skills for jobs that exist.

Careers are different than they were a generation ago. Very few people stay working in one job for one company for their entire life anymore. As technology progresses faster and faster, workers are going to need to constantly update their skills. We need a workforce development system that is agile enough to keep up with these changing demands. That is essential not just so workers will be able to get the different skills they will need over the course of their working lives, it is also going to be one of the keys to the United States remaining globally competitive. If our workers can't adapt to the new industries that are constantly forming, we will lose those jobs to our global competitors. We are seeing manufacturing coming back to our country for all sorts of reasons, and we need to have the skilled workers to take advantage of that and be globally competitive. There is no better way to anticipate and react to these changes than to connect businesses directly with our schools to get workers exactly the skills they need.

This is also about local competitiveness, it is about jobs, it is also about college affordability. I already talked about the student with 14 job offers, all of which included a free engineering degree. We can't get more affordable than free. Many have heard me talk about this issue before, a manufacturer from Minnesota named Erick Ajax.

When Erick hires employees from these business-technical college partnerships, the way he looks at it is they are on a career ladder that would otherwise not be available to them. He told me about one such hire. He hired him right after a credentialing program, like a short CNC credential program. The guy did a great job, and

so he said: Well, I am going to send you back to community college to get your associate's degree while you are working, and I will pay for it.

So the guy got his associate's degree, came back, and he was magnificent. So then he said: You know what. I am going to send you to the University of Minnesota to get your bachelor's degree, while you are working. I believe he is about to get his bachelor's degree, but he is now the head of quality control for this advanced manufacturing company—and he will have a couple of degrees, with zero debt. I think about that story a lot when I think about college affordability.

I could talk about these partnerships for hours, as the Presiding Officer knows—he has heard me—because they work. I have been enthusiastic about this. That is why I worked with PATTY MURRAY, the great Senator from Washington; JOHNNY ISAKSON, the great Senator from Georgia; TOM HARKIN, the great Senator from Iowa; and LAMAR ALEXANDER, the great Senator from Tennessee, to make sure this bill would encourage the formation of these partnerships. I thank each and every one of them for their leadership on this bill. They worked together on a bipartisan basis and led a cooperative process in the HELP Committee. I think the result is a bill of which everyone can be proud.

I will keep working to pass my Community College to Career Fund Act, because I think these partnerships deserve even more focus as well as a dedicated funding source. But I am proud that I fought to make sure the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act contains provisions similar to my bill, and it does a lot to encourage the formation of more of these partnerships—and bigger partnerships—create more jobs, more workers with jobs, and degrees on a path in the right direction. I think this is a huge step in the right direction, and I thank my colleagues. We are creating a smarter, nimbler workforce that will be able to respond to the unique needs of each local area, coordinating all the programs so they will all be working together toward the same goals and the same outcome metrics. This will reduce administrative costs and make the system focus on what counts—getting people good jobs.

Once again, I thank Senators MURRAY, HARKIN, ISAKSON, and ALEXANDER for their hard work on this bill. I encourage my colleagues to support it so we can get our workforce system working for today's economy and the economy of tomorrow.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, as we end this debate, I thank my coauthors and managers of this bill, Senator ISAKSON, Senator HARKIN, and Senator ALEXANDER. And I also again thank Senator ENZI who was for years my partner on this bill.

For over a decade now some combination of us, along with others, has been

working to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act, and I am so excited that we are finally on the verge of passing this long overdue legislation through the Senate.

Let me remind everyone that the workforce development system serves over 20 million people every year. That is one of every eight working-age adults in this country—people who are looking for work, people who want to change their jobs, people who want to upgrade their skills. And the system serves thousands of employers every year—manufacturers, construction firms, health care providers, financial institutions. The list goes on.

Let's also remember that our workforce development system is a vital partner of economic developers all around the country, making sure that companies being recruited or expanded have access to training and skilled workers necessary to compete and grow.

With millions of new jobs that will require postsecondary education and advanced skills in the coming years, we will fall behind if we do not modernize our workforce development system and programs now. We have to make sure when high-tech jobs of the next century are created, Americans are ready to fill them. That is what we have done with this bill. We have doubled down on the programs that work, we have eliminated programs that have become outdated, and created a workforce system that is more nimble, adaptable, better aligned, and more accountable.

I am very proud to be at this point. I again especially thank my partner who has been with me so many critical times, Senator ISAKSON from Georgia, who has been incredibly hardworking and diligent in getting this done.

I look forward to the votes. We have two amendments—I will be joining all of our cosponsors in voting against those amendments—and then final passage. I again thank everyone who has worked so hard on this legislation for so many years.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, as we close the debate, I enthusiastically support and endorse the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act. This is a statement the Senate can send to the United States of America and all people who are on unemployment, looking for better opportunities. We are now going to offer training to see to it those 10,600,000 Americans out of work can find jobs, and hopefully it will be the 4 million jobs available today in America where skilled workers are not trained.

I thank Senator MURRAY for her kind comments and reiterate my appreciation for her, her staff, Scott Cheney, my staff, Tommy Nguyen.

Chairman HARKIN has been a fearless leader on our committee and allowed us the chance to get to where we are today.

Senator ALEXANDER's velvet glove on an iron hand helped us get through an amendment process that was difficult at times but got us to the point we are today.

I urge my colleagues to vote for the bill and against the two amendments.

I yield back the remainder of our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3379, offered by the Senator from Arizona, Mr. FLAKE.

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.
The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNIS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 33, nays 63, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 212 Leg.]
YEAS—33

Ayotte	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blunt	Grassley	Roberts
Boozman	Hatch	Rubio
Burr	Heller	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Johnson (WI)	Shelby
Cornyn	Kirk	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Toomey
Cruz	McCain	Vitter
Fischer	McConnell	Wicker

NAYS—63

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baldwin	Hagan	Murphy
Begich	Harkin	Murray
Bennet	Heinrich	Nelson
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Portman
Booker	Hirono	Pryor
Boxer	Hoeven	Reed
Brown	Isakson	Reid
Cantwell	Johnson (SD)	Sanders
Cardin	Kaine	Schatz
Carper	King	Schumer
Casey	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Chambliss	Landrieu	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Tester
Coons	Levin	Udall (CO)
Corker	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	Markey	Walsh
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Enzi	Merkley	Warren
Feinstein	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Franken	Moran	Wyden

NOT VOTING—4

Cochran	McCaskill
Johanns	Rockefeller

The amendment (No. 3379) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the amendment offered by the Senator from Utah, Mr. LEE.

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.
The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNIS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 40, nays 58, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 213 Leg.]
YEAS—40

Ayotte	Graham	Portman
Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hatch	Roberts
Boozman	Heller	Rubio
Burr	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Johnson (WI)	Shelby
Collins	Kirk	Tester
Corker	Lee	Thune
Cornyn	McCain	Toomey
Crapo	McConnell	Vitter
Cruz	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Murkowski	
Flake	Paul	

NAYS—58

Alexander	Hagan	Murray
Baldwin	Harkin	Nelson
Begich	Heinrich	Pryor
Bennet	Heitkamp	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reid
Booker	Isakson	Rockefeller
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Sanders
Brown	Kaine	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Landrieu	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Chambliss	Levin	Udall (NM)
Coons	Manchin	Walsh
Donnelly	Markey	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Warren
Enzi	Menendez	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Merkley	Wyden
Franken	Mikulski	
Gillibrand	Murphy	

NOT VOTING—2

Cochran	Johanns
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The amendment (No. 3380) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3381 offered by the Senator from Iowa, Mr. HARKIN.

The amendment (No. 3381) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the substitute amendment, No. 3378, as amended, is agreed to.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall it pass?

Mr. HARKIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNIS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 95, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 214 Leg.]
YEAS—95

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murray
Ayotte	Graham	Nelson
Baldwin	Grassley	Paul
Barrasso	Hagan	Portman
Begich	Harkin	Pryor
Bennet	Hatch	Reed
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reid
Blunt	Heitkamp	Risch
Booker	Heller	Roberts
Boozman	Hirono	Rockefeller
Boxer	Hoeven	Rubio
Brown	Inhofe	Sanders
Burr	Isakson	Schatz
Cantwell	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Cardin	Kaine	Scott
Carper	King	Sessions
Casey	Kirk	Shaheen
Chambliss	Klobuchar	Shelby
Coats	Landrieu	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Tester
Coons	Levin	Thune
Corker	Manchin	Toomey
Cornyn	Markey	Udall (CO)
Crapo	McCain	Udall (NM)
Cruz	McCaskill	Vitter
Donnelly	McConnell	Walsh
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Enzi	Merkley	Warren
Feinstein	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Fischer	Moran	Wicker
Flake	Murkowski	Wyden
Franken	Murphy	

NAYS—3

Coburn	Johnson (WI)	Lee
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NOT VOTING—2

Cochran	Johanns
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The bill (H.R. 803), as amended, was passed.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATEMENT OF THE MANAGERS TO ACCOMPANY THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

CONTENTS

- I. Purpose and Summary of the Legislation
- II. Background and Need for Legislation
- III. Legislative History and Committee Action
- IV. Explanation of the Bill and Managers' Views
- V. Section-by-Section Analysis

I. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF THE LEGISLATION

The purpose of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is to amend and reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, which supports the nation's primary programs and investments in employment services, workforce development, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation activities and has been due for reauthorization since 2003. The bill also reauthorizes and enhances the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, amends the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933, and amends and reauthorizes certain provisions in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The legislation is the product of an extensive bipartisan, bicameral effort in negotiations between the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee and House Committee on Education and the Workforce regarding their respective reauthorization bills and input from the major stakeholders in workforce development, adult education, employment services, and vocational rehabilitation and other disability programs. In addition, two hearings were held in the 113th Congress regarding the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998—one in the Senate and one in the House of Representatives.

This legislation amends the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 by making the changes identified below.

This legislation repeals the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and replaces it with new authorization language for workforce systems in the States and local areas, Job Corps, national programs, adult education and literacy, and general provisions. In addition, the legislation includes amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which are important programs connected to the broader workforce development system.

First, the bill makes a number of specific changes to workforce investment activities under title I. The number of required members on State and local workforce boards is reduced. States are required to submit one plan to address all of the core programs—title I-B, title II, employment services under the Wagner-Peyser Act in title and State vocational rehabilitation under title IV—and develop a comprehensive State strategy to align workforce activities with labor market demands and economic development goals. The bill also includes a process describing the partner contributions for infrastructure funding. There is an increased emphasis on ensuring physical and programmatic accessibility of one-stop centers and training providers. Flexibility of funds for use at the local level between adult and dislocated worker funding is enhanced. A set of common performance indicators is required for all core programs under the bill. Importance is placed on providing career pathways and the use of sector strategies for delivering services. Streamlining reporting requirements and administrative burdens are applied. Youth who face severe barriers to employment and education, including out-of-school youth, are targeted for assistance.

Second, the bill makes a number of changes to the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act to support successful transitions to postsecondary education or training, or employment. The bill requires specific activities at the local, State, and national level, including integrating basic adult education and occupational skills training and the use of career pathways. The bill also requires the Secretary of Education to conduct evaluations and research regarding adult education activities provided under the title.

Third, the amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 include changes to the Workforce Information Council, which supports the development of a State-Federal system for identifying labor market information. The amendments also include provisions to support professional development for employment services staff.

Fourth, the bill prioritizes competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities, particularly young people with disabilities who are transitioning from education to employment, by ensuring that these individuals have the skills and training necessary to maximize their potential. The amendments also include better alignment of disability programs in order to ensure that individuals receive the services, technology, and support they need in order to live inclusive, successful lives.

Fifth, the bill repeals the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and eliminates the following 15 programs:

- Youth Opportunity Grants
- 21st Century Workforce Commission
- National Institute for Literacy under Adult Education
- Health Care Gap Coverage for Trade Adjustment Assistance participants
- WIA Incentive Grants
- WIA Pilots and Demonstration Projects
- Community-based Job Training Grants
- Green Jobs Act
- Projects with Industry under the Rehabilitation Act amendments
- Recreation Programs under the Rehabilitation Act amendments

In-service Training under the Rehabilitation Act amendments

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program under the Rehabilitation Act amendments

WIA Veterans Workforce Investment Program

WIA Workforce Innovation Fund

Grants to States for Workplace and Community Transition Training for Incarcerated Individuals under the 1998 Amendments to the Higher Education Act.

II. BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

When Congress passed the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, it was seen as a major step forward in streamlining existing Federal workforce programs and supporting Federal investment in workforce development activities. Since the authorization for the statute expired in 2003, there have been numerous attempts to reauthorize the legislation in both the House and the Senate.

III. LEGISLATIVE HISTORY AND COMMITTEE ACTION

In the 113th Congress, the Senate took the following action on reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act. On June 20, 2013, the Senate HELP Committee conducted a hearing on reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. On July 24, 2013, Senator Murray, Senator Isakson, Senator Harkin, and Senator Alexander introduced S. 1356, the Workforce Investment Act of 2013. On July 31, 2013, the Senate HELP Committee considered S. 1356 in executive session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the Senate by a vote of 18 to 3. The committee considered and adopted two amendments to the underlying bill. The first amendment was in the nature of a substitute and included changes recommended by the bill managers—Senate HELP Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA), HELP Committee Ranking Member Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), and Senator Johnny Isakson (R-GA)—and was adopted by unanimous consent. The second amendment, offered by Senator Casey (D-PA), Senator Hatch (R-UT), and Senator Whitehouse (D-RI) included additional reporting requirements for the Job Corps program. The amendment was accepted by voice vote.

In the 113th Congress, the House took the following action on reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act. On February 26, 2013, the House Education and the Workforce Committee, in the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training, conducted a hearing on the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. On February 25, 2013, Higher Education and Workforce Training Subcommittee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (R-NC) introduced H.R. 803, the Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills Act. On March 6, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce considered H.R. 803 in legislative session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the House of Representatives.

The committee considered and adopted the following amendments to H.R. 803. The first amendment was in the nature of a substitute and included changes recommended by the bill manager, Representative Foxx, and was adopted by voice vote. The second amendment, offered by Representative Tim Walberg (R-MI), streamlined the unified State plan process at the Federal level. The third amendment, offered by Representative Martha Roby (R-AL), prohibited the use of funds for lobbying and political activities. The fourth amendment, offered by Representative Susan Brooks (R-IN), allowed State and local workforce boards to implement pay-for-performance strategies. The second, third, and fourth amendments were considered en bloc and adopted by voice vote.

On March 15, 2013, the House of Representatives adopted H.R. 803 by a vote of 215–202. During debate the House considered the following amendments. The first amendment, offered by Representative Foxx provided a local application process when designating local workforce investment areas and made technical and clarifying changes to the underlying bill, and passed by voice vote. The second amendment, offered by Representative Pete Gallego (D-TX), required State and local plans include advanced manufacturing workforce development strategies, and passed by voice vote. The third amendment, offered by Representative Don Young (R-AK), required the Secretary of Labor to set aside one percent of the funds for Native American workforce development programs, and passed by voice vote. The fourth amendment, offered by Representative Diane Black (R-TN), expressed a sense of Congress that any administrative costs be off-set by funds currently being used for marketing and outreach by the Department of Agriculture, and was withdrawn by unanimous consent. The fifth amendment, offered by Representative Scott Garrett (R-NJ), required a reduction in funds to the Department of Labor if long overdue evaluations were not completed within a specified amount of time, and passed by voice vote. Another amendment was offered by Representative John Tierney (D-MA) and was in the nature of a substitute, and did not pass by a recorded vote of 192–227.

IV. EXPLANATION OF THE BILL AND MANAGERS' VIEWS

Sections 1, 2, and 3. Sections 1, 2, and 3 describe the short title for the bill, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; include the purposes of the Act; and state the definitions for the Act, which are intended to have the same meaning under each program authorized under the Act unless otherwise stated. The definitions identify the “core programs” under the Act, which consist of title I State grant programs; title II adult education programs; the employment service under title III amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act; and State vocational rehabilitation programs under title IV.

TITLE I—WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES; PROVIDERS; JOB CORPS; NATIONAL PROGRAMS; AND ADMINISTRATION

Title I of the underlying bill includes the primary components of State and local area workforce development systems as well as several national programs for youth and special populations. In order to strengthen and streamline the workforce system, the title focuses on changes to governance, including reducing the number of required board members at the State and local level; requiring one, unified State plan; and promoting local workforce areas more closely aligned to labor markets and economic development regions while preserving a locally driven workforce system. The bill also promotes the themes of providing employment services and workforce development along a career pathway for participants, and education training in line with in-demand industry sectors and occupations for a region.

Workforce Boards

In order for boards to be more strategic, the bill reduces the number of required board members at both the State and local level. The boards remain a business majority with a business chairperson, while the representation for the workforce is increased. At the local level, with the exception of the core programs under the Act, the one-stop partners are no longer required members.

Workforce Plans

To support a strategic, comprehensive, and streamlined system, the bill requires one,

unified State plan, covering four years, to meet the requirements for each of the core programs. The plan also requires a description of the State's overall strategy for workforce development and how the strategy will help meet identified skill needs for workers, job seekers and employers in the State. This unified plan will improve service delivery to individuals as well as reduce administrative costs and reporting requirements at the State level. In order to promote a one-stop system that accommodates the needs of individuals with disabilities, the State and local plans must include a description of how the one-stop system in the State will comply with the applicable requirements of section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act regarding the accessibility of programs and facilities for people with disabilities.

Workforce Development Areas

In order to maintain the balance between governors and local elected officials, the bill requires States to consult with local boards and chief elected officials in order to identify local areas and planning regions that are in alignment with labor markets and regional economic development areas. The bill allows for initial and subsequent designations based on performance, fiscal integrity, and participation in regional coordination activities, including regional planning, information sharing, pooling of administrative costs, and coordination of service delivery.

Performance Accountability

In order to promote increased transparency about the outcomes of Federal workforce programs, the bill includes six primary indicators of performance for adults served under programs authorized under the Act, and six primary indicators for youth served under the Act. Commonality among the indicators will allow policymakers, program users, and consumers to better understand the value and effectiveness of the services. The managers recognize that for those participants who have low levels of literacy skills, or who are English language learners, the acquisition of basic English literacy and numeracy skills are critical steps to obtaining employment and success in postsecondary education and training. Therefore, the term "measurable skill gains" referred to under indicator V in this section for adult and youth, is intended to encourage eligible providers under title II to serve all undereducated, low-level, and under prepared adults. The managers agree that reporting and evaluation requirements are important tools in measuring effectiveness, especially for the core programs. Therefore, the legislation includes performance reports to be provided at the State, local and eligible training provider levels, as well as evaluations of the core programs by States.

One-Stop Infrastructure

To improve the quality of the one-stop delivery system, the bill requires the State board, in consultation with chief local elected officials and local boards, to establish criteria for use by the local board in assessing the effectiveness, physical and programmatic accessibility, and continuous improvement of one-stop centers and delivery systems at least every three years. Regarding infrastructure funding for one-stop centers, the bill maintains requirements for the mandatory one-stop partners in a local area to reach a voluntary agreement, in the form of a memorandum of understanding, to fund the costs of infrastructure, other shared costs, and how the partners will deliver services under the system. If local areas fail to come to an agreement regarding sufficient funding of one-stop infrastructure costs, a State one-stop infrastructure funding mechanism can be imposed for those local areas.

Mandatory partner program contributions, pursuant to the State one-stop infrastructure funding mechanism, are based on the proportionate use of the one-stop centers and subject to specified caps.

Employment and Training Activities

For youth, the bill utilizes the existing formula to allot funds to States for youth services. It improves upon existing youth services by placing a priority on out-of-school youth (75 percent of funding at the State and local level), and focusing on career pathways for youth, drop-out recovery efforts, and education and training that lead to the attainment of a high school diploma and a recognized postsecondary credential. A priority is also included for work-based learning activities.

For adults and dislocated workers, the bill utilizes the existing formulas with the inclusion of a minimum and maximum allotment percentage for the dislocated worker formula beginning in fiscal year 2016. The managers believe the addition of the minimum and maximum percentages will help bring stability to the only formula that currently does not include such mechanisms, and will reduce funding volatility for States year to year. The bill preserves the governor's 15 percent set aside for statewide activities.

To eliminate the perceived "sequence of services" under current law, requiring an individual to proceed through core and intensive services before training eligibility can be determined, the bill consolidates core and intensive services into a new "career services" category. While the services remain similar to those under current law, the structure is intended to provide more flexibility to one-stop staff in determining a participant's need for training. Local boards are required to convene, use, or implement industry or sector partnerships. The bill also improves upon the mechanisms for local boards to provide education and training to eligible participants by adding the following optional methods, under certain guidelines, for training—contracting for classes of training for multiple participants or on a pay-for performance basis; incumbent worker training; and transitional jobs strategies. Finally, the title includes authorization levels for appropriations for the State grant programs.

Job Corps

The bill improves upon the current Job Corps program by strengthening the contracting requirements for centers, requiring the program use the performance accountability indicators for youth described in section 147(b)(2)(B) or Section 147(h)(3) due to the effects of a natural disaster or the participation of the center in a performance pilot program, it is the intent of the managers the Secretary apply the provisions of that section to any performance information that is available to the Secretary from the relevant period preceding the time the determination under that provision is made. This would allow entities operating the center to have an opportunity to meet performance requirements allowing them to compete where the absence of complete information is not the fault of the operating entity.

National Programs

The bill reauthorizes the Native American program; the Migrant and Seasonal Farm-

worker program; and YouthBuild. It also includes provisions for National Dislocated Worker Grants; technical assistance under title I; and evaluations, research, studies and multistate projects conducted by the Secretary of Labor. The bill requires the Secretary of Labor to conduct a multistate study on strategies for placing individuals in jobs and education and training programs that lead to equivalent pay for men and women, including the participation of women in high-wage, high-demand occupations in which women are underrepresented. We believe this is important because a key element of raising women's wages is to provide access to occupations that are predominantly held by men, pay well, and are in demand in the economy. Many occupations today are still dominated by one gender, with more than 75 percent of the jobs in that occupation held by men or by women. Jobs that are predominantly held by men—in industries like transportation, manufacturing, or construction trades—often pay considerably more than jobs traditionally held by women, such as child care workers, health care workers, clerical workers, or workers in retail or other service sectors industries. The managers expect the Secretary to review existing programs and research, State laws and initiatives, and any other relevant project, to determine successful strategies for placement and retention of women in relevant training or jobs and to provide States and localities with the information, tools, and assistance they need to develop programs and activities that will replicate such strategies. We request completion of this project within eighteen months of enactment.

The bill requires an independent evaluation of the activities under title I at least once every four years for the purpose of improving the management and effectiveness of programs and activities. In recognition of the changing demands of the economy, the bill allows the YouthBuild program to expand into additional in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the region.

The bill includes authorization of appropriations for the programs under subtitle D.

Administration

The bill adds restrictions against lobbying activities with funds under this title. The managers do not intend for these provisions to restrict awareness or outreach activities regarding services and activities under title I.

TITLE II—THE ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT

In reauthorizing title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the bill places an emphasis on ensuring States and local providers offer basic skills, adult education, literacy activities, and English language acquisition concurrently or integrated with occupational skills training to accelerate attainment of secondary school diplomas and postsecondary credentials. Making sure these skills are solidly in place for all students is a priority. The bill also emphasizes utilization of a career pathway approach for adult learners to support transitions to postsecondary education or training and employment opportunities.

The bill requires all adult basic education and literacy programs to use the same set of primary indicators of performance accountability outlined for all employment and training activities authorized under this Act. Individuals receiving these services should be able to use these skills in obtaining a regular secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, obtaining full time employment, increasing their median earnings, and enrolling in postsecondary education or training, or earning a recognized postsecondary credential.

It is essential for adult educators to work closely with workforce development stakeholders in the State, including State and local workforce boards. To help in achieving a seamless statewide workforce development system, the bill requires title II programs to submit a unified State plan with the other core programs within this Act. The bill also provides funds for States to use in offering eligible providers of adult education technical assistance, providing professional development training to improve the instruction and outcomes for adult learners, and conducting evaluations. It encourages State and local leaders to provide activities contextually and concurrently with workforce preparation and training activities for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

The bill authorizes national activities to assist States and local providers in developing valid, measurable, and reliable performance data, and in using such performance information for the improvement of adult education and family literacy education programs. The bill also includes provisions to support research and evaluation of adult education activities at the national level. Finally, the bill places an emphasis on integrating English literacy with civics education, as well as adult education and occupational training activities.

TITLE III—AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT

Title III of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act makes amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933, which authorizes the public employment services and the employment statistics system. Amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act generally maintain current law but also reflect the need to align the statute with the other changes in the bill such as including the State employment services in the unified State plan; aligning performance accountability indicators with those indicators used for core programs—as described in section 116 of title I; renaming “employment statistics” to the “workforce and labor market information system” and updating the Workforce Information Council; and providing for staff professional development in order to strengthen the quality of services. Authorization of appropriations for the workforce and labor market information system and the workforce information council is provided for each of the fiscal years of 2015 through 2020.

TITLE IV—AMENDMENTS TO THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act amends and reauthorizes the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Rehabilitation Act was last reauthorized in 1998.

The Rehabilitation Act is an important law for individuals with disabilities, particularly those with significant disabilities. It authorizes programs that affect the daily lives of many individuals with disabilities, including the vocational rehabilitation program (training, services, and supports for employment); the independent living program; and research and information on new technology to assist individuals with disabilities.

There remains a critical need for employment and training services for individuals with disabilities. Almost 25 years after the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is still difficult for many individuals with significant disabilities to find full time employment that is commensurate with their skills, interests, and goals. Yet State vocational rehabilitation programs can play a significant role in meeting this need by providing training, services and supports for individuals with disabilities.

It is especially important to provide young people with disabilities more opportunities to practice and improve their workplace skills, to consider their career interests, and to get real world work experience. Those activities are prioritized in the amendments to the Act. For example, the bill requires State vocational rehabilitation agencies to make “pre-employment transition services” available to all students with disabilities, and to coordinate those services with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. State vocational rehabilitation programs will set aside at least 15 percent of their Federal program funds to help young people with disabilities transition from secondary school to postsecondary education programs and employment.

In addition, these amendments establish a framework to ensure every young person with a disability, regardless of their level of disability, has the opportunity to experience competitive, integrated employment. These requirements will provide young people with disabilities with the opportunity to develop their skills and to use supports, available through State vocational rehabilitation programs, to experience competitive, integrated employment as they leave school and enter the workforce.

In order to better align the Independent Living program that serves individuals with significant disabilities living in the community with other similar efforts, the amendments transition the administration of the Independent Living program from the Department of Education to the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living. The transition moves the program to an agency with a lifespan and community focus and will better allow the program to fulfill its goal to support “independent living . . . and the integration and full inclusion of individuals with disabilities into the mainstream of American society.”

The amendments also incorporate “independent living” into the name and mission of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research and similarly move that program’s administration from the Department of Education to the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living in order to better align the program priorities with agency goals and priorities.

TITLE V—GENERAL PROVISIONS

The bill repeals the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 in its entirety, replacing it with reforms to better serve unemployed and underemployed workers as well as employers. In doing so, authority is provided to the Secretaries of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services to establish a smooth and orderly transition period to implement this Act.

V. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title; Table of Contents

The short title of the bill is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Section 2. Purposes

Identifies the purposes of the Act.

Section 3. Definitions

Defines terms that are common to all titles, except where otherwise noted.

TITLE I: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Subtitle A.—System Alignment

Chapter 1—State Provisions

Section 101. State Workforce Development Boards

Establishes State boards. Membership includes the governor; one member of each chamber of the State legislature; and members appointed by the governor of which the chair and majority shall remain representa-

tives of business; requires that 20 percent of the board be representatives of the workforce, including labor organizations; requires the balance of the board to include State government officials responsible for core programs (title I State grant programs, adult education programs, employment services under the Wagner-Peyser Act, and State vocational rehabilitation programs), and chief elected officials. Identifies the functions of the board, permits the State board to hire staff, and directs the State board to establish and apply objective qualifications for the director’s position.

Section 102. Unified State Plan

Establishes unified State plans (hereafter referred to as State plans), which will meet the planning requirements for the core programs and describe how the State will develop a coordinated and comprehensive workforce development system. Streamlines the process for plan submission, approval, and modification of State plans among the Federal agencies.

Section 103. Combined State Plan

Establishes a process for the State to allow additional workforce development-related programs to participate in and submit federally required plans through the State planning process.

Chapter 2—Local Provisions

Section 106. Workforce Development Areas

Describes how States, in consultation with local boards and chief elected officials, will identify local areas and planning regions in a State based on criteria for alignment with labor markets, regional economic development, and availability of resources. Describes process for initial and subsequent designation based on performance, fiscal integrity, and participation in regional coordination activities, including regional planning, information sharing, and coordination of service delivery for local workforce areas. Requires States to provide funding and technical assistance to local areas in a regional planning process that choose to become a single local workforce area. Provides for an appeal process and the continuation of single State designations.

Section 107. Local Workforce Development Boards

Establishes local boards. Membership includes a majority of representatives of businesses in the local area and a business chairperson; requires 20 percent of the board be representatives of the workforce, including labor organizations; other representatives include education and training providers in the local area (such as community colleges), the core programs in the local area, and economic and community development. With the exception of core programs, required one-stop programs are not required to be represented on the board. Describes permissible standing committees; the appointment, certification, and decertification requirements for local boards; and continues to allow the State board of a single State to function as the local board for the State. Identifies the functions of the local board, permits the local board to hire staff, and directs the local board to establish and apply objective qualifications for the director’s position. Provides certain limitations for the local board concerning the delivery of career and training services.

Section 108. Local Plan

Requires each local board to develop and submit a local plan to the governor, including a description of how services offered through the core programs at the local level will be coordinated and aligned to regional needs. Requires the strategy described in the local plan to align with the State strategy

for workforce development. Local boards participating in a regional planning process are required to contribute to and submit a regional plan. Describes the process for plan submission, approval, and modifications.

Chapter 3—Board Provisions

Section 111. Funding of State and Local Boards

Clarifies that funding to support State and local boards must be provided by title I administrative funds, which may be supplemented by non-Federal funds.

Chapter 4—Performance Accountability

Section 116. Performance Accountability System

Establishes performance accountability indicators at the State level that are common to each of the core programs for adults and performance accountability indicators applicable to all youth programs within the Act. Requires States to negotiate with the Secretaries of Labor and Education a level of expected performance for each of the indicators. Describes factors for consideration in setting and assessing levels of performance. Establishes performance accountability indicators for local programs and a performance negotiation process similar to that required of the State. Requires performance reports to be prepared and submitted by States, local areas, and eligible training providers. Requires States to conduct an evaluation of the core programs, use the results to continuously improve programs, and make results available to the public. Establishes sanctions for poor performance at the State level, including, for those States not meeting performance targets for two consecutive years, a reduction in the percentage of funds governors may reserve. Establishes sanctions for poor performance at the local level. Requires States to establish and operate a fiscal and management accountability information system for the core programs using guidance provided by the Secretaries. Permits the governor to establish incentives using non-Federal funds for pay-for-performance contract strategies for the delivery of services. Requires States to utilize quarterly wage records, consistent with State law, to measure progress on State performance accountability measures.

Subtitle B.—Workforce Investment Activities and Providers

Chapter 1—Workforce Investment Activities and Providers

Section 121. Establishment of One-Stop Delivery Systems

Establishes the one-stop delivery system. Identifies one-stop partners and their roles and responsibilities. Directs the local board to enter into a MOU with the one-stop partners regarding the operation and costs of the one-stop delivery system. Outlines the competitive process for designating one-stop operators. Describes the services to be made available through the one-stop system, and the criteria for certifying one-stop centers. Establishes a process at the State level for determining one-stop partner program contributions to infrastructure costs, based on proportionate use and funding limitations, for those local areas that do not reach a consensus agreement through the MOU process.

Section 122. Identification of Eligible Providers of Training Services

Describes eligibility for providers; outlines State criteria, information requirements, and application and renewal processes for selecting providers; requires the list of eligible providers be provided to participants; and includes sanctions for providers with substantial violations.

Section 123. Eligible Providers of Youth Workforce Investment Activities

Requires local boards to award grants or contracts to providers for youth workforce

investment activities, taking the performance of such providers into account.

Chapter 2—Youth Workforce Investment Activities

Section 126. General Authorization

Requires the Secretary to allot funding to States and grants to outlying areas for youth activities.

Section 127. State Allotments

Establishes reservations for Native Americans, outlying areas, and States; maintains current law formulas for State allotments; describes limitations and requirements. Maintains current law minimum and maximum allotment percentages. Maintains small State minimums. Describes reallocation procedures.

Section 128. Within State Allocations

Allows governors to reserve 15 percent of State allotments for State workforce investment activities. Maintains within-State formula and minimum allocation percentage. Includes a 10 percent limitation on local administrative costs. Describes reallocation procedures.

Section 129. Use of Funds for Youth Workforce Investment Activities.

Describes eligibility for youth participants. Establishes the percentage of youth funds (75 percent) to be used for out-of-school youth. Describes statewide and local activities, including career pathway development, dropout recovery efforts, occupational skills training, and education and training leading to a recognized postsecondary credential. Includes a priority for the provision of work-based learning experiences for youth, and allows for a priority for training that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential.

Chapter 3—Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities

Section 131. General Authorization

Requires the Secretary to allot funding to States and grants to outlying areas for adult and dislocated worker activities.

Section 132. State Allotments

Establishes reservations for outlying areas and States; maintains current law formulas for State allotments; describes limitations requirements. For the adult formula, maintains current law minimum and maximum allotment percentages, and adds similar provisions to the dislocated worker formula beginning in fiscal year 2016. Maintains 20 percent reservation for national dislocated worker grants and technical assistance. Describes reallocation procedures.

Section 133. Within State Allocations

Maintains reservations for governors' statewide and rapid response activities. Allows local boards to transfer 100 percent of funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs at the local level. Maintains a within-State formula and minimum allocations for the adult formula, and adds a similar minimum allocation for the dislocated worker formula beginning in fiscal year 2016. Describes reallocation procedures.

Section 134. Use of Funds for Employment and Training Activities

Specifies required and allowable statewide employment and training activities as well as rapid response activities. Permits incumbent worker and customized training, industry sector strategies, career pathway programs, layoff aversion activities, innovative services to individuals with barriers to employment, and coordination with other workforce-related programs from other agencies. Removes the current "sequence of services" between core, intensive and training services by streamlining core and intensive into "career services." Maintains customer choice

requirements and allows for the combined use of individual training accounts, cohort training, and pay-for-performance contracts. At the local level, permits boards to utilize incumbent worker training; on-the-job training; customized training; and transitional jobs activities; and provide supportive services.

Chapter 4—General Workforce Investment Provisions

Section 136. Authorization of Appropriations

Authorizes appropriations for youth, adult, and dislocated worker programs.

Subtitle C.—Job Corps

Section 141. Purposes

Identifies the purposes of the subtitle.

Section 142. Definitions

Provides definitions specific to Job Corps.

Section 143. Establishment

Establishes within the Department of Labor a "Job Corps".

Section 144. Individuals Eligible for the Job Corps

Describes eligibility for participants and includes a special rule for veterans.

Section 145. Recruitment, Screening, Selection, and Assignment of Enrollees

Specifies general requirements for selecting enrollees and placing them into centers that offer the type of career and technical education and training selected by the individual. Ensures these provisions shall be implemented with organizations that have demonstrated a record of effectiveness in serving at-risk youth. Prohibits denying enrollment in Job Corps based solely on contact with the criminal justice system, but adds an exception barring the selection of individuals convicted of certain felonies. Describes process by which the Secretary develops an assignment plan for enrollment at centers.

Section 146. Enrollment

Outlines two-year enrollment limits and exceptions.

Section 147. Job Corps Centers

Describes the competitive basis for the selection process and the eligibility requirements to operate a Job Corps center. Outlines the criteria for determining high-performing centers. Defines length of agreement and contract renewal conditions for Job Corps centers based on performance.

Section 148. Program Activities

Describes the activities, education and training, and graduate services provided by Job Corps centers and links these activities to in-demand industries and occupations.

Section 149. Counseling and Job Placement

Describes the assessment, counseling, and placement assistance for enrollees, and allows for services to former enrollees.

Section 150. Support

Provides for personal and transition allowances for graduates and support for former enrollees.

Section 151. Operating Plan

Specifies general information for an operating plan.

Section 152. Standards of Conduct

Describes disciplinary measures and zero tolerance standards, as well as an appeals process.

Section 153. Community Participation

Outlines business and community participation, including connections with local workforce boards.

Section 154. Workforce Councils

Describes the roles and responsibilities for workforce councils, including recommending

training programs that are in in-demand industry sectors or occupations within the region.

Section 155. Advisory Committees

Allows the Secretary to establish advisory committees, as necessary, consistent with current law.

Section 156. Experimental, Research, and Demonstration Projects

Requires the Secretary to inform authorizing committees if a waiver is required to carry out initiatives under this section. Allows the Secretary to reserve administrative funds to provide technical assistance to the Job Corps program.

Section 157. Application of Provisions of Federal Law

Establishes that enrollees are not Federal employees, consistent with current law.

Section 158. Special Provisions

Generally maintains current law.

Section 159. Management Information

Describes financial management controls and procedures, as well as audit requirements. Aligns performance accountability indicators for Job Corps with the indicators for all youth activities described in section 116. Establishes performance indicators for recruiters and career transition service providers. Describes data the Secretary must include in congressional reports regarding the program and centers. Outlines performance improvement plan requirements for centers that fail to reach expected levels of performance.

Section 160. General Provisions

Generally maintains current law outlining general provisions required by the Secretary.

Section 161. Job Corps Oversight and Reporting

Requires the Secretary to submit financial reports to applicable congressional committees within a specific timeframe. Requires a third-party review of the Job Corps program once every five years, with results to be submitted to Congress. Directs the Secretary to establish written criteria for Job Corps center closures and submit such written criteria to applicable committees.

Section 162. Authorization of Appropriations

Authorizes appropriations for the Job Corps program.

Subtitle D.—National Programs

Section 166. Native American Programs

Describes the requirements for competitive grants for Native Americans. Aligns performance indicators for Native American programs with the performance indicators described in Sec. 116. Clarifies the authority of the Advisory Council and the ability for the Secretary to provide assistance to unique populations in Hawaii and Alaska.

Section 167. Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Programs

Describes the requirements for competitive grants for migrant and seasonal farmworkers. Aligns performance indicators for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker programs with the performance indicators described in section 116. Outlines the range of activities authorized to access education, training, and employment opportunities.

Section 168. Technical Assistance

Specifies the activities to be undertaken by the Secretary to support an effective workforce development system. Requires the Secretary to establish a system to collect, evaluate, and disseminate promising and proven practices.

Section 169. Evaluations and Research

Requires the Secretary to conduct an independent evaluation at least once every four

years. Allows for research, studies, and multistate projects to be conducted by the Secretary.

Section 170. National Dislocated Worker Grants

Provides definitions for areas impacted by “emergency or disaster” and a “disaster area.” Permits the Secretary to provide assistance to such areas.

Section 171. YouthBuild Program

Describes the requirements for YouthBuild grants. Aligns performance indicators for YouthBuild with the performance accountability indicators for all youth activities described in section 116. Allows training for participants to be linked to industries that are in-demand.

Section 172. Authorization of Appropriations

Authorizes appropriations for Native American programs, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker programs, Technical Assistance, and Evaluations and Research.

Subtitle E.—Administration

Section 181. Requirements and Restrictions

Specifies the general requirements on the limitations of funds to carry out the Act.

Section 182. Prompt Allocation of Funds

Describes requirements for the Secretary regarding the distribution of funds under the title, including the use of current data and the publishing of the formula used for funding distribution. Requires the State to distribute funds to local areas in a timely fashion.

Section 183. Monitoring

Similar to current law, describes monitoring guidelines to determine compliance.

Section 184. Fiscal Controls: Sanctions

Provides requirements regarding use of fiscal controls; sanctions for substantial violations; an appeals process; requirements for repayment of funds not expended in accordance with this title; and response and remedies regarding discrimination.

Section 185. Reports; Recordkeeping; Investigations

Describes requirements for record keeping and reporting for recipients of funds under this title.

Section 186. Administrative Adjudication

Describes complaint and appeal procedures regarding dissatisfaction with or failure to receive financial assistance.

Section 187. Judicial Review

Describes the judicial review process for administrative adjudication decisions.

Section 188. Nondiscrimination

Describes prohibitions on discriminations.

Section 189. Secretarial Administrative Authorities and Responsibilities

Describes the general administrative responsibilities of the Secretary in carrying out this title. Excludes requirements regarding funding of infrastructure costs for one-stop centers, and those requirements related to the basic purposes of this title, from provisions the Secretary may waive. Requires expedited approval of waiver requests that have been previously approved by the Secretary for any other State or local area.

Section 190. Workforce Flexibility Plans

Allows States to submit a plan to the Secretary for waiver approval regarding relevant requirements applicable to local areas.

Section 191. State Legislative Authority

Clarifies nothing in statute prevents the enactment of State legislation regarding implementation of provisions of this title, consistent with the requirements of this title.

Section 192. Transfer of Federal Equity in State Employment Security Agency Real Property to the States

Maintains current law.

Section 193. Continuation of State Activities and Policies

Maintains current law.

Section 194. General Program Requirements

Prohibits the use of Federal funds under this title to establish or operate stand-alone, fee-for-service enterprises. Nothing in this provision prohibits or discourages one-stop centers from using such agencies or companies to assist in serving program participants. Includes a maximum rate of pay for staff hired with funds provided under this title.

Section 195. Restrictions on Lobbying Activities

Prohibits funds provided under this Act from being used for lobbying activities.

TITLE II: ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY

Section 201. Short Title

Cited as the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act.

Section 202. Purpose

Establishes the purposes of this title.

Section 203. Definitions

Defines those terms specific to this title. Defines activities that increase coordination between programs and services to better meet the needs of adult learners and workers, as well as models that integrate adult education and literacy activities with workforce preparation activities and training activities.

Section 204. Home Schools

Retains autonomy of home schools.

Section 205. Rule of Construction Regarding Postsecondary Transition and Concurrent Enrollment Activities

Provides nothing in the title shall be construed to prohibit or discourage eligible individuals' transition to postsecondary education, training, or employment, or concurrent enrollment activities.

Section 206. Authorization of Appropriations

Authorizes appropriations to carry out this title.

Subtitle A.—Federal Provisions

Section 211. Reservation of Funds; Grants to Eligible Agencies; Allotments

Describes required reservations for certain programs. Requires eligible State agencies to participate in the State planning processes for the core programs described in title I. Describes process for the allotment and reallocation of funds to eligible agencies.

Section 212. Performance Accountability System

Aligns performance accountability indicators for this title with the indicators for adults described in section 116.

Subtitle B.—State Provisions

Section 221. State Administration

Describes responsibilities of eligible State agencies.

Section 222. State Distribution of Funds; Matching Requirement

Describes requirements for State distribution of funds and agency match requirements.

Section 223. State Leadership Activities

Delineates required and permissible State activities, including instruction for adult learners, integrated education and training, and career pathways development. Requires alignment of adult education activities with those of other core programs and one-stop partners in this Act.

Section 224. State Plan

Includes the State agency as part of the unified State planning requirements for all core programs described in title I of this Act.

Section 225. Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals

Describes the use of funds under this section and maintains a priority for those individuals most likely to leave the correctional

institution within five years of participation in the program.

Subtitle C.—Local Provisions

Section 231. Grants and Contracts for Eligible Providers

Describes the considerations the eligible agency must take into account when making awards to eligible providers, including alignment with local plans under title I and past performance.

Section 232. Local Application

Describes requirements for applications from eligible providers.

Section 233. Local Administrative Cost Limits

Establishes limits for uses of funds for administrative purposes.

Subtitle D.—General Provisions

Section 241. Administrative Provisions

Maintains requirements related to “supplement not supplant” and maintenance of effort. Includes considerations for extreme financial hardship.

Section 242. National Leadership Activities

Delineates required and allowable national activities to be carried out by the Secretary. Requires research on adult education and literacy and an independent evaluation at least once every four years of the activities under this title.

Section 243. Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education

Authorizes the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program, which includes serving English language learners and providing integrated education and training.

TITLE III: AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT

Title III amends the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C 49 et seq.)

Section 301. Employment Service Offices

Clarifies the offices referred to are a part of the public employment service.

Section 302. Definitions

References definitions under title I.

Section 303. Federal and State Employment Service Offices

Requires co-location of employment service offices with one-stop centers. Increases access to and improves the quality of workforce information. Promotes the use of best practices across the system and provides for staff professional development.

Section 304. Allotment of Sums

Clarifies the allotment of funds to the States.

Section 305. Use of Sums

Requires employment service offices to provide unemployment insurance claimants with information about and assistance with applying for education and training programs.

Section 306. State Plan

Includes State employment services in the unified State plan described in title I of this Act.

Section 307. Performance Measures

Aligns performance indicators with the adult performance accountability indicators for all core programs described in section 116.

Section 308. Workforce and Labor Market Information System

Renames “employment statistics” to the “workforce and labor market information system.” Clarifies the duties of the Secretary and provides for a two year plan. Describes the composition, roles and responsibilities of the Workforce Information Advisory Council.

TITLE IV: AMENDMENTS TO THE REHABILITATION ACT

Title IV amends the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.)

Sec. 401. References

Identifies the title refers to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.).

Sec. 402. Findings, Purpose, Policy

States current findings regarding the disability workforce and identifies the purposes of the title.

Sec. 403. Rehabilitation Services Administration

States the responsibilities of the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

Sec. 404. Definitions

Includes definitions for this act including “competitive integrated employment,” “pre-employment transition services,” and “supported employment services.”

Sec. 405. Administration of the Act

Describes the responsibilities of the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration and the Administrator of the Administration for Community Living in reference to carrying out the activities of this Act.

Sec. 406. Reports

Clarifies dissemination requirements for the annual report on activities under the law.

Sec. 407. Evaluation and Information

Describes the responsibilities of the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration and the Administrator of the Administration for Community Living in reference to evaluating the activities carried out under this Act.

Sec. 408. Carryover

No changes were made to this section.

Sec. 409. Traditionally Underserved Populations

Updates the section to reflect the demographics of the United States.

Sec. 411. Declaration of Policy; Authorization of Appropriations

Sets authorization levels for the program for fiscal years 2015 through 2020.

Sec. 412. State Plans

Specifies the unified State plan, or combined State plan, under title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, must include the provisions of the State plan for vocational rehabilitation services. Requires the State plan to assure that individuals who are otherwise eligible for vocational rehabilitation services and who are at imminent risk of losing their jobs unless they receive additional necessary postemployment services receive priority. Allows designated State agencies to prioritize serving students with disabilities. Requires State plan to detail the State’s strategies to serve students with disabilities so they are prepared for post-school employment.

Sec. 413. Eligibility and Individualized Plan for Employment

Requires applicants for vocational rehabilitation services be presumed to benefit from an employment outcome, and individuals should be provided the opportunity to try different employment experiences, including supported employment, and the opportunity to become employed in competitive integrated employment.

Sec. 414. Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Requires States to ensure designated State units provide or arrange for the provision of preemployment transition services for all students with disabilities who are in need of these services, and those services are coordinated with services provided under the Indi-

viduals with Disabilities Education Act. Also allows State agencies to support advanced training in STEM and other technical professions.

Sec. 415. State Rehabilitation Council

Requires coordination with other entities, and with activities carried out under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998.

Sec. 416. Evaluation Standards and Performance Indicators

Aligns the evaluation standards of the Rehabilitation Act with the standards of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Sec. 417. Monitoring and Review

Provides for the provision of technical assistance to promote high quality employment outcomes.

Sec. 418. Training and Services for Employers

Allows States to provide services to employers to promote recruitment, hiring, and retention of workers with disabilities.

Sec. 419. State Allotments

Requires that 15 percent of a State’s allotment be designated to provide “pre-employment transition services.”

Sec. 420. Payments to States

No substantive changes made to this section.

Sec. 421. Client Assistance Program

Requires the Secretary to reserve funds to provide services to American Indians. If the funds appropriated exceed \$14M, requires the Secretary to reserve a small percentage for grants to provide training and technical assistance to the client assistance programs in the States. Establishes authorization levels for fiscal years 2015 through 2020.

Sec. 422. Pre-Employment Transition Services

Requires States to ensure that designated State units provide, or arrange for the provision of, preemployment transition services for all students with disabilities who are in need of these services.

Sec. 423. American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Reserves a small percentage of program funds to make grants to provide technical assistance and training.

Sec. 424. Vocational Rehabilitation Services Client Information

No substantive changes made to this section.

Sec. 431. Purpose

Updates purposes of the title.

Sec. 432. Authorization of Appropriations

Sets authorization levels for fiscal years 2015 through 2020.

Sec. 433. National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research

Adds “Independent Living” to the name of the Institute, and moves the Institute from the Department of Education to the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living. Requires the dissemination of educational materials and research results to nongovernmental agencies and organizations, employers and employer organizations, and relevant congressional Committees. Describes the research activities and findings, demonstration projects, reports, evaluations, and studies that will be made available.

Sec. 434. Interagency Committee

Adds independent living research. Requires a periodic meeting of funders, researchers, and individuals with disabilities to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for disability, independent living, and rehabilitation research.

Sec. 435. Research and Other Covered Activities

Describes allowable research activities.

Sec. 436. Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research Advisory Council

Specifies Council membership and qualifications.

Sec. 437 Definition of Covered School

Defines “covered school” as an “elementary school” or “secondary school” as defined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended.

Sec. 441. Purpose; Training

Specifies that technical assistance provided to community rehabilitation programs shall be focused on competitive integrated employment. Also sets authorization levels for training for fiscal years 2015 through 2020.

Sec. 442. Demonstration, Training, and Technical Assistance Programs

Continues to authorize demonstration, training, and technical assistance projects focused on improving transition from education to employment for youth who are individuals with significant disabilities. Repeals the In-Service Training of Rehabilitation Personnel program. Also sets authorization levels for fiscal years 2015 through 2020.

Sec. 443. Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers; Recreational Programs

Repeals these programs.

Sec. 451. Establishment

Changes the number of Council members from 15 to 9. Alters the appointment of the Council members to share that responsibility among Congress and the President.

Sec. 452. Report

No substantive changes.

Sec. 453. Authorization of Appropriations

Sets authorization levels for fiscal years 2015 through 2020.

Sec. 456 Interagency Committee, Board, and Council

Sets authorization levels for the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board for fiscal years 2015 through 2020.

Sec. 457. Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights

Sets authorization levels for fiscal years 2015 through 2020.

Sec. 458. Limitation on the Use of Subminimum Wage

Describes how an entity may not employ an individual with a disability at wages less than the Federal minimum wage unless the individual has first received available pre-employment transition services; applied for vocational rehabilitation services and, if eligible, made a serious attempt at competitive integrated employment; and received counseling and information and referral about alternatives to subminimum wage employment. Individuals with disabilities who are currently employed at subminimum wage shall be provided ongoing career counseling, information and referrals, and notification of training opportunities in the individual’s geographic area, in order to promote opportunities to move into competitive integrated employment, as appropriate.

Sec. 461. Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities

Describes how States with an allotment under the Supported Employment Services program must reserve an allotment to support youth with the most significant disabilities, describes extended services, and limits the administrative allotment to be used to administer the program to 2.5 percent. Also establishes a committee to prepare recommendations to increase employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in competitive integrated employment, and terminates that committee after two years. Finally, sets

authorization levels for fiscal years 2015 through 2020.

Sec. 471. Purpose

Includes the purpose of “improving the independence of individuals with disabilities.”

Sec. 472. Administration of the Independent Living Program

Transfers the Independent Living program from the Rehabilitation Services Administration in the Department of Education to the Administration on Community Living in the Department of Health and Human Services and establishes an Administration on Independent Living.

Sec. 473. Definitions

Includes minor definition additions.

Sec. 474. State Plan

Specifies that the State plan shall be jointly developed by the chairperson of the Statewide Independent Living Council and the directors of centers for independent living in the State.

Sec. 475. Statewide Independent Living Council

Requires meaningful representation by directors of centers for independent living in the State. Amends the responsibilities of the Council to include development of the State plan and the monitor, review and evaluation of the implementation of the plan.

Sec. 475A. Responsibilities of the Administrator

Describes the responsibilities of the Administrator to develop and publish performance indicators for centers for independent living and Statewide Independent Living Councils, and to conduct onsite compliance reviews of such centers and Councils.

Sec. 476. Administration

Specifies funds allotted or made available to a State under the section shall be administered by the Statewide Independent Living Council, in accordance with the approved State plan. Reserves a small percentage of program funds to provide training and technical assistance to Statewide Independent Living Councils. Sets authorization levels for fiscal years 2015 through 2020.

Sec. 481. Program Authorization

Reserves a small percentage of program funds to make grants to provide training and technical assistance to centers for independent living.

Sec. 482. Centers

Details how the Administrator of the Administration for Community Living should determine how to fund centers for independent living in an unserved region.

Sec. 483. Standards and Assurances

No substantive changes were made to this section.

Sec. 484. Authorization of Appropriations

Sets authorization levels for fiscal years 2015 through 2020.

Sec. 486. Independent Living Services for Older Individuals who are Blind

Reserves a small percentage of program funds to provide training and technical assistance to designated State agencies or other providers of independent living services for older individuals who are blind.

Sec. 487. Program of Grants

No substantive changes were made to this section.

Sec. 488. Independent Living Services for Older Individuals who are Blind Authorization of Appropriations.

Sets authorization levels for fiscal years 2015 through 2020.

Sec. 491. Transfer of Functions

Transfers the Independent Living program, the National Institute on Disability, Inde-

pendent Living, and Rehabilitation Research, and the programs authorized under the Assistive Technology Act of 2004 to the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living. Requires the Office of Management and Budget to certify that these transfers do not result in an increase in full time equivalent positions.

TITLE V: GENERAL PROVISIONS

Subtitle A.—Workforce Investment

Section 501. Privacy

Specifies general privacy protections.

Section 502. Buy-American Requirements

Requires compliance with the Buy American Act. Includes a Sense of the Congress for the purchase of American-made equipment and products. Prohibits contracts with persons falsely labeling products as made in America.

Section 503. Transition Provisions

Describes transition provisions for all titles and programs under this Act.

Section 504. Reduction of Reporting Burdens and Requirements

Instructs the Secretaries of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services to establish procedures and criteria by which State and local boards may reduce reporting burdens and requirements.

Section 505. Effective Dates

Stipulates the effective date of the Act.

Subtitle B.—Amendments to Other Laws

Section 511. Repeal of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998

Repeals the entire Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and the Grants to States for Workplace and Community Transition Training for Incarcerated Individuals under the Higher Education Act.

Section 512. Conforming Amendments

Provides conforming amendments to other legislation, as necessary and appropriate.

Section 513. References

Specifies related references to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

TOM HARKIN,
Chairman, Senate
HELP Committee.

PATTY MURRAY,
Chairman, Senate
Budget Committee
and Member, Senate
HELP Committee.

JOHN KLINE,
Chairman, House Com-
mittee on Education
and the Workforce.

VIRGINIA FOXX,
Chairwoman, Higher
Education and
Workforce Training
Subcommittee, House
Committee on Edu-
cation and the
Workforce.

LAMAR ALEXANDER,
Ranking Member, Sen-
ate HELP Com-
mittee.

JOHNNY ISAKSON,
Ranking Member, Sen-
ate HELP Sub-
committee on Em-
ployment and Work-
place Safety.

GEORGE MILLER,
Ranking Member,
House Committee on
Education and the
Workforce.

RUBÉN HINOJOSA,
Ranking Member,
Higher Education
and Workforce
Training Sub-
committee, House
Committee on Edu-
cation and the
Workforce.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I thank all of the Senators for their strong affirmative vote for the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act, now called the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. It is a great bill. A 95-to-3 vote I think indicates that people worked hard, put together a great bill that meets the needs of our country in training our new workforce for the future.

Again, I thank Senator ALEXANDER, our ranking member, for a very close working relationship on our committee. I would note for the record that the passage of this bill marks the 14th bill reported out of our committee during this session of Congress, during this Congress, that will go to the President for his signature. Our committee met a little bit ago. We are now reporting another bill, the Autism Cures bill we hope to have again before the Senate very shortly also for passage. Our committee has worked very hard across party lines to reach these agreements.

Again, I thank Senator ALEXANDER.

On this bill, especially, I thank Senator ISAKSON and Senator MURRAY for sticking with it. This bill took 5 years and a lot of ups and downs, a lot of knots to untangle. But they did it. They worked hard at it.

I think there is a lesson here for all of us, that if you stick to it and you focus on the areas in which you have agreement, not those where you do not have agreement, but you focus on the areas you have agreement and build from there, you can get good things done. So this is a good bill. I want to thank all of the Senators and their staffs.

I again thank my ranking member on the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, HELP, Committee, Senator ALEXANDER, and his staff. I appreciate their assistance in getting this bill through the floor, and I especially appreciate their partnership in the updates we made to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which is title IV of the WIOA. My thanks to David Cleary, William Knudsen, Peter Oppenheim, and Patrick Murray on Senator ALEXANDER's team.

I again thank the Democratic champion of reauthorizing the Workforce Investment Act, WIA, Senator MURRAY. She and her staff have dedicated countless hours to advancing this bill. In particular, my thanks to Mike Spahn, Stacy Rich, Evan Schatz, and Scott Cheney.

My thanks as well to Senator ISAKSON and his team, who have been great partners in this bipartisan effort. I would especially like to thank Tommy Nguyen, Brett Layson, and Michael Black.

We absolutely could not have made it to the finish line in the Senate without the dedication and work of my House colleagues, Representatives KLINE, MILLER, FOXX, and HINOJOSA. Working with them and their staff has been a pleasure, and I would like to take a moment to thank some of the key staff in their offices specifically.

For Representatives KLINE and FOXX, my thanks to Amy Jones, Rosemary Lahasky, Brad Thomas, and James Bergeron who has since moved on to other professional endeavors.

For Representatives MILLER and HINOJOSA, my thanks to Megan O'Reilly, Leticia Mederos, Jamie Fasteau, Jacqueline Chevalier, Brian Kennedy, and Rosa Garcia. I also thank Michele Varnhagan and Jody Calemine, who have since moved on to other professional endeavors. I would also like to thank Kevin McDermott in Representative McDERMOTT's office.

I also offer my appreciation to my own team for their work in advancing this bill. Specifically, I thank Brian Ahlberg, Derek Miller, Crystal Bridgeman, Michael Gamel-McCormick, Mildred Otero, Lauren McFerran, Lee Perselay, Liz Weiss, Michael Kreps, and Robin Juliano. I would also like to thank Andy Imperato, Pam Smith, David Johns and Thomas Showalter, former members of my staff who have since moved on to other professional endeavors.

Let me also express my appreciation to Senator ENZI and his former HELP Committee staff who dedicated many years to reauthorizing WIA. Specifically, I would like to express my appreciation to Beth Buehlmann and Kelly Hastings.

I also greatly appreciate the technical assistance we received from the Federal agencies and the Congressional Research Service.

Specifically, I thank the Department of Labor and the Department of Education for their technical assistance. Portia Wu, Gerri Fiala, Mark Morin, Sean Cartwright, Michelle Rose, Adri Jayaratne, Julia McKinney, and so many others at the Department played key roles in moving this legislation forward.

At the Department of Education, I extend my thanks to Gabriella Gomez, Lloyd Horwich, Brenda Dann-Messier, Jodie Fingland, and Johan Uvin.

I also thank the following staff at the Congressional Research Service for the expert assistance they provided during this process—David Bradley, Benjamin Collins, Adrienne Fernandes-Alcantara, and Kate Manuel.

Finally, we could not do this work without the help of the Senate Legislative Counsel. Liz King, Kristin Romero, Amy Gaynor, and others on their team were instrumental in drafting this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. I want to thank our chairman and ranking member, Senator HARKIN and Senator ALEXANDER, for their tremendous work and backing

us as we worked through this process. I again thank my partner, Senator ISAKSON, who was so diligent and true to his word and worked through every issue with us. I want to thank him for that.

I also will take a minute this afternoon to extend a sincere thank you to all of the staff who worked so hard to help put this bill together, worked through its challenges, and got us to this point today where we have passed it in the Senate. If the Senate will bear with me, we have a lot of names, but I think that tells you how many people worked so hard on this. From my office: senior advisor Scott Cheney; my chief of staff Mike Spahn; my Budget Committee staff director Evan Schatz; Stacy Rich and Emma Fulkerson from my floor and leadership staff; my entire communications team, especially Eli Zupnick and Sean Coit; and everyone else from my team who has worked so very hard to move this bill forward.

I thank the wonderful staff from Senator ISAKSON's office: Tommy Nguyen, staff director of the HELP Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety, as well as Brett Layson and Michael Black who have been incredible to work with.

I thank Chairman HARKIN's Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee team: senior education policy adviser Crystal Bridgeman; chief education counsel Mildred Otero; disability policy director Michael Gamel-McCormick; disability counsel Lee Perselay; Derek Miller, staff director of the HELP Committee; deputy staff director and labor policy director of the HELP Committee Lauren McFerren; and labor policy adviser Liz Weiss; and many more on his staff who have helped.

I also thank the staff of Senator ALEXANDER: education policy adviser Patrick Murray; education policy director and counsel Peter Oppenheim; Bill Knudsen, education policy advisor; and HELP Committee staff director and chief of staff David Cleary.

We also benefited from the expertise of the Congressional Research Service. I thank David Bradley, Benjamin Collins, and Adrienne Fernandes-Alcantara.

I would be remiss if I did not thank the professionals in the Senate Legislative Counsel's office, especially Liz King, Amy Gaynor, Kristin Romero, and Katie Grendon.

As you can see, a lot of people worked a very long time to get us where we are. This has been an 11-year process, so there have been a lot of staff who worked on various versions of this reauthorization over the years. I cannot name them all, but there are some who deserve recognition as well: Gerri Fiala, Bill Kamela, Beth Buehlmann, Kelly Hastings, Pam Smith, David Johns, and Glee Smith.

Of course, my thanks to the staff in the House and the administration, of whom there are far too many to mention here.

I think that tells all of us that this is a bill that was worked on diligently by

many over the years. Who will benefit at the end of the day are our workforce and our employers and our country.

I thank again my counterpart Senator ISAKSON for working with me to get this done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. I want to associate myself with the remarks of Senator HARKIN and Senator PATTY MURRAY from Washington. I reiterate what I said in my opening statement about how much regard and respect I have for Senator MURRAY, for the job she has done. We would not be here today if it were not for PATTY MURRAY. I am grateful for her support and her kind words.

I want to reiterate all of the names she said, all the thanks that we have. But I want to particularly thank my staff who have made me once again look good. That is a difficult job to do sometimes. I thank Tommy Nguyen, Amanda Maddox, Michael Black, Brett Layson. I appreciate all they have done; Joan Kirchner, my chief of staff, who came to our aid last week and pulled a rabbit out of the hat in the Republican conference that allowed us to be here.

We all get a lot of credit as Members of the Senate. But it is our staff who make or break what we do. We are very grateful to our staff or the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act would not become law, would not get to the President's desk.

So to PATTY MURRAY, to Senator HARKIN, to Senator ALEXANDER, thank you. And to all of our staff, thank you for day in and day out doing the real work of the Senate and for the people of the United States of America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, H.R. 803, as amended, having passed, amendment No. 3382 to the title is agreed to and the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

The amendment (No. 3382) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the title)

Amend the title so as to read: "An Act to amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to strengthen the United States workforce development system through innovation in, and alignment and improvement of, employment, training, and education programs in the United States, and to promote individual and national economic growth, and for other purposes."

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JESSICA GARFOLA WRIGHT TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS

NOMINATION OF JAMIE MICHAEL MORIN TO BE DIRECTOR OF COST ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

NOMINATION OF THOMAS P. KELLY III TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk reported the nominations of Jessica Garfola Wright, of Pennsylvania, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness; Jamie Michael Morin, of Michigan, to be Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation; and Thomas P. Kelly III, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Djibouti.

VOTE ON WRIGHT NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Jessica Garfola Wright, of Pennsylvania, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON MORIN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Jamie Michael Morin, of Michigan, to be Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON KELLY NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Thomas P. Kelly III, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Djibouti?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

BIPARTISAN SPORTSMEN'S ACT OF 2014—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, equal time until 4:30 shall be divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I have come here every week now for 72 consecutive weeks that the Senate has been in session to urge colleagues to wake up to the growing threat of climate change. Today I have the pleasure and honor of being joined by my friend and colleague Senator JOE MANCHIN of West Virginia.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from West Virginia and I be allowed to engage in a colloquy for the time we have been allotted.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Senator MANCHIN and I come from very different parts of the country. We are the Ocean State, he is the Mountain State. We both came here today to say that climate change is real, that human activities, including the burning of fossil fuels, are causing dramatic changes to the Earth's atmosphere and oceans, and to seek responsible solutions that will ensure reliable, sustainable energy for the United States and protect our local communities and economies from the worst effects of a changing climate, recognizing, as we must, that fossil fuels will be part of America's fuel mix for decades.

The recent National Climate Assessment showed many effects of climate change are already being seen across the United States. In my home State of Rhode Island, we have Narragansett Bay, more than 3 degrees warmer in the winter than it was 50 years ago. Measurements at the Newport tide gauge show that as the seawater warms and expands, the sea level is up almost 10 inches against our shores since the 1930s.

Extreme weather depends a lot on natural variability, but climate change increases the odds that heat waves and heavy rain bursts will occur. As the climate has warmed, some types of extreme weather have become more frequent and severe. Here on this chart we see that in the northeast, up here, the area which includes both Rhode Island and West Virginia, between 1958 and 2010, the amount of rain coming in those big downpours has gone up by 70 percent.

Let's remember how climate change affects the economy and jobs. For example, fishermen in Rhode Island have seen their winter flounder catch from Narragansett Bay nearly disappear in the recent decades as the bay has warmed. These are not distant climate model projections, this is now. This is happening to Rhode Island.

The people of West Virginia have Senator MANCHIN fighting for them every day in Washington. I know he believes that we need to find economically responsible answers to environmental problems. I am proud to stand with him today as his friend and colleague.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.