

BILL SUMMARY: H.R. 4227, THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT OF 2012

House Democrats on the Education and Workforce Committee have released a bill to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act. H.R. 4227, the Workforce Investment Act of 2012 was introduced by Reps. John Tierney (D-MA), Ruben Hinojosa (D-TX) and George Miller (D-CA). The bill aims to update the current workforce investment system by adding new accountability measures, streamlining existing programs, and creating new funding streams for innovative practices.

- The bill seeks to streamline and modify existing program by requiring states to establish unified state plans that streamline and coordinate the operation of job training, adult education, and postsecondary education programs. It also: (1) requires workforce investment boards (WIBs) to implement career pathways strategies and like initiatives; (2) expands the use of on-the-job training, and paid work experience; (3) allows individuals to access services in any sequence; (4) requires training programs to offer multiple exit and entry points for workers at various skill levels and career stages; (5) allows local areas the flexibility to contract directly with community colleges to provide specialized group training classes that are designed for employers who are looking to hire many workers with a particular skill.
- The bill establishes common reporting and performance measures across all job training, adult education, Wagner-Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs. It provides workers and employers with access to performance outcome information, and adds a performance measurement for how many individuals gain recognized postsecondary credentials for employment.
- The bill authorizes the Workforce Innovation Fund - a competitive grant program to support the development and expansion of new and promising strategies including career pathways, sector partnerships and regional approaches.
- The bill authorizes funding for President Obama's \$8 billion Community College to Career Fund to expand capacity to train workers in high-growth industries, such as health care, transportation, and advanced manufacturing.
- The bill allows community colleges to contract for class-size training (not just student-by-student payments), and moves the workforce investment system towards a common system of recognized credentials.
- The bill authorizes additional investments and expands services to support adult literacy and workplace skills services.
- The bill expands the continuum of services offered to disabled individuals with the goal of expanding opportunities for competitive and self-employment.