

WIA Reauthorization Update – July 2013

(Based on updates from the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the National Skills Coalition)

House

On March 15, 2013, the House passed the *Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills (SKILLS) Act* (H.R. 803), legislation to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The bill was passed 215-202, largely along party lines. You will remember the SKILLS Act consolidates 35 existing workforce programs and reduces discretionary funding for the State WIBs (CWDC in Colorado).

Senate

WIA Reauthorization conversations are active and bipartisan in the Senate. The U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee recently released a staff discussion draft to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The discussion draft addresses a number of key issues, including:

- Maintaining the 15% WIA discretionary funding (also referred to as the state set-aside). This is the flexible discretionary funding that allows CWDC to fund innovation in the workforce system.
- Providing for a minimum majority of business representation on state workforce boards (though the draft removes governors' authority to appoint the state workforce board chair).
- Implementing common performance measures.

There are rumors that a bill might be introduced any week now, although it may take a bit longer as they attempt to iron out differences in Title V (Vocational Rehabilitation). It is likely that the Senate will mark-up a bill before the August recess.

To see a side-by-side comparison of the House and Senate bills from the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, [click here](#).

What Comes Next?

The House and the Senate must agree on the same version of a bill in order for it to be passed to the President for signature, making it law. Although the discussions are not close to the final step of becoming law, there is great movement forward. Reauthorizing the Workforce Investment Act does seem to be a priority in the House and Senate.

U.S. Secretary of Labor

There is no scheduled confirmation vote for Secretary of Labor Nominee Tom Perez yet.