

Proposed Talking Points: Cathy Rychalsky Testimony at Senator Ryan Aument's Hearing on Technical Education and Career Readiness

I. Introduction

- Senator **Ryan Aument**, thank you for the opportunity to offer remarks on this important and timely topic.
- My name is Cathy Rychalsky, and I am the Executive Director of the Lancaster County Workforce Development Board (LCWDB), one of 22 Workforce Development Boards across Pennsylvania.
- Governed by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), our programs goals include improving the quality of the workforce, reducing dependency on subsidized programs, increasing self-sufficiency, meeting the skills requirement of our local employers and enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of our community.

II. The CareerLink System

- WIOA Title I - Adult Employment and Training – is where the majority of our funding exists. Within this funding WDB's are directed to coordinate the delivery of adult program services, including career services, training services, and job placement assistance. Priority to recipients of public assistance, low- income, veterans and people who are basic skills-deficient. Twenty percent of grant funds may be spent on incumbent worker training. Youth Employment and Training funds provide support to targeted youth in attainment of a high school diploma or equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and individualized delivery of 14 career readiness opportunities. **One major change is a requirement that WDB's spend at least 75% of youth program funds on out-of-school youth ages 16-24. In Lancaster County we allot a portion of these funds to serve in-school high school students enrolled at the Lancaster County Career and Technology Center.** Dislocated Worker Employment and Training - directs WDB's to coordinate the delivery of services to dislocated workers who lost jobs due to plant closures, company downsizing, or significant change in market conditions.
- Core Program – WIOA Title II - Basic Education for Adults - provides

services that include adult education literacy, family literacy, and English language acquisition, integrated English literacy and civics education, workplace preparation activities and integrated education and training.

- **Core Program - WIOA Title III - Wagner Peyser Employment Services** - provides access to employment services to all job seekers including job search preparation and placement assistance services.
- **Core Program - WIOA Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation Services** - offers vocational rehabilitation and training services to help eligible individuals with disabilities become employed.

WIOA requires implementation of a renewed, more robust and collaborative workforce delivery system for all to pursue the skills, training, and education needed for employment. It begins with Pennsylvania's Combined State Plan for the period July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2020 which requires a single, unified State Plan inclusive of all core programs under WIOA.

Pennsylvania's State Plan is designed to improve service delivery and access to the workforce system for job seekers and employers. Local Workforce Development Board Plans are designed to address the needs of the local labor market and to ensure coordination with the State's workforce plan goals.

Lancaster Examples of Integration with Career and Technical Education

Career and Technical Education (CTE) is strategically embedded in Lancaster County workforce system. One of LCWDB's career and technical education centers is co-located at PA CareerLink® of Lancaster County, providing an immediate, on-site, close-to-customer career and technical education presence within the workforce system offering industry-recognized training options and credentials aligned to industry-driven, high priority occupations within targeted industry sectors for adults, dislocated workers and youth. All of Lancaster County's career and technical centers training programs are on the approved State Eligible Training Provider/Program. We anticipate on-site presence from two additional CTE providers this coming year.

Along with being partners of the Lancaster CareerLink, both the Lancaster County Career and Technology Center and Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology

participate in youth and adult CTE. To align business and industry needs with education, and continue to develop a pipeline of workers in high priority occupations within targeted industry sectors, LCWDB participate in and refer private sector companies to serve on career and technical centers' Occupational Advisory Committees to provide industry guidance on curriculum and equipment purchases for training in high demand careers. In turn, members of CTEs are represented on LCWDB's Board of Directors and standing committees, including Youth Council and Pathways Planning Committee to offer guidance and receive input on current and future employment needs.

Given the strength of the CTE programs in Lancaster County, the business community both locally and nationally reach out to these providers in search of quality candidates for their employment needs.

Harrisburg Area Community College has recently launched an Industrial Maintenance Technician Apprenticeship with funds our WDB applied for on their behalf. This apprenticeship is the first in the State of its kind and together we are providing details of this excellent opportunity to our business community.

Our advanced manufacturing industry partnership, which is 100% employer driven, we continue to identify common training needs and work with our CTE institutions to assist in the upskilling of our incumbent workforce.

In partnership with Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology, the LCWDB was able to secure funds for the purchase of state-of-the art equipment that students will use in the development of skills employers are looking for.

Last year LCWDB approved almost \$590,000 of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for training in high demand occupations such as Commercial Driver's License (CDL), advanced manufacturing, and healthcare industries to CTE partners.

While all of this work is critical to the success of our county and state, the fact is, there are not enough resources being funneled into career and technical programs. Capacity at the CTE institutions is insufficient to meet the current and future workforce needs. This limits the ability to provide adequate training necessary to replace retiring and transitioning workers as well as allowing for growth and expansion.

Another key challenge is the perception of parents and K-12 system that all

students should pursue a four-year college program immediately after high school. In Lancaster County, according to the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, 82.3% of the jobs do not require a four-year degree. To that end, the LCWDB is conducting six regional events titled “Redefining Career Success” to expose parents and young adults to all of the career and education options available to them.

I appreciate the opportunity to talk about the great work happening in our community as well as the challenges employers are facing today. The lack of skilled workers is something we all need to be concerned about for the well-being of our business community and Lancaster County residents.

Thank you,
Cathy Rychalsky