



August 18, 2003

The Honorable Judd Gregg
Chairman, Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee
United States Senate

The Honorable Edward Kennedy
United States Senate

Dear Senator Gregg and Senator Kennedy:

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, strongly support strengthening the existing provisions in the Workforce Investment Act for displaced homemakers and individuals training for nontraditional occupations.

The Workforce Investment Act was designed to increase the employment, retention, earnings and occupational skills of America's workers, including displaced homemakers and individuals seeking high-skill, high-wage nontraditional careers. Unfortunately, the system has not been effective in meeting its commitment to train women for today's workforce. In 1998, Congress justified the elimination of set-asides for displaced homemakers and individuals preparing for nontraditional occupations in the Perkins Adult and Technical Education Act of 1998, by saying that these populations would be served through WIA. Yet, WIA has not fulfilled this promise.

There are more than 7 million displaced homemakers and 10 million single mothers in the United States, and 56% of the WIA participants served in PY 2000 were women. Yet, a recent survey of over 100 Local Workforce Investment Boards found that the majority made minimal use of dislocated worker funds to serve displaced homemakers.¹ In another nationwide survey of women's employment and job training programs, more than 60% of respondents rated services for women in transition as fair or poor². Only 10 percent rated them as excellent.

Congress can fulfill WIA's commitment to women by strengthening the language to improve services for displaced homemakers and women seeking high-skills, high-wage jobs. Specifically:

- Direct states to describe in their state plan how they will provide services to displaced homemakers and individuals training for nontraditional employment, including outreach, intake, assessments and service delivery, the development of performance measures and training of One-Stop staff.
- Provide technical assistance to One-Stop staff on serving displaced homemakers and individuals training for nontraditional jobs.

¹ Wider Opportunities for Women. "WIA Reauthorization: What Local Workforce Boards Say About Services For Women." www.chn.org/pdf/localWIBsurveyfactsheet.pdf. Winter 2003.

² Women Work! "WIA Reauthorization: How to Improve the Workforce Development System for Women." www.womenwork.org/pdfresources/issues_improvewia.pdf. Winter 2003.

- Mandate programs preparing individuals for nontraditional jobs and programs for displaced homemakers and single parents under the required statewide activities.
- Direct Workforce Investment Boards to create a plan to effectively utilize community programs, services, and agencies that work with hard-to-serve individuals.
- Instruct One-Stops to provide needed support services to individuals with barriers to employment, if referral mechanisms have been exhausted.

We urge you to support legislation that will fulfill WIA's commitment to women by ensuring that displaced homemakers and other women entering the workforce have access to the training they need to attain the goal of self-sufficiency. Should you have any questions about this letter, please contact Jill Miller, Executive Director at Women Work! at (202) 467-6346.

Sincerely,

Women Work! The National Network for Women's Employment

S & S Staffing

Toni Partington, Women Work! Governing Board

Diane Wilson, Friend of Women Work!

Project for Homemakers in Arizona Seeking Employment

National Economic Development and Law Center

Carmen Carrillo, Women Work! Governing Board

A WENDI instructor

Virginia E. Meyer, Friend of Women Work!

Resource Center for Women

Marie Doucette, Friend of Women Work!

New Connections to Work, South Georgia Technical College

Bernice R. Bowen-Montgomery, Ed.D., Women Work! Member

Atlanta Technical College

New Connections to Work, Augusta Technical College

CLP, Presbyterian Church USA

New Connections to Work

New Connections to Work

Ogeechee Technical College

Single Parents & Displaced Homemakers Program, Kapiolani Community College

Adult Re-Entry Program

Center for New Directions at Eastern Idaho Technical College

Center for New Directions

Sheila J. Rogers, Women Work! Governing Board

Access to Education and Employment, Black Hawk College

Olney Central College

Rock Valley College

Kansas Women Work!

Area Self Sufficiency & Employment Taskforce (ASSET)

LeClair/Petter Associates

Maine Centers for Women, Work & Community

Maine Centers for Women, Work & Community

Iris D. Fields, Women Work! Member

Lake Michigan College

Washington, D.C.

Sheridan, AR

Rio Rico, AZ

Tucson, AZ

Tucson, AZ

Oakland, CA

Denver, CO

Cocoa, FL

Cocoa Beach, FL

Largo, FL

Titusville, FL

Americus, GA

Atlanta, GA

Atlanta, GA

Augusta, GA

LaFayette, GA

LaGrange, GA

Oakwood, GA

Statesboro, GA

Honolulu, HI

Dubuque, IA

Idaho Falls, ID

Pocatello, ID

Chicago, IL

Moline, IL

Olney, IL

Rockford, IL

Independence, KS

Independence, KS

Hudson, MA

Augusta, ME

Bangor, ME

Skowhegan, ME

Benton Harbor, MI

Focus on Women, Henry Ford Community College
Women's Resource Center
Heather Densmore, Friend of Women Work!
Lansing Community College Women's Resource Center
Every Woman's Place
Life-Work Planning Center
Meta 5 Displaced Homemaker Program
Donna Miner, Women Work! Member
Ozarks Technical Community College
Career Futures, Inc.
Sheila Hogan, Women Work! Governing Board
Career Training Institute
Career Development Workforce Center, Miles Community College
Ms. Fix-It, LLC
New Choices Displaced Homemaker Program
Women's Resource Center
Tri-County Women's Resource Center
Rocky Mount Family YMCA
Community Humanitarian Resource Center
Donna Bolz, Friend of Women Work!
Rebecca Hasty, Women Work! Member
Job Outfitters program of the YWCA Lincoln
YWCA of Lincoln
Flora J. Lundberg, Friend of Women Work!
New Beginnings, Northeast Community College
Metropolitan Community College, Single Parent Homemaker Services
Nebraska Commission on the Status of Women
New Hampshire Commission on the Status of Women
New Hampshire Community Technical College
Welfare to Work, Rockingham Community Action
Career & Life Counseling Center, Displaced Homemaker Program
The Displaced Homemakers Network of NJ, Inc.
Women's Opportunity Center
Center for People in Transition
TMCC Re-Entry Center, Truckee Meadows Community College
Two Year College Development Center, University at Albany
Economic Opportunity Commission of Nassau County, Inc.
Schenectady Community Action Program, Project LIFT
Florence Koenig, Friend of Women Work!
The Women's Employment & Resource Center, Inc.
Southern State Community College's "Your Place" Program
Women's Center at Lakeland Community College
People Called Women
Mt. Hood Community College
New Directions
Portland Community College
New Choices/New Options, Greater Altoona Career & Tech Center
New Choices/New Options

Dearborn, MI
Grand Rapids, MI
Holland, MI
Lansing, MI
Muskegon, MI
Mankato, MN
Staples, MN
Kansas City, MO
Springfield, MO
Butte, MT
Helena, MT
Helena, MT
Miles City, MT
Carrboro, NC
Grantsboro, NC
Greensboro, NC
Mount Airy, NC
Rocky Mount, NC
Grand Island, NE
Lincoln, NE
Lincoln, NE
Lincoln, NE
Lincoln, NE
McCook, NE
Norfolk, NE
Omaha, NE
Omaha, NE
Concord, NH
Nashua, NH
Portsmouth, NH
Hackensack, NJ
Jamesburg, NJ
Mt. Laurel, NJ
Sewell, NJ
Reno, NV
Albany, NY
Hempstead, NY
Johnstown, NY
Rochester, NY
Utica, NY
Hillsboro, OH
Kirtland, OH
Toledo, OH
Gresham, OR
Portland, OR
Portland, OR
Altoona, PA
Blue Bell, PA

New Choices/New Options	Bradford, PA
Mary Carolyn Warnock, Women Work! Member	Clarks Summit, PA
National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity	Cochranville, PA
Bucks County Opportunity Council	Doylsetown, PA
New Choices / New Options Career Development Services	Erie, PA
Potter County Education Council	Galeton, PA
Formerly of New Choices / New Options	Indiana, PA
Carbon County New Choices/New Options program	Jim Thorpe, PA
New Choices, New Options of Lancaster County	Lancaster, PA
New Choices/New Options Venango County	Oil City, PA
Pennsylvania Women Work!	Pittsburgh, PA
Lori Pilling, Women Work! Member	Pittsburgh, PA
CCAC New Choices/New Options	Pittsburgh, PA
Pennsylvania Women Work!	Pittsburgh, PA
Wings of Success	West Chester, PA
New Choices/New Options	York, PA
McAuley Village	Providence, RI
South Carolina Women Work!	Columbia, SC
Center for Adult Learners & Job Training, Midlands Technical College	Columbia, SC
Education Associate for Gender Equity/Special Populations	Columbia, SC
The Right Turn, Inc.	Pierre, SD
Roberta Dill, Friend of Women Work!	Sioux Falls, SD
Southeast Technical Institute	Sioux Falls, SD
South Dakota Women Work!	Sioux Falls, SD
South Dakota Association of Employment and Career Counselors	Sioux Falls, SD
Wheels to Work	Sioux Falls, SD
Tennessee Women Work!	Memphis, TN
Joseph Nelson, Friend of Women Work!	Memphis, TN
Earl Henry Strong, Jr., Friend of Women Work!	Memphis, TN
Samuel L. King, Friend of Women Work!	Memphis, TN
JeVita Perkins, Friend of Women Work!	Memphis, TN
Grace Durham, Friend of Women Work!	Memphis, TN
Fredrick Durham, Friend of Women Work!	Memphis, TN
YWCA of Greater Memphis	Memphis, TN
First Step Program, South Plains College	Lubbock, TX
Mary Denson, Women Work! Member	Vidor, TX
Betsy Dill, Women Work! Member	Centreville, VA
Center for Education for Independence, Dabney S. Lancaster Community College	Clifton Forge, VA
Trish Perry, Friend of Women Work!	Leesburg, VA
Northern New England Tradeswomen, Inc.	Essex Junction, VT
Turning Point, Displaced Homemaker Program, Whatcom Community College	Bellingham, WA
YWCA	Everett, WA
Women's Educational Bureau, Fox Valley Technical College	Appleton, WI
Interfaith Older Adult Programs	Milwaukee, WI
West Virginia Women Work!	Morgantown, WV

Cc: The Honorable Lamar Alexander
The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
The Honorable Christopher Bond
The Honorable Hillary Clinton
The Honorable Mike DeWine
The Honorable Christopher Dodd
The Honorable John Edwards
The Honorable John Ensign
The Honorable Mike Enzi
The Honorable Bill Frist
The Honorable Lindsey Graham
The Honorable Tom Harkin
The Honorable James Jeffords
The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
The Honorable Patty Murray
The Honorable Jack Reed
The Honorable Pat Roberts
The Honorable Jeff Sessions
The Honorable John Warner