

Broward Workforce Development Board (BWDB)

2026 Legislative Agenda

Introduction

The public workforce system remains lean, effective, and efficient. Every dollar invested by the federal government through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) generates more than \$15 in overall economic value. These returns do not account for additional public savings from reduced reliance on TANF, Medicaid, and other public assistance programs as individuals enter the workforce, nor do they include the significant value of leveraged funding that supports local initiatives such as summer youth employment, work-based learning, and apprenticeship programs.

1. Fully Fund the Workforce System

Concern: The workforce system has been funded at less than recommended levels for many years.

Recommendation: Fund the workforce system at authorized levels to maximize its impact on job placement and business support, enabling more individuals to secure employment and businesses to thrive. The public workforce system is lean, effective, and efficient - each federal dollar invested through WIOA generates more than \$15 in overall economic value. Further, the provision of workforce services is critical as we address the AI revolution and need to assure American workers have the skills for the jobs of the future as many current jobs become obsolete.

2. Modify Florida's 50% ITA Expenditure Requirement to Align with the One Big Beautiful Bill (OB BB) Act's Pell Eligibility

Concern: Florida currently requires that local boards expend at least 50% of Adult and Dislocated Worker funds on training. Boards spent significant amounts of funds on short-term training, which training was not PELL eligible. The OB BB will now allow students to pay for short-term training with PELL grants. This will affect Boards' ability to meet the 50% requirement.

Recommendation: 1) Support legislation that recognizes work experience activities as training, similar to State of Florida policy, not career services as they are currently categorized. 2) Allow local boards to take advantage of WIOA flexibility to direct funds where they will best serve their local communities, and 3) When calculating funds spent on training, include PELL in the calculation to count towards the 50% ITA expenditure requirement.

3. Support Legislation That Expands Apprenticeship Programs

Concern: While apprenticeship programs are proven to connect jobseekers to high-demand careers and provide employers with a skilled talent pipeline, apprenticeship opportunities remain limited. Barriers include administrative complexity for employers—particularly small and mid-sized businesses.

Recommendation: Support legislation that 1) makes it easier for employers to create registered apprenticeships and 2) allow pre-apprenticeship completion to count as training for adults.

4. Preserve Local Control By Maintaining Designation of Local Areas

Concern: While the bill, *A Stronger Workforce For America (ASWA)*, did not pass, new legislation will be introduced and, as in past and current workforce legislation, it should support local area designation. The previous WIOA reauthorization proposal did not preserve local autonomy nor contain the flexibility for workforce boards to deliver services tailored to local needs.

Recommendation: Local Workforce Board input, control, and oversight in partnership with local elected officials is the engine that drives local workforce development. WIOA's governance structure has resulted in program delivery integrity because of performance, accountability, fiscal oversight, procurement standards, and broad local board composition requirements. Being able to respond to unique economic, demographic, and employer characteristics of local communities, as opposed to larger centralized regions that tend to focus on the more concentrated population centers, will result in local workforce systems that continue to best serve our communities.