

FACT SHEET
CLINTON-GORE INVESTMENTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
IN SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITIONS AND WORKER TRAINING

SCHOOL-TO-WORK

- The School-to-Work Opportunities Act was proposed by the Clinton Administration and approved by Congress in 1994.
- Since 1994, the federal government has made over \$1.6 billion available to states and local partnerships as seed funding for school-to-career experimentation and implementation, with annual appropriations cresting at \$400 million in both FY 1997 and 1998. States are investing the funds in: developing new working relationships among education, workforce training, and economic development; statewide outreach; professional development; new curricula; and other activities. Local partnerships have significant leeway in their use of funds, provided they demonstrate support for the local investments from employers, schools, and other partners. While no new grants will be made after FY 2000, some states will have until 2005 to fully spend their funding.

GOALS 2000 AND THE NATIONAL SKILL STANDARDS BOARD

- The Goals 2000: Educate America Act was proposed by the Clinton Administration, based on President Bush's America 2000, and was approved by Congress in 1994.
- Title V of Goals 2000 authorized the National Skill Standards Board (NSSB). The mission of the NSSB is to encourage the creation and adoption of a national system of skill standards that will enhance the ability of the United States to compete effectively in a global economy. It was created to build a voluntary national system of skill standards, assessment, and certification systems developed by industry in full partnership with education, labor, and community stakeholders.
- Since 1994, skill standards development has been completed in several important sectors – manufacturing and the retail/wholesale industries. Core standards are being developed to be released in 2001 in the areas of education and training workers, the hospitality and tourism sector, and the utility industry.
- In addition, NSSB has sponsored grants to 12 industry and research groups to serve as living laboratories of the national skill standards system and covered the following industry sectors and sub-sectors: advanced manufacturing, banking, chemical lab and process technicians, electronics, health care, heavy construction, human/social services, bioscience, restaurants and hotels, and retail trade.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT AND YOUTH OPPORTUNITY GRANTS

- **Workforce Investment Act.** In 1998, the President signed the Workforce Investment Act. This historic bipartisan legislation reformed our national job training system to streamline the array of publicly funded employment and training programs and create a network of customer-focused local "one stop" service delivery centers to increase the earnings and skills of the nation's workforce.

- Since the signing of the Workforce Investment Act two years ago, all 50 states have developed plans that passed the Department of Labor's approval, and the number of One-Stop Centers in communities across the United States has grown from zero in 1993 to 1200 today. The realization of the President and Vice-President's vision for an accountable streamlined national job training system will not only help ensure that the nation's workforce has the skills to support continued economic growth in today's rapidly changing economy, but also assure that all Americans can participate in our economic prosperity.
- **Youth Opportunity Grants.** The Youth Opportunity Grants, authorized under the Workforce Investment Act, significantly increase resources available for serving youth growing up in high-poverty urban and rural areas. These grants are helping individual youth find better jobs and increase their educational attainment. In addition to positive outcomes for individual youth, these grants are helping to achieve community-wide impacts in increasing youth employment rates and educational attainment.
- **Call for Funding WIA and YOs.** The President has called on Congress to properly fund workforce development activities in the 2001 Labor-HHS appropriations bill. The House bill provides none of the \$154 million requested for the One-Stop Career Center system, proposes a \$93 million cut from the 2001 requested and 2000 enacted levels for adult training, underfunds youth opportunity grants by \$200 million, and eliminates \$21 million in job training and education opportunities for 13,000 disadvantaged youth under the Youth Activities program. The Senate bill also underfunds youth opportunity grants by \$125 million, cuts youth Activities by \$21 million, fails to fund \$44 million in enhancements for One-Stops, and cuts dislocated worker assistance by \$181 million. By failing to fund employment and training activities, Congress undermines the foundation of the new workforce investment system, and abandons the spirit of cooperation that marked the passage of WIA.

RECORD OF COMMITMENT TO LIFELONG LEARNING AND THE AMERICAN WORKER.

- The Workforce Investment Act represents the successful realization of a vision to retrain America's workers that Bill Clinton and Al Gore first outlined in their 1992 book Putting People First. For the next 6 years, President Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore pressed for their employment and training services reform proposal as a G.I. Bill for American Workers. Finally signed August 7, 1998, the Workforce Investment Act was described as "one of the best but most underreported, bipartisan achievements of the Clinton Era." With WIA now up and running, the Clinton-Gore Administration crowns its many achievements to assure that the American worker can participate in both lifelong learning and in our nation's economic prosperity.
- Among other accomplishments, the President and Vice-President have helped make community college universally available through the Hope Scholarship and lifetime learning tax credits, employed 857,000 former welfare recipients through the Welfare To Work initiative, allowed penalty-free IRA-withdrawals for undergraduate, graduate, and post-secondary vocational education, and increased funding for Job Corps by over \$400 million (or 48%) and increased the number of slots available to disadvantaged youth by over 3,000 slots (or 8%) since 1992.

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 - Communications
 - Grants
 - Evaluation
 - TA Providers



NEW YORK SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES - 1999 PROFILE

State Development (1 Years): \$620,000	Federally Funded Local: \$ 958,608
State Implementation (5 Years): \$60,300,000	Urban-Rural High Poverty: \$10,110,043
	Out-of-School Youth: \$ 139,424
Total Federal Investments (as of 9/30/99): \$72,128,075	

Governance & Leadership for the NYS STW system is provided by a 33-member NYS STW Advisory Council representing, in addition to the required partners, the legislature, governmental departments and agencies, service delivery organizations & associations, and students from across the State. The Council is co-chaired by the State Education Department and The Business Council of NYS.

Sub-state roll-out. The NYS STW system infrastructure consists of 47 regional STW Partnerships, each governed by an advisory council composed of all of the statutory partners. Each partnership supports a broad array of programs, activities and services that continues to reach 85 percent of all public schools in the state.

Roll of Key Partners. At the State Advisory Council level partners support the initiative through a variety of ways. They serve the Council by bringing each organization's unique perspective, policy initiatives and program information that shapes statewide STW policy decision-making. They are the conduit of information flowing to each agency and raise awareness of STW by ongoing information dissemination to their constituency groups. Examples of STW initiatives undertaken by policy members include:

- * **The Department of Labor** supports activities related to career majors research and implementation, provides information on labor market statistics and child labor law, and has designed and continually improves the Occupational Information Network, now know as CareerZone, which is an on-line service available through the world wide web.

- * **The NYS Congress of Parents and Teachers** provides awareness and training for parents through it regional networks and develops and disseminates brochures for parents on STW.

- * **The Business Council of NYS, Inc.**, in partnership with local chambers of commerce, provides leadership and direction to over 4,000 businesses in the State of New York around involvement with education, including STW activities and programs.

- * **NY Association for Training and Employment Professionals** - conducts an annual STW institute. This partner also developed a resource guide on "Sustaining and Building School-to-Work."

- * **Legislative Partners** - In each of the past four years New York's legislative partners have drafted, in collaboration with the STW office, legislation for a statewide STW program. The legislation has failed each time to get past committee.

School-to-Work Models

System building initiatives include:

- Statewide regional conferences provide professional development and technical assistance around the integration of SCANS, workplace readiness skills and career development activities into all subject areas.
- Development of scope and sequence grids for each of the 6 career majors.
- Development and dissemination of a resource guide, *Sustaining and Building School-to-Work* that describes all the products created for STW.
- Continuation of the STW Advisory Council as a permanent advisory council in the proposed "New York's Workforce Development System" governance structure. STW Advisory Council has designed strategies for the possible transition of council membership on to Workforce Investment Boards.
- Maintenance of the NYC STW Alliance, a not-for-profit intermediary agency which provides coordination and collaboration between the employer community, NYC Board of Education and local partnerships.
- The state Education Department's Basic Education Data System (BEDS) collects data about teachers and administrators with respect to career development integration in curriculum and the alignment of all curricula areas with the all learning standards including CDOS.
- Maintenance of the NYS STW Web-Page which permits the exchange of local effective practices.
- The Regents have charged a panel of experts to study and make recommendations concerning the feasibility of a career and technical education diploma.
- New state assessments contextualize constructs around CDOS.
- Creation of the Office of School-to-Career at the New York City Board of Education.
- Development and implementation of the statewide Career Plan Pilot that involves 17 school districts which will expand to 200 districts next year.

Key STW Partners:

* **Business** - All partnerships have multiple employer/business partners including the following: Fleet Bank, American Express, Goldman-Sachs, Siemens Corporation, Travelers Insurance, Corning Incorporated, Eastman Kodak, Consoildaed Edison, NYNEX, Citibank, Solomon Smith Barney, Oppenhiemer & Co., Lehman Brothers, Coopers & Lybrand, MicroTrek, American International Group, the Wall Street Journal, Careers and Colleges Magazine, Novartis Pharmaceuticals, First Union National Bank, Ciba Specialty Chemicals, Paine Webber, Inc., East Harlem Cobs

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*Prepared in case the President does something
on this — nothing planned at this time*

DRAFT
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT PRESS PAPER
DRAFTDRAFT AS OF 7/31/00**

Today, the President will celebrate the implementation of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). This historic bipartisan legislation reformed our national job training system to streamline the array of publicly funded employment and training programs and create a network of customer-focused local "one stop" service delivery centers to increase the earnings and skills of the nation's workforce. Since the signing of the Workforce Investment Act two years ago, all 50 states have developed plans that passed the Department of Labor's approval, and the number of One-Stop Centers in communities across the United States has grown from zero in 1993 to 1200 today. The realization of the President and Vice-President's vision for an accountable streamlined national job training system will not only help ensure that the nation's workforce has the skills to support continued economic growth in today's rapidly changing economy, but also assure that all Americans can participate in our economic prosperity. The President will call on Congress to invest in workforce development by fully funding WIA and other key training and employment activities such as the Administration's Fathers' Work/Families Win initiative rather than reversing course with irresponsible tax cuts that risk our fiscal discipline and jeopardize our continued economic strength.

ACHIEVING FULL IMPLEMENTATION. The President will announce the publication of the final rule providing guidance and preserving flexibility for states and communities as they implement key provisions of WIA. The publication of this rule marks the nation's progress in both consolidating numerous employment services at the street level through One-Stop Career Centers, and in reforming the system for customer-accountability through Individual Training Accounts (ITA's). These ITA's expand consumer choice by allowing individuals to select the training and provider that best suits their needs.

The principles of coordination, partnership, and customer service underlying WIA are reflected in the process and format of the rule. Developed with the leadership and participation of stakeholders such as business, labor, community groups, veterans service organizations, states, local entities and the disability community, the rule itself is written in a plain English Question and Answer format. Finally, the Administration has launched a website, <http://usworkforce.org>, to serve as a central user-friendly information resource for employers, employees, states, communities, and others with questions concerning any aspect of WIA.

RETOOLING FOR THE NEW ECONOMY. The implementation of WIA will help prepare workers and our nation's youth for the 21st century and respond to the growing need for skilled workers in today's rapidly changing economy. The pace of economic change calls for ready access to lifelong learning that meets individual needs and interests; an objective that WIA promotes through accessible One-Stops in every community and ITA's that empower eligible individuals to choose the training programs they prefer. By providing universal access to electronic tools such as the Internet based Career Kit and including access to electronic databases such as America's Job Bank, America's Talent Bank, and Career Info Net, One-Stop Centers recognize the increasing importance of technological access for full participation in America's economic, political and social life. By investing in skill development, WIA also helps

businesses--many of which have been clamoring for more skilled workers from any source--stay competitive. In recognition of the stake employers' have in job training, WIA includes business among the key partners in the state and local workforce investment boards and One-Stops. A skilled workforce is necessary to propel economic growth and to assure that all Americans participate in the resulting prosperity.

INVESTING IN A SYSTEM WE BUILT TOGETHER. Today the President will call on Congress to properly fund workforce development activities in the Labor-HHS appropriations bill. The House bill provides none of the \$154 million requested for the One-Stop Career Center system, proposes a \$93 million cut from the 2001 requested and 2000 enacted levels for adult training, underfunds youth opportunity grants by \$200 million, and eliminates \$21 million in job training and education opportunities for 13,000 disadvantaged youth under the Youth Activities program. The Senate bill also underfunds youth opportunity grants by \$125 million, cuts youth Activities by \$21 million, fails to fund \$44 million in enhancements for One-Stops, and cuts dislocated worker assistance by \$181 million. Promoting involvement of fathers in the workforce carries particular importance, since responsible fathers are critical to the well-being of their children. Today the President will also call on Congress to fully fund the Administration's \$255 million Fathers Work/Families Win initiative which would help approximately 80,000 low-income fathers and working families obtain the support and skills necessary to support their families. By failing to fund employment and training activities, Congress undermines the foundation of the new workforce investment system, and abandons the spirit of cooperation that marked the passage of WIA.

CLINTON-GORE ADMINISTRATION'S CONTINUING COMMITMENT TO LIFELONG LEARNING AND THE AMERICAN WORKER. This program represents the successful realization of a vision to retrain America's workers that Bill Clinton and Al Gore first outlined in their 1992 book Putting People First. For the next 6 years, President Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore pressed for their employment and training services reform proposal as a G.I. Bill for American Workers. Finally signed August 7, 1998, the Workforce Investment Act was described as "one of the best but most underreported, bipartisan achievements of the Clinton Era." With WIA now up and running, the Clinton-Gore Administration crowns its many achievements to assure that the American worker can participate in both lifelong learning and in our nation's economic prosperity.

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Clinton Administration School-to-Work Accomplishments -

- According to a report written by Jobs for the Future, as a result of School-to-Work “education will be richer in technology, less classroom-bound, and more focused on what young people will do when faced with new demands or real problems.”
- Since 1994, the federal government has made over \$1.6 billion available to states and local partnerships as seed funding for school-to-career experimentation and implementation, with annual appropriations cresting at \$400 million in both FY 1997 and 1998. States are investing the funds in: developing new working relationships among education, workforce training, and economic development; statewide outreach; professional development; new curricula; and other activities. Local partnerships have significant leeway in their use of funds, provided they demonstrate support for the local investments from employers, schools, and other partners. While no new grants will be made after FY 2000, some states will have until 2005 to fully spend their funding.
- STW has led to improvement in student attendance, student motivation and satisfaction, the rigor of course selection, employer engagement, the quality of adult relationships, dropout prevention, college attendance rates, wages in first jobs.
- Evidence from Philadelphia, Boston, New York State, and elsewhere indicate, some of the most encouraging gains have been in urban schools with high concentrations of minority students.

What has STW done for New York?

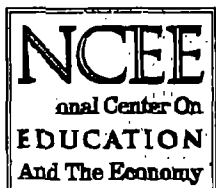
- Infused over \$72 million into the State to help young people make the transition for school to work by providing them with education that is based on high standards, is reliable, usable, and leads to multiple future careers and lifelong learning.

What's Next?

STW sunsets in FY 2001. What can we do to continue to help young people with transitions to work, build effective partnerships between schools and business, and ensure that all of our students have access to economic opportunity now and in the future?

- Support major effort to reform high schools into smaller learning environments that include opportunities for young people to learn in small, thematic, personalized environments. Career academies set in high schools, for example, can focus on careers in technology and include effective school-to-work strategies that combine high academic standards with workplace training. (Administration has proposed \$120 million for high school reform in FY 2001, VP has proposed \$1 billion for smaller classes and smaller schools). [Charter Schools or alternative schools that focus on school-to-work or career academies are also another alternative.]

- Provide funding for regional intermediaries that scope out the skill needs of the business communities and then work to connect business, organized labor, and schools to improve in-school achievement and out-of-school learning opportunities.
- Help prepare our students for careers in technology: Support the Administration's \$300 million Tech-Prep Initiative that works to promote training in high-tech by promoting curriculum realignment between high schools and postsecondary institutions provides students with a two-year experience in a high-tech field aligned to the curriculum.
- Continue to Support and Build School-Business Partnerships: Advocate for \$100 million to award grants to workforce investment boards to continue to support effective school to work practices, such as externships for teachers, structured workplace for kids, employer involvement, and educational course work that includes high-tech curriculum.



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An article to

America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages! The Report of the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce

By Ira Magaziner and Hillary Rodham Clinton

*remember
America
Cherie*

We have watched as Singapore, Taiwan and Korea grew from run-down Third World outposts to world premier exporters; as Germany, with one quarter of our population, almost equaled us in exports; as Japan became the world's economic juggernaut, and as America became the world's biggest borrower.

We have heard the excuses: The countries we beat in the Second World War are simply regaining their former places in the world. The Europeans and the Japanese are exploiting their low wages. Our competitors are class-ridden countries.

The truth is otherwise: Our former adversaries are doing far better in relation to us than they did before the war. A dozen nations now pay wages above ours. Our distribution of income is more skewed than any of our major competitors and our poverty rate is much higher.

Our education statistics are as disappointing as our trade statistics. Our children rank at the bottom on most international tests—behind children in Europe and East Asia. Again, we've heard the excuses: They have elite systems, but we educate everyone. They compare a small number of their best to our much larger average. The facts are otherwise: Many of the countries with the highest test scores have more of their students in school than we do.

We are not facing the facts about our future. What we are facing is an economic cliff—the front-line working people of America are about to fall off it.

From the 1950s to the 1970s, America's productivity grew at a healthy pace. The nation was get-

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Mr. Magaziner co-authored the study on which this story is based.

He is a graduate of Brown University and attended Balliol College Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar.

Hillary Rodham Clinton, an attorney in Little Rock, Arkansas, is a national leader in education and community affairs. She chaired the Arkansas Education Standards Committee which recommended substantial changes in standards for the State's public schools.

Ms. Clinton serves as co-chairperson of the Implementation Committee for the Commission. She graduated from Wellesley College and earned her law degree from Yale.

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If we are to avert potential catastrophe, we must make drastic improvements in our rate of productivity growth.

ting richer, and workers lived better on what they earned. Since then, the rate of increase in productivity has dropped dramatically. The distribution of income in the United States has been worsening. Those with college degrees are prospering, but front-line workers have seen the buying power of their paychecks shrink year after year. Since 1969, real average weekly earnings in the United States have fallen by more than 12 percent. And, during the past two decades, our productivity growth has slowed to a crawl. It now takes nearly three years to achieve the same productivity improvement we used to achieve in one year.

If productivity continues to falter, we can expect one of two futures. Either the top 30 percent of our population will grow wealthier while the bottom 70 percent becomes progressively poorer, or we all will slide into relative poverty together. If we are to avert potential catastrophe, we must make drastic improvements in our rate of productivity growth. But we cannot grow simply by putting more people to work, as we have done for 30 years. Fewer people are entering the workforce, and fewer still will enter in the years ahead. We must grow by having every American worker produce more. If we do not, our incomes will go into a free fall with no end in sight.

We must work more productively and be more competitive. We cannot do this simply by using better machinery, because low wage countries can now use the same machines and still sell their products more cheaply than we can. Nor can we continue to organize work by breaking complex jobs into a myriad of simple rote tasks, because the world's best companies now use new high performance work organizations, unleashing major advances in productivity, quality, variety and speed of new product introductions.

The key to productivity improvement for a high wage nation lies in the third industrial revolution now taking place in the world. The steam engine and the electric motor drove the first two industrial revolutions, causing profound changes in work organization. This boosted productivity, quality and living standards dramatically. The creation of the

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modern factory in the 1800s and mass production in the 1900s followed these technology breakthroughs.

The advent of the computer, high speed communication and universal education are heralding a third industrial revolution, a revolution keyed to the high performance work organization.

The new high performance forms of work organization operate very differently from most American workplaces where simple tasks are managed by a small group of educated planners and supervisors. Rather than increasing bureaucracy, the high performance work organization reduces it by giving front-line workers more responsibility. Workers are asked to use judgment and make decisions. Management layers disappear as front-line workers assume responsibility for many of the tasks—from quality control to production scheduling—that others used to do.

Because most American employers organize work in a way that does not require high skills, they report no shortage of people who have such skills and foresee no shortage. With some exceptions, the education and skill levels of American workers roughly match the demands of their jobs. If we want to compete more effectively in the global economy, we will have to move to high performance work organizations.

To do this we must mobilize our most vital asset, the skills of our people—not just the 30 percent who will graduate with baccalaureate degrees from college, but the front-line workers, the bank tellers, farm workers, truck drivers, retail clerks, data entry operators, laborers and factory workers. We can move toward high performance organizations only by reorganizing the way we work in our stores and factories, in our warehouses and insurance offices, and in our government agencies and hospitals. We can give much more responsibility to our front-line workers, educate them well and train them to do more highly skilled jobs.

By doing this, we streamline work. Fewer supervisors, fewer quality checkers, fewer production schedulers and fewer maintenance people are needed, so organizations become more efficient. Because they are more efficient, they can lower prices

Workers are asked to use judgment and make decisions.

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and sell more. Because they can sell more, they can expand. Because they can expand, they can employ more people. Although each operation requires fewer people, society as a whole can increase employment and wages can go up.

Our most formidable international competitors are doing just this. For the most part, we are not.

We still have a robust economy. Some of our firms are among the best run in the world. They learned how to organize for high productivity. If many more do so, and we make the required investment in skills for our front-line workers, this country will have a bright future. If not, our incomes will decline at an accelerated pace. This is our choice: high skills or low wages.

The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce

The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce was brought together in June 1989 to analyze the interplay between economic trends and population dynamics, with hopes of steering a new course for the U.S. before we face a crisis. The Commission's study was carried out by a research team of 23 loaned executives from companies, unions, industry associations and the United States Department of Labor. The team probed into several industries both in the United States and abroad and concentrated in major labor markets of several states. In total, the team interviewed over 2,000 people at more than 550 firms and agencies and analyzed many government and private reports relevant to the project.

The Commission's findings on American industry, labor policy, and education pointed in one direction: Americans are unwittingly making a choice. It is a choice that most of us would not make were we aware of its consequences. It is a choice that will lead to an America where 30 percent of our people may do well—at least for a while—but the other 70 percent will see their dreams slip away.

The choice America faces is a choice between high skills and low wages.

The choice is being made by companies that cut

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wages to remain competitive. It is being made by public officials who fail to prepare our children to be productive workers. Ultimately, we are all making the choice by silently accepting this course. We still have time to make the other choice—one that will lead us to a more prosperous future—a choice for high skills, not low wages. To make this choice we must fundamentally change our approach to work and education.

To make this choice we must fundamentally change our approach to work and education.

Problems and Solutions

The Commission did not seek in its research merely to draw conclusions about the problems America faces. Rather, the Commissioners set out to both identify the problems and recommend feasible solutions. Based on its research, the Commission made several key recommendations for an education and training system to address the economic challenges confronting our nation.

1. Problem: Two factors stand in the way of producing a highly educated workforce: We lack a clear standard of achievement and few students are motivated to work hard in school. One reason that students going right to work after school have little motivation to study hard is that they see little or no relationship between how well they do in school and what kind of job they can get after school.

Recommendation: A new educational performance standard should be set for all students, to be met by age 16. This standard should be established nationally and benchmarked to the highest in the world.

Students passing a series of performance based assessments that incorporate this new standard would be awarded a Certificate of Initial Mastery. Possession of the Certificate would qualify the student to choose among going to work, entering a college preparatory program or studying for a Technical and Professional Certificate as described below.

2. Problem: More than 20 percent of our students drop out of high school—almost 50 percent in many of our inner cities. These dropouts go on to make up more than a third of our front-line workforce. Turning our backs on those dropouts, as we

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do now, is tantamount to turning our backs on our future workforce.

Recommendation: The states should take responsibility for assuring that virtually all students achieve the Certificate of Initial Mastery. Through new local Employment and Training Boards, states, with federal assistance, should create and fund alternative learning environments for those who cannot attain the Certificate of Initial Mastery in regular schools.

All students should be guaranteed the educational attention necessary to attain the Certificate of Initial Mastery by age 16, or as soon as possible thereafter. Youth Centers should be established to enroll school dropouts and help them reach that standard.

3. Problem: Other industrial nations have multi-year career-oriented educational programs that prepare students to operate at a professional level in the workplace. America prepares only a tiny fraction of its non-college bound students for work. As a result, most flounder in the labor market, moving from low paying job to low paying job until their mid-twenties, never being seriously trained.

Recommendation: A comprehensive system of Technical and Professional Certificates and associate's degrees should be created for the majority of our students and adult workers who do not pursue a baccalaureate degree.

Technical and Professional Certificates would be offered across the entire range of service and manufacturing occupations. A student could earn the entry-level occupation certificate after completing a two- to four-year program of combined work and study. A sequence of advanced certificates would be available and could be obtained throughout one's career.

National committees of business, labor, education and public representatives should be convened to define certification standards for two- to four-year programs of professional preparation in a broad range of occupations. These programs should combine general education with specific occupational skills and should include a significant work component.

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4. Problem: The vast majority of American employers are not moving to high performance work organizations, nor are they investing to train their non-managerial employees for these new work organizations. The movement to high performance work organizations is more widespread in other nations, and training of front-line workers is commonplace.

Recommendation: All employers should be given incentives and assistance to invest in the further education and training of their workers and to pursue high performance forms of work organization.

We propose a system whereby all employers will invest at least one percent of their payroll for the education and training of their workers. We further recommend that public technical assistance be provided to companies, particularly small businesses, to assist them in moving to higher performance work organizations.

We propose a system whereby all employers will invest at least one percent of their payroll for the education and training of their workers.

5. Problem: The United States is not well organized to provide the highly skilled workers needed to support the emerging high performance work organizations. Public policy on worker training has been largely passive. The training system is fragmented with respect to policies, administration and service delivery.

Recommendation: A system of Employment and Training Boards should be established by federal and state governments, together with communities' local leadership, to organize and oversee the new school-to-work transition programs and training systems we propose.

We envision a new, more comprehensive system where skills development and upgrading for the majority of our workers becomes a central aim of public policy. The key to accomplishing these goals is finding a way to enable the leaders of our communities to take responsibility for building a comprehensive system that meets their needs. The local Employment and Training Boards would serve as the vehicles for oversight and management of training and transition programs, Youth Centers, and job information services.

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Implementing America's Choice

Since the release of the report in June 1990, the Commission has been busy promoting awareness of the report's recommendations through speeches and briefing sessions with educators, business and labor leaders, government officials and advocacy groups throughout the United States. As the report's findings have been disseminated, interest in implementing its recommendations has become widespread.

On the national level, key members of Congress have asked for a legislative program to implement the recommendations made by the Commission and have offered to hold hearings on it. Over 20 states have expressed an interest to work with the Commission on implementation strategies; three states, Oregon, Washington and New York, have already created legislative initiatives to implement key proposals from the report. Other activities to implement specific recommendations are described below.

New Standards for the Schools

Efforts are underway to implement the Commission's first recommendation, the Certificate of Initial Mastery. Since the release of the report, key national groups including the President's Advisory Committee on Education, the governing board of the National Assessment on Educational Progress and the National Education Goals Panel began to advocate the development of an examination system consistent with the Commission's recommendation.

More recently, President Bush, in his education initiative, "America 2000", announced the development of a national examination system for the nation's K-12 school system, with standards benchmarked to the highest in the world. Numerous groups, including the New Standards Project, a partnership of the National Center on Education and the Economy and the Learning Research and Development Center of the University of Pittsburgh, have begun to develop a new student perfor-

Over 20 states have expressed interest to work with the Commission on implementation strategies.

propose a system
all employers will
at least one percent
payroll for the
and training of
workers.

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mance assessment system, putting into place the first steps to making this new system a reality.

Recovering our Dropouts

It will do no good to raise academic standards for school leavers if large numbers of high school students cannot meet them. The idea of Youth Centers, the Commission's strategy for recovering school dropouts and bringing them up to a high academic standard, is an essential component to the whole strategy for national human resource development.

The Commission is working closely with the William T. Grant Foundation's Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship and others to develop a national network of Youth Centers. A bill has been submitted to the New York State legislature to create Youth Centers in that state.

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The Commission is working to make information available to other states on the characteristics of alternative education programs that have been successful for dropouts.

Technical and Professional Preparation for Front-Line Workers

The vast majority of employers in this country have never been seriously involved in setting industry standards for entry level employment, and have no established mechanisms for doing so. Instead of blaming schools for not providing the type of workers employers want, business and industry leaders must share responsibility for defining standards of professional competence and take the lead in helping students cross the bridge from school to work. There is also no tradition among employers in this country of offering formal, multi-year, on-the-job training programs to high school graduates.

Efforts are currently underway to change American employer attitudes and practices toward workforce education. The U.S. Departments of Labor and Education are focusing on workforce training and vocational education. Ira Magaziner, the chair of the Commission, serves on the Department of Labor's Commission on Work-Based Learning, an

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advisory commission on workplace training and high performance work organization.

The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce plans to work with industry associations and key national business organizations to convene industry groups to develop certification standards for their industries. This summer, the Commission plans to participate with the National Governors' Association (NGA) and the National Council on Vocational Educational in an NGA-sponsored conference on new forms of technical and professional preparation programs.

Work Reorganization and Industry Incentives

Setting skill standards must go hand-in-glove with a strategy to reorganize work. Under current forms of work organization, employers do not demand high skilled workers. It is highly unlikely that this country will do what must be done about workers' skills unless there is a strong demand from business and industry for people with those skills. That will not happen until employers see the need to embrace high performance forms of work organization.

The Commission has met with national business groups to begin a concerted campaign to promote an understanding of high performance work organization. Plans are underway to begin to develop an industry-led technical assistance network to help companies make the transition. Activities would range from disseminating information to visiting successful high performance work sites to helping companies reorganize to make the most effective use of new technologies. In terms of matching employees' skills to the new organization, some companies will have the internal resources to develop the necessary training programs to upgrade worker skills, while others will need outside consultation.

Employment and Training Boards

Without a cohesive labor market system that embraces national, state and local government, the Commission's other recommendations will be less effective.

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The Commission has put forth a legislative proposal that we believe is a first step toward bringing together disparate pieces of the nation's existing labor market programs. In addition, we plan to publish papers on the elements of the system we believe should be put in place—from post-secondary data systems to a reborn employment service. Then, we hope to convene a working group of state, federal and national government leaders with business, labor and education leaders to begin discussions on implementation.

Conclusion

Taken together, the Commission's recommendations provide the framework for developing a high quality American education and training system, closely linked to high performance work organizations. The system we propose provides a uniquely American solution. Boldly executed, it has the potential not simply to put us on an equal footing with our competitors, but to allow us to leap ahead, to build the world's premier workforce. In doing so, we will create a formidable competitive advantage.

The status quo is not an option. The choice we have is to become a nation of high skills or one of low wages. The choice is ours. It should be clear. It must be made. ■

The status quo is not an option.

See pg 3-4 re: legislation

The Problem

As we move closer to the year 2000, the United States economy continues to demonstrate surprising growth and strength. Unemployment has dipped to levels not seen in decades and inflation has remained subdued. These extraordinary economic conditions, however, should not blind us to the plight of many Americans, particularly the less educated and disadvantaged, who face three major threats in the current labor market: a wide wage and employment gap between more and less educated workers, rising skill requirements for many jobs and heightened job insecurity.

As many analysts have observed, the wage-gap between educated and less educated workers has grown rapidly since 1979 and is still wide in the late-1990s. Between 1979 and 1995, the real hourly earnings of college-educated males grew by 0.6 percent. However, earnings for high-school educated males dropped by 16.7 percent during the same period. (Economic Policy Institute, 1997) In addition, more educated workers have much brighter employment prospects than less educated workers. In 1995 only 2.6 percent of college graduates were unemployed, while 5.8 percent of high school graduates and 12.8 percent of individuals with less than a high school education were unemployed. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, unpublished tabulations)

The large wage and employment gap between workers reflects another major economic trend: rising skill requirements for many jobs. In recent decades, the U.S. economy has been generating an increasing number of high skill jobs and shedding many jobs that require minimal skills. Between 1983 and 1994 almost half of all new jobs were in managerial and professional occupations that require high-level cognitive skills. (The Manufacturing Institution, 1998) This trend is likely to continue into the net century. According to the latest projections, over a third of new jobs created before 2005 will require a bachelor's degree or more. (Bureau of Labor Statistics) The major force behind this change in the nature of work has been rapid technological progress, notably the introduction and widespread use of the computer. In the past, for example, workers in automobile manufacturing plants tended to be semi-skilled or unskilled employees. Today, however, manufacturing workers must have the advanced technical skills required to operate robots, computers and other sophisticated machines.

A third trend affecting many Americans is the threat of permanent job loss. Technological change, corporate restructuring and downsizing and intensified global competition have reshaped the American economy. Between 1991 and 1995 about 3 million workers each year were permanently displaced from their jobs. (Sum, 1997) Some displaced workers have encountered serious labor market problems, such as extended periods of

joblessness and real wage losses upon reemployment. In the early 1980s displacement was primarily a phenomenon affecting blue-collar, manufacturing workers. But in recent years the pace of white-collar job loss has quickened as layoffs increasingly affected upper and middle management. Between 1993 and 1995, for example, over half of all displaced workers were white-collar employees. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996)

Although these labor market trends have affected the entire workforce, they have been particularly pronounced for minorities and the disadvantaged. Minorities tend to be much more likely than whites to have low-paying jobs. By 1995, 39 percent of African American workers and 48 percent of Hispanic workers held jobs paying less than poverty-level wages, compared to only 26 percent of Caucasian workers. (Economic Policy Institute, 1997) Minorities have also faced a greater likelihood of unemployment, even in what has been a generally robust economy. In 1996, unemployment rates for African American and Hispanic women were nearly twice the national level with the unemployment rate for African American males reaching 11.2 percent and 8.1 percent for Hispanic males. (Economic Policy Institute, 1996) Most importantly, minority youth face serious challenges in getting the high-quality education and training they desperately need to be successful in today's labor market. High school dropout rates in some urban areas and among some minority groups have climbed to well over 50 percent.

These facts pose major challenges for states and local areas. For too long, workforce programs have been fragmented, poorly aligned and difficult to access. States now face the challenge of reforming the delivery of workforce services to meet the increasing skill needs of a changed labor market. They must create integrated workforce development systems that provide universal access to a wide range of education, employment and training services. In particular, states must design systems for:

- moving young people from education to work;
- assisting welfare recipients to move into the workforce and upgrade their skills;
- guiding unemployed and experienced workers from one job to the next; and
- helping all workers advance in an economy characterized by rising skill requirements and swiftly changing patterns of occupational demand.

In addition, states and local areas must reform alternative education options for young people who have left the traditional system but still need to develop the skills that will lead to good jobs and decent earnings. Most of the alternative education programs in the United States suffer from a lack of resources, high staff turnover rates and unstable funding. (National Center on Education and the Economy, 1997) And most alternative education programs are not part of any system of alternative education with agreed

upon and common goals for participant achievement and objective measures which determine whether participants are prepared for the new world of work. Those alternative programs which do have agreed upon goals and standards offer either a GED program, which provides a strong incentive for those young people working to pass it, or, in some cases, a local high school diploma. However, even though participants who have attained the GED fare better than those who do not, reports indicate that the GED still carries a stigma. Tied to performance of the average high school graduating class, states are free to move the "pass" rate often well below the national goal of 40 percent.

As school systems across the country implement new, high academic and applied learning standards, young people in alternative programs working toward a standard designed just for them and perceived as a lower standard may fall further and further behind their peers in traditional schools unless new standards are introduced into these programs as well. The consequences of not addressing an increasing disparity in standards between those in public schools and those in alternative programs are unacceptable. Employers will be even less likely to hire young people who have not met new higher standards. And the pathway to further education will be made even more difficult. Higher education institutions will admit fewer young people from alternative education programs as the admission standards are ratcheted up, and those who do enter may be less able to compete with their peers from the public schools. The research shows that long-term earnings of those who enter but never complete post-secondary education are no better than those who never entered.

In 1990, the National Center's Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce tackled the issue of how American public policy needs to change to respond to the changing labor market and the increasing skill needs in the economy. The Commission's report, *America's Choice: high skills or low wages!*, made five core recommendations. The report recommended that the United States create:

- A national qualifications system, with a foundation-level qualification for basic education and a set of technical/professional qualifications for advanced skills training;
- A school-to-work transition system to help move young people from basic education to training to rewarding careers;
- New alternative learning environments to recover virtually all school dropouts and take responsibility for helping them meet the new basic education standards;
- A labor market system that serves everyone, offers opportunities for upgrading skills, and provides the information workers need to find good jobs and employers need to find good workers; and

- Policies and programs to promote high performance work organizations in the workplace.

Since the release of *America's Choice*, the United States has made much progress toward implementing these recommendations, in large part due to the strong commitment to these ideas by the Clinton Administration. In 1994, the Congress passed the Goals 2000: Educate America Act which focused on raising education standards in our schools. The President has since championed this cause across the country. The Congress also established the National Skill Standards Board to work with the business and labor communities to set voluntary skill standards for front-line through first-line supervisory work. At the President's urging, the Congress also moved to create a system for helping young people make a smooth transition from school to work, passing the School to Work Opportunities Act which has given states substantial funds to design and begin implementation of School-to-Work systems.

This Administration has made significant progress in improving our public labor market institutions to better help all citizens prepare for, search for and secure good jobs. The President's G.I. Bill proposal recognized the need for fundamental reform of our labor market system and echoed the recommendations of the *America's Choice* report. Although this proposal was not enacted in legislation, the Administration has moved ahead with many of the ideas through a number of U.S. Department of Labor initiatives. The Department of Labor has invested in efforts in over forty states to put in place one-stop career center systems to provide a comprehensive range of job training information and services to all citizens. In addition, the Department has begun an initiative to provide employment information and services to the welfare population through the same system that currently serves unemployed and dislocated workers. Efforts are also being made to give disadvantaged young people better opportunities to connect to the labor market. Through the Youth Opportunities Areas Program, the Department is supporting intensive and targeted efforts in low-income communities to place disadvantaged young people in career path jobs.

Still, it is at the state level that these changes will need to be put in place and integrated into a system that can truly serve all workers. The first piece of our proposed project is an effort to help advance this broad new workforce agenda at the state level. Clearly, no state should have to face the challenge of building new systems to move young people, unemployed workers, dislocated workers and those on welfare into work alone; collaborative solutions will be more innovative, more cost-effective and yield faster progress.

The High Skills State Consortium — a small set of diverse states committed to building comprehensive education, employment and training systems for

→ Since writing this Congress passed, + the President signed, the Workforce Investment Act which helps states build one-stop career center systems as described here.

MORE ON NSSB

The National Center has continued to play a leading role on the National Skill Standards Board whose goals include boosting the competitiveness of American firms and increasing the skills of the workforce, connecting skilled workers to better jobs, opening opportunities for all workers and reducing training and retraining costs for business. Marc Tucker, as chair of the Board's Standards, Assessment, Certification and Policy Committee, leads the development of the Board's framework for the skill standards system. The framework defines the economic sectors in which standards will be set, the levels of jobs that standards will be developed for, the method for setting standards, the type(s) of assessments that will be produced which show that individuals meet the standards and other key components of a quality assurance system to insure that the NSSB endorses skill standards and certificates that meet or exceed the highest standards used in the United States and other countries.

Having helped to produce consensus on that framework, the National Center has focused on the design of the certification and assessment system, civil rights and access policies and the development of a common format and language for skill standards. The Center has also helped identify the broad clusters of jobs by industry, for which skill standards will be developed and helped define the composition and operating procedures of the Voluntary Partnerships which will set the standards. These Voluntary Partnerships include employer, union, worker, community, government and education and training representatives in fifteen economic sectors including:

- Manufacturing, Installation and Repair;
- Retail Trade, Wholesale Trade, Real Estate and Personal Services;
- Finance and Insurance;
- Construction;
- Telecommunications, Computers, Arts and Entertainment and Information;
- Restaurants, Lodging, Hospitality and Tourism;
- Education and Training;
- Business and Administrative Services;
- Mining;
- Public Administration, Legal and Protective Services;
- Scientific and Technical Services;
- Transportation and
- Utilities and Environmental and Waste Management

Skill standards in Manufacturing and Retailing will be released in the Fall 2000. Education and Training and Hospitality skill standards will follow next year. Work is underway as well in the Utility and Information technology sectors.

NSSB *Mission Statement*

NSSB Mission Statement An Elaboration

The mission of the NSSB is to encourage the creation and adoption of a national system of skill standards that will enhance the ability of the United States to compete effectively in a global economy. These voluntary skill standards will be developed by industry in full partnership with education, labor, and community stakeholders, and will be flexible, portable, and continuously updated and improved.

This national skill standards system is intended to do the following:

- ♦ promote the growth of high performance work organizations in the private and public sectors that operate on the basis of productivity, quality and innovation, and in the private sector, profitability;
- ♦ raise the standard of living and economic security of American workers by improving access to high skill, high wage employment and career opportunities for those currently in, entering, or re-entering the workforce; and
- ♦ encourage the use of world-class academic, occupational and employability standards to guide continuous education and training for current and future workers.

The mission of the NSSB is to encourage the creation and adoption of a voluntary national system of skill standards. The NSSB is a catalyst for the development of a voluntary system of skill standards that will support America's competitive position in the marketplace. It will not develop the standards themselves, but will serve as a catalyst to encourage those who will be the end-users of these standards -- business, education, labor, community groups, and state and local governments -- to develop these standards. We use the word creation consciously. Our role is not to codify existing standards, but to encourage the creation anew of a system of standards that tell the American worker what it is a person needs to know and be able to do to succeed in modern society and in the global economy.

These standards are meaningful only to the extent that the intended end-users adopt and use them; their creation alone is insufficient. The NSSB's role is to be a catalyst for the development of a voluntary system, which creates and updates standards, to publicize the standards, and to encourage their use.

A national system of skill standards which will enhance the ability of the United States to compete effectively in a global economy. The NSSB is a national body representing the end-users -- employers, unions, workers, students, teachers, and citizens -- who want to understand the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for success in the modern workplace.

If these voluntary standards are truly national, they will represent a clear statement of our country's competitive position with respect to the skills of its people vis-a-vis other countries. Our nation's competition is not between the economy of one state versus another, Wisconsin versus Illinois. We are operating in a global economy; we compete on the basis of the skills of our people with all the other countries of the world. We seek not fifty separate state programs, but a system that serves all fifty states well. We hope each state that desires to create a competitive workforce will embrace this national system of standards voluntarily and make them known in every community throughout the state.

These skill standards, then, are designed to support America's competitive position in the increasingly competitive global marketplace. We believe an investment in the skills of our people will enhance America's competitive position, by giving it an edge that allows us to compete on a basis that includes quality, innovation, and productivity, in addition to price. Building our economic success as a nation through skills allows us to also benefit all our people, regardless of their state of residence or the particular industry or job they work in.

Price is no longer enough to capture and keep market share. Businesses now have to compete on the basis of quality, variety, customization, convenience, and timeliness. The United States can compete effectively on this basis only if its enterprises change the way they organize their work and use their human resources. Successful competition in the global economy can only be achieved if our people are on a continuous learning curve, so that their skills keep pace with the rapid changes in technology and work processes in the workplace and in society.

These voluntary skill standards will be developed by industry in full partnership with education, labor, and community stakeholders. The system of skill standards we envision is a voluntary system. Employers will use skill standards only if they prove useful in recruitment, hiring, promotion, and training decisions. If they are not useful, they will not be used. Industry must take the lead in the development of the standards, to assure they represent present and future workplace requirements.

Business is not our only stakeholder. For the standards to be effective tools for teachers in educating students, for workers in maintaining their own competitive edge in the marketplace, for the unemployed in gaining the necessary skills to enable them to enter or re-enter the workforce, or for communities in understanding and meeting the skill requirements of local employers, these stakeholders must also be full partners in developing the standards. Teachers in K-12 education, vocational education, community and four-year colleges, and job training organizations must have a voice; and so must workers, the administrators of our state education and training systems, and organized labor so that the standards developed are embraced by and work for all. If all of the diverse stakeholders are full participants from the beginning, they will assure that the standards meet their needs. A voluntary system assures that it will be a customer-driven system.

Each of these stakeholders should determine who speaks for them; they are fully able to decide who would best represent their interests in the standards development and implementation. By allowing stakeholders to choose their representation, we assure not only the individual support of the representative, but also create the base of institutional support for creating and using skill standards that is so vital for their long-term sustainability.

The standards will be flexible, portable, and continuously updated and improved. In today's environment, change is the only constant. New technologies are creating new jobs, new industries, and new ways of working. If skill standards are to effectively articulate these changing workplace realities and help workers anticipate change, the standards themselves must be continuously updated and improved.

Just as important, the skill standards must describe the underlying competence that defines worker excellence. The standards will be meaningless if they are merely detailed lists of competencies that describe specific task steps and lose sight of what it takes to perform in an ever-evolving work environment. By flexibility, we mean standards that have staying power and that get at the critical elements of performance without getting bogged down in lists of tasks that all too quickly become outmoded. In short, employees need to understand the why's of their jobs, and not just the how's.

If the standards use a common language, if they describe knowledge, skills, and abilities using the same framework, then the standards will be portable. Students and workers will be able to move from state to state, industry to industry, employer to employer and know that the skills they've achieved are understood.

The national skill standards system intends to promote the growth of high performance work organizations in the private and public sectors that operate on the basis of productivity, quality, and innovation, and in the private sector, profitability. This nation, if it is to be competitive in the global economy, cannot compete on the same basis as countries with much lower cost structures than ours. We cannot compete solely on price, but we can compete on quality, customization, innovation, and timeliness. To do so, however, requires American enterprises to work differently, to reorganize work so that we capitalize on our front-line workforce, and ask them to take major responsibility for the continuous improvement of products and services and the processes by which they are produced.

Enterprises who adopt this approach are ones we call high performance work organizations. These organizations recognize that sustainable economic success depends, in large part, on workers who:

- ♦ can take on one another's jobs when needed to meet customer expectations;
- ♦ work collaboratively in a variety of teams; and
- ♦ think and learn in constantly evolving ways.

In essence, the high performance work organization demands that the entire workforce has a high level of skills, not just managers or professional workers.

These high performance organizations are needed not just in the private, for-profit sector but also in the public and nonprofit sectors. After all, our public infrastructure supports our private businesses; businesses use the public highways to move goods to market and public education provides businesses with a skilled workforce. Nonprofit organizations, such as the Red Cross, support our communities in times of natural disasters. These three sectors are inter-dependent; all need to operate at high levels of performance.

Raise the standard of living and economic security of American workers by improving access to high skill, high wage employment and career opportunities for those currently in, entering, or re-entering the workforce. Workers in a high performance enterprise are able to share in the benefits of a growing economy and have achieved economic security, because they have attained the skills needed to command wages and benefits sufficient to support their family. Productivity alone is not sufficient; it must be linked with improving the standards of living of all American workers: workers in manufacturing and service jobs, in enterprises large and small, and for front-line workers and managers.

The NSSB cannot assure access to good jobs, but it intends to improve access to these jobs for all Americans by making sure that the skills needed to get these jobs are clearly spelled out to students, new entrants to the job market, current workers, laid-off workers, and people trying to re-enter the work force. By clearly and simply spelling out the skill needs of employers, we hope to promote both horizontal and vertical career movement. Our work will result in voluntary standards that make it easier for workers to see how their skills can be transferred laterally from one industry or job area to another, as well as ease the transition from novice to expert worker.

Whether someone is moving from school-to-work, work-to-work, or out-of-work to work, skill standards will make clear what skills and knowledge the transition requires. The routes to meeting those standards will differ among individuals who are currently employed, students, or individuals that are trying to apply their skills to a new occupation. Skill standards will serve as a tool to increase accountability and performance among providers of educational and training services.

Encourage the use of world-class academic, occupational, and employability standards to

guide continuous education and training for current and future workers. If our standards are intended to allow this country to compete effectively in the global economy, then what is required are skills that are second to none. Every American is a part of the global economy. We do him or her a disservice if our standards only address local or even state labor market requirements. If the United States has the most skilled work force in the world, its enterprises will use American workers when they are competing on the basis of quality, rather than acquire labor from other countries. We cannot afford to give American enterprises a reason to look elsewhere.

The standards must address academic, occupational, and employability skill requirements. Our work will build on a strong foundation of academic skills and show an explicit link between the skills learned in the classroom with those required in the workplace, and how the basic skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and computation are used in the workplace. They will also draw on and show the application of the employability skills of problem-solving, decision making, learning-to-learn, teamwork, negotiation, and others as described in ASTD's Workplace Basics and the SCANS report. Occupational skills refer to the skills that are transferable among broad industrial or occupational areas (e.g., computer applications) as well as the core occupational knowledge and skills that are particular to a cluster of occupations. The voluntary skill standards will represent a synthesis of these three types of skills as they are applied in the workplace.

In a traditional Tayloristic workplace, a few workers (e.g., managers, professionals, and technicians) need a high level of academic education, a few workers are highly-skilled in a narrow job category (e.g., machinist), but most front line workers require little of either. The emerging high performance work organization requires a high level of academic knowledge and ability, a high level of occupation-specific knowledge and skills, and possession of employability or SCANS-like skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, etc. across all levels of the organization, from the front line worker to the CEO.

In a high performance work organization, academic, occupational, and employability skills are not independent of one another. It is the integration of all three that is necessary to function effectively. Therefore, any system of skill standards must recognize the significance and synergy among these skill components and assure that they are explicitly addressed.

The skill standards are designed to guide continuous education and training. In a rapidly changing world, our education and training institutions must keep pace with change and adapt the content of educational programs to the continually evolving sets of skill standards. Only those institutions that take on the challenge of change and continuous improvement are likely to prosper.

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Legislative *Charter*

TITLE V--NATIONAL SKILL STANDARDS BOARD

SEC. 501. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "National Skill Standards Act of 1994."

SEC. 502. PURPOSE.

It is the purpose of this title to establish a National Skill Standards Board to serve as a catalyst in stimulating the development and adoption of a voluntary national system of skill standards and of assessment and certification of attainment of skill standards--

- (1) that will serve as a cornerstone of the national strategy to enhance workforce skills;
- (2) that will result in increased productivity, economic growth, and American economic competitiveness; and
- (3) that can be used, consistent with civil rights laws--
 - (A) by the Nation, to ensure the development of a high skills, high quality, high performance workforce, including the most skilled frontline workforce in the world;
 - (B) by industries, as a vehicle for informing training providers and prospective employees of skills necessary for employment;
 - (C) by employers, to assist in evaluating the skill levels of prospective employees and to assist in the training of current employees;
 - (D) by labor organizations, to enhance the employment security of workers by providing portable credentials and skills;
 - (E) by workers, to--
 - (i) obtain certifications of their skills to protect against dislocation;
 - (ii) pursue career advancement; and
 - (iii) enhance their ability to reenter the workforce;
 - (F) by students and entry level workers; to determine the skill levels and competencies needed to be obtained in order to compete effectively for high wage jobs;
 - (G) by training providers and educators, to determine appropriate training services to offer;
 - (H) by government, to evaluate whether publicly funded training assists participates to meet skill standards where such standards exist and thereby protect the integrity of public expenditures;
 - (I) to facilitate the transition to high performance work organizations;
 - (J) to increase opportunities for minorities and women, including removing barriers to the entry of women into nontraditional employment; and

(K) to facilitate linkages between other components of the national strategy to enhance workforce skills, including school-to-work transition, secondary and postsecondary vocational-technical education, and job training programs.

SEC. 503. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL BOARD.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**-- There is established a National Skill Standards Board (hereafter in this title referred to as the "National Board").

(b) **COMPOSITION.**--

(1) **IN GENERAL.**-- The National Board shall be composed of 28 members appointed in accordance with paragraph (3), of whom --

(A) one member shall be the Secretary of Labor;

(B) one member shall be the Secretary of Education;

(C) one member shall be the Secretary of Commerce;

(D) one member shall be the Chairperson of the National Education Standards and Improvement Council established pursuant to section 212(a);

(E) eight members shall be representatives of business (including representatives of small employers and representatives of large employers) selected from among individuals recommended by recognized national business organizations or trade associations;

(F) eight members shall be representatives of organized labor selected from among individuals recommended by recognized national labor federations; and

(G) (i) 2 members shall be neutral, qualified human resource professionals; and

(ii) 6 members shall be representatives from the following groups with at least 1 member from each group:

(I) Educational institutions (including vocational-technical institutions).

(II) Community-based organizations.

(III) State and local governments.

(IV) Nongovernmental organizations with a demonstrated history of successfully protecting the rights of racial, ethnic, or religious minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, or older persons.

(2) **DIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS.**-- The members described in subparagraph (G) of paragraph (1) shall have expertise in the area of education and training. The members described in subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of paragraph (1) shall--

(A) in the aggregate, represent a broad cross-section of occupations and industries; and

(B) to the extent feasible, be geographically representative of the United States and reflect the racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of the United States.

(3) **APPOINTMENT.**-- The membership of the National Board shall be appointed as follows:

(A) Twelve members (four from each class of members described in subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of paragraph (1) shall be appointed by the President.

(B) Six members (two from each class of members described in subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of paragraph (1) shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, of whom three members (one from each class of members described in subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of paragraph (1) shall be selected from recommendations made by the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives and three members (one from each class of members described in subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of paragraph (1) shall be selected from recommendations made by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

(C) Six members (two from each class of members described in subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of paragraph (1) shall be appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate, of whom three members (one from each class of members described in subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of paragraph (1) shall be selected from recommendations made by the Majority Leader of the Senate and three members (one from each class of members described in subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of paragraph (1)) shall be selected from recommendations made by the Majority Leader of the Senate.

(4) EX OFFICIO NONVOTING MEMBERS.--The members of the National Board specified in subparagraphs (A), (B), (C), and (D) of paragraph (1) shall be ex officio, nonvoting members of the National Board.

(5) TERM.-- Each member of the National Board appointed under subparagraph (E), (F), or (G) of paragraph (1) shall be appointed for a term of 4 years, except that of the initial members of the Board appointed under such subparagraphs--

(A) twelve members shall be appointed for a term of 3 years (four from each class of members described in subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of paragraph (1), of whom--

(i) two from each such class shall be appointed in accordance with paragraph (3)(A);

(ii) one from each such class shall be appointed in accordance with paragraph (3)(B); and

(iii) one from each such class shall be appointed in accordance with paragraph (3)(C); and

(B) twelve members shall be appointed for a term of 4 years (four from each class of members described in subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of paragraph (1)), of whom--

(i) two from each such class shall be appointed in accordance with paragraph (3)(A);

(ii) one from each such class shall be appointed in accordance with paragraph (3)(B);

(iii) one from each such class shall be appointed in accordance with paragraph (3)(C).

(6) VACANCIES.-- Any vacancy in the National Board shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(C) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSONS.--

(1) CHAIRPERSON.--

(A) IN GENERAL.-- Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the National Board, by majority vote, shall elect a Chairperson once every 2 years from among the members of the National Board.

(B) INITIAL CHAIRPERSON.-- The first Chairperson of the National Board shall be

- elected, by a majority vote of the National Board, from among the members who are representatives of business (as described in subparagraph (E) of subsection (b)(1) and shall serve for a term of 2 years.

(2) **VICE CHAIRPERSONS.**-- The National Board, by majority vote, shall annually elect 3 Vice Chairpersons (each representing a different class of the classes of members described in subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of subsection (b)(1) and each of whom shall serve for a term of 1 year) from among its members appointed under subsection (b)(3).

(d) **COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES.**--

(1) **COMPENSATION.**-- All Members of the National Board who are not full-time employees officers of the Federal Government shall serve without compensation. All members of the National Board who are officers or employees of the United States shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for their services as officers or employees of the United States.

(2) **EXPENSES.**-- The members of the National Board shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57, title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes of regular places of business in the performance of services for the National Board.

(e) **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND STAFF.**--

(1) **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.**-- The Chairperson of the National Board shall appoint an Executive Director who shall be compensated at a rate determined by the National Board, not to exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) **STAFF.**--

(A) **IN GENERAL.**-- The Executive Director may appoint and compensate such additional staff as may be necessary to enable the Board to perform its duties. Such staff shall include at least one individual with expertise in measurement and assessment.

(B) **COMPENSATION.**-- The Executive Director may fix the compensation of the staff without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, related to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the staff may not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(f) **VOLUNTARY AND UNCOMPENSATED SERVICES.**-- Notwithstanding section 1342 of title 31, United States Code, the National Board is authorized, in carrying out this title, to accept voluntary and uncompensated services.

(g) **AGENCY SUPPORT.**--

(1) **USE OF FACILITIES.**--The National Board may use the research, equipment, services, and facilities of any agency or instrumentality of the United States with the consent of such agency or instrumentality.

(2) **STAFF OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.**--Upon the request of the National Board, the head of any Federal agency of the United States may detail to the National Board, on a reimbursable basis, any of the personnel of such Federal agency to assist the National Board in carrying out this title. Such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

(h) **CONFLICT OF INTEREST.**-- An individual who has served as a member of the National Board may not have any financial interest in an assessment and certification system developed or endorsed under this title for a period of 3 years after the termination of service of such individual from the National Board.

(i) **PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT SERVICES.**-- The Chairperson of the National Board may procure temporary and intermittent services of experts and consultants under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code.

(j) **TERMINATION.**-- The National Board shall terminate on September 30, 1999.

SEC. 504. FUNCTIONS OF THE NATIONAL BOARD.

(a) IDENTIFICATION OF OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS.--

(1) **IN GENERAL.**-- Subject to paragraph (2), the National Board shall identify broad clusters of major occupations that involve 1 or more than 1 industry in the United States and that share characteristics that are appropriate for the development of common skill standards.

(2) **PROCEDURES FOR IDENTIFICATION.**-- Prior to identifying board clusters of major occupations under paragraph (1), the National Board shall engage in extensive public consultation, including solicitation of public comment on proposed clusters through publication in the Federal Register.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF VOLUNTARY PARTNERSHIPS TO DEVELOP STANDARDS.--

(1) **IN GENERAL.**-- For each of the occupational clusters identified pursuant to subsection (a), the National Board shall encourage and facilitate the establishment of voluntary partnerships to develop a skill standards system in accordance with subsection (d).

(2) **REPRESENTATIVES.**-- Such voluntary partnerships shall include the full and balanced participation of--

(A) (i) representatives of business (including representatives of large employers and representatives of small employers) who have expertise in the area of workforce skill requirements, and who are recommended by national business organizations or trade associations representing employers in the occupation or industry for which a standard is being developed; and

(ii) representatives of trade associations that have received grants from the Department of Labor or the Department of Education to establish skill standards prior to the date of enactment of this title;

(B) employee representatives who have expertise in the areas of workforce skill requirements and who shall be--

(i) individuals recommended by recognized national labor organizations representing employees in the occupation or industry for which a standard is being developed; and

(ii) such other individuals who are nonmanagerial employees with significant experience and tenure in such occupation or industry as are appropriate given the nature and structure of employment in the occupation or industry;

(C) representatives of--

- (i) educational institutions;
- (ii) community-based organizations;
- (iii) State and local agencies with administrative control or direction over education, vocational-technical education, or employment and training;
- (iv) other policy development organizations with expertise in the area of workforce skill requirements; and
- (v) non-governmental organizations with a demonstrated history of successfully protecting the rights of racial, ethnic, or religious minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, or older persons; and

(D) individuals with expertise in measurement and assessment, including relevant experience in designing unbiased assessments and performance-based assessments.

(3) **EXPERTS.**-- The partnerships described in paragraph (1) may also include such other individuals who are independent, qualified experts in their fields.

(c) **RESEARCH, DISSEMINATION, AND COORDINATION.**-- In order to support the activities described in subsections (b) and (d), the National Board shall--

(1) conduct workforce research relating to skill standards (including research relating to use of skill standards in compliance with civil rights laws) and make such research available to the public, including the voluntary partnerships described in subsection (b);

(2) identify and maintain a catalog of skill standards used by other countries and by States and leading firms and industries in the United States;

(3) serve as a clearinghouse to facilitate the sharing of information on the development of skill standards and other relevant information among representatives of occupations and industries identified pursuant to subsection (a), the voluntary partnerships described in subsection (b), and among education and training providers through such mechanisms as the Capacity Building and Information and Dissemination Network established under section 453(b) of the Job Training Partnership Act (29 U.S.C. 1733(b)) and the Educational Resources Information Center Clearinghouses;

(4) develop a common nomenclature relating to skill standards;

(5) encourage the development and adoption of curricula and training materials, for attaining the skill standards developed pursuant to subsection (d), that provide for structured work experiences and related study programs leading to progressive levels of professional and technical certification and postsecondary education;

(6) provide appropriate technical assistance to voluntary partnerships involved in the development of standards and systems described in subsection (b); and

(7) facilitate coordination among voluntary partnerships that meet the requirements of subsection (b) to promote the development of a coherent national system of voluntary skill standards.

(d) **ENDORSEMENT OF SKILL STANDARDS SYSTEMS.**--

(1) **DEVELOPMENT OF ENDORSEMENT CRITERIA.**--

(A) The National Board, after extensive public consultation, shall develop objective criteria for endorsing skill standards systems relating to the occupational clusters identified pursuant to subsection (a). Such criteria shall, at a minimum, include the components of a skill standards system described in subparagraph (B). The endorsement criteria shall be published in the Federal Register, and updated as appropriate.

(B) The skill standards systems endorsed pursuant to paragraph (1) shall have one or more of the following components:

(i) Voluntary skill standards, which at a minimum--

(I) take into account relevant standards used in other countries and relevant international standards;

(II) meet or exceed the highest applicable standards used in the United States, including apprenticeship standards registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the "National Apprenticeship Act," 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663, 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.);

(III) take into account content and performance standards certified pursuant to title II;

(IV) take into account the requirements of high performance work organizations;

(V) are in a form that allows for regular updating to take into account advances in technology or other developments within the occupational cluster;

(VI) are formulated in such a manner that promotes the portability of credentials and facilitates worker mobility within an occupational cluster or industry and among industries; and

(VII) are not discriminatory with respect to race, color, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, disability, or national origin, consistent with Federal civil rights laws.

(ii) A voluntary system of assessment and certification of the attainment of skill standards developed pursuant to subparagraph (A), which at a minimum--

(I) has been developed after taking into account relevant methods of such assessment and certification used in other countries;

(II) utilizes a variety of evaluation techniques, including, where appropriate, oral and written evaluations, portfolio assessments, and performance tests; and

(III) includes methods for establishing that the assessment and certification system is not discriminatory with respect to race, color, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, disability, or national origin, consistent with Federal civil rights laws.

(iii) A system to promote the use of and to disseminate information relating to skill standards, and assessment and certification systems, developed pursuant to this paragraph (including dissemination of information relating to civil rights laws relevant to the use of such standards and systems) to entities such as institutions of higher education offering professional and technical education, labor organizations, trade associations, employers providing formalized training, and other organizations likely to benefit from such standards and systems.

(iv) A system to evaluate the implementation of the skill standards, and assessment and certification systems developed pursuant to this paragraph, and the effectiveness of the information disseminated pursuant to subparagraph 8 for informing the users of such standards and systems of the requirements of relevant civil rights laws.

(v) A system to periodically revise and update the skill standards, and assessment and certification systems developed pursuant to this paragraph, which will take into account changes in standards in other countries.

(2) **ENDORSEMENT.**-- The National Board, after public review and comment, shall endorse those skill standards systems relating to the occupational clusters identified pursuant to subsection (a) that--

(A) meet the objective endorsement criteria that are developed pursuant to paragraph (1); and

(B) are submitted by voluntary partnerships that meet the requirements of subsection (b).

(e) **RELATIONSHIP WITH CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS.**--

(1) **IN GENERAL.**-- Nothing in this title shall be construed to modify or affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, disability, or national origin.

(2) **EVIDENCE.**-- The endorsement or absence of an endorsement by the National Board of a skill standard, or assessment and certification system, under subsection (d) shall not be used in any action or proceeding to establish that the use of a skill standard or assessment and certification system conforms or does not conform to the requirements of civil rights laws.

(f) **COORDINATION.**-- The National Board shall establish cooperative arrangements with the National Education Standards and Improvement Council to promote the coordination of the development of skill standards under this section with the development of voluntary national content standards and voluntary national student performance standards in accordance with section 213.

(g) **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**--

(1) **IN GENERAL.**-- From funds appropriated pursuant to section 507--

(A) the National Board may enter into contracts and cooperative agreements to carry out the purposes of this title;

(B) the Secretary of Labor may, in accordance with paragraph (2) award grants to voluntary partnerships for the development of skill standards systems meeting the requirements of subsection (d).

(2) **GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY PARTNERSHIPS.**--

(A) **ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION.**-- Voluntary partnerships that meet the requirements of subsection (b) shall be eligible to apply for a grant under this subsection. Each such voluntary partnership desiring a grant shall submit an application to the National Board at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the National Board may reasonably require.

(B) **REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION.**-- The National Board shall review each application submitted pursuant to subparagraph (A) in accordance with the objective criteria published pursuant to subparagraph 8 and shall forward each such application to the Secretary of Labor accompanied by a nonbinding recommendation for the approval or disapproval of each such application by the Secretary.

(C) CRITERIA FOR REVIEW.--Prior to each fiscal year, the National Board shall publish objective criteria to be used by the Board in reviewing applications under subparagraph (B).

(3) LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS.--

(A) IN GENERAL.-- Not more than 20 percent of the funds appropriated pursuant to the authority of section 507(a) for each fiscal year shall be used by the National Board for the costs of administration.

(B) COSTS OF ADMINISTRATION DEFINED.-- For purposes of this paragraph, the term, "costs of administration" means costs relating to staff, supplies, equipment, space, and travel and per diem, costs of conducting meetings and conferences, and other related costs.

SEC. 505. DEADLINES.

Not later than December 31, 1995, the National Board shall, at a minimum--

- (1) identify occupational clusters pursuant to section 504(a) representing a substantial portion of the workforce; and
- (2) promote the development of an initial set of skill standards in accordance with section 504(d) for such clusters.

SECTION 506. REPORTS.

The National Board shall prepare and submit to the President and the Congress in each of the fiscal years 1994 through 1999, a report on the activities conducted under this title. Such report shall include information on the extent to which skill standards have been adopted by employers, training providers, and other entities, and on the effectiveness of such standards in accomplishing the purposes described in section 502.

SECTION 507. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.-- There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 1994 and such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 1995 through 1999.

(b) AVAILABILITY.-- Amounts appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) shall remain available until extended.

SEC. 508. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this title, the following definitions apply:

- (1) COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS.**-- The term "community-based organizations" has the meaning given the term in section 4(5) of the Job Training Partnership Act (29 U.S.C. 1503(5)).
- (2) EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION.**-- The term "educational institution" means a high school, a vocational school, and an institution of higher education.
- (3) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**-- The term "institution of higher education" means an institution of higher education (as such term is defined in section 481 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1088)) which continues to meet the eligibility and certification requirements under section 498 of such Act.

(4) **SKILL STANDARD.**-- The term "skill standard" means a standard that specifies the level of knowledge and competence required to successfully perform work-related functions within an occupational cluster.

SEC. 509. SUNSET PROVISION.

(a) **REPEAL.**-- This title is repealed on September 30, 1999.

(b) **REVIEW OF REPEAL.**-- It is the sense of the Congress that the appropriate committees of the Congress should review the accomplishments of the National Board prior to the date of repeal described in subsection (a) in order to determine whether it is appropriate to extend the authorities provided under this title for a period beyond such date.



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**NSSB
ONLINE**

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Accomplishments *and* Milestones

1999

- Accepted letters of intent from 100 specialty certifiers
 - Developed a process for aligning specialty certification programs
 - Doubled the contents of the Skills Certification database to disseminate endorsed national skill standards and other skill standards and certifications .
 - Finalized the Common Language final document
 - Implemented a state strategy to monitor workforce needs that are addressed through the Workforce Investment Act.
 - Introduced the new NSSB newsletter- Skills Today, along with the production of three outreach manuals and a Clearinghouse brochure.
 - Board Approval of Three Recognition Awards to:
 1. National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS)
 2. National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)
 3. Northwest Center for Emerging Technologies (NWCET)
 - Expanded the NSSB website to include information on over 200 qualified apprenticeship and certification programs.
-

1998

- Recognized the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC) and the Sales and Service Voluntary Partnership (S&SVP) as Voluntary Partnerships
- Funded Convening Group activities in six industry clusters, providing funding totaling \$1.1 million:
 1. Business and Administrative Services;
 2. Construction;
 3. Education and Training;
 4. Finance and Insurance;
 5. Hospitality and Tourism; and
 6. Telecommunications, Computers, Arts and Entertainment, and Information.

- Developed a common format and language for skill standards development
- Initiated work with leading Specialty Certifiers to design a pathway for existing certifiers to align with the common skill standards criteria, format and language.
- Designed a strategy for the endorsement of core standards.
- Co-sponsored the Illinois Occupational Skill Standards and Credentialing Council summit to discuss assessment and credentialing programs. The summit brought together representatives from key states across the nation involved in the effort to create a national skill standards system.
- Conducted a roundtable meeting of community and civil rights group representatives to ensure their involvement in the national skill standards system.
- Hosted meetings and technical assistance workshops with the leaders and staff of the Voluntary Partnerships and Convening Groups.
- Completed and disseminated skill standards materials which were developed by NSSB-funded Pilot Projects in the following industry clusters and sub-clusters: advanced manufacturing, electronics, banking, retail trade, health care, restaurants and hotels, heavy construction, chemical lab and process technicians, photonics, bioscience and agricultural biotechnology, and human/social services.
- Redesigned and reprogrammed the entire NSSB web site and added network links to the Voluntary Partnerships and Convening Group sites. The site now averages more than 50,000 hit per month.
- Developed a State Skill Standards Information database that summarizes the skill standards initiatives of all 50 states.
- Developed and distributed a Manual of Criteria and Advice to Voluntary Partnerships and Convening Groups.
- Joined Washington State representatives plus representatives from Boeing, Microsoft, and the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, in a conference entitled, "Strengthening the Use of Skill Standards Through Partnerships." This conference was held in conjunction with a quarterly NSSB Board meeting.

1997

- Established Industry Coalitions in eight industry clusters
 1. Business and Administrative Services;
 2. Construction;
 3. Education and Training;
 4. Finance and Insurance;
 5. Restaurants, Lodging, Hospitality and Tourism;

6. Communications, Computers, Arts and Entertainment, and Information;
 7. Manufacturing; and
 8. Sales and Services
- Formulated criteria for benchmark standards
 - Established Voluntary Partnership Membership Requirements
 - Synchronized the standards process with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI)
 - Established the Recognition Awards Program
 - Defined Civil Rights and Access to assure system compliance with civil rights law.
 - Implemented Outreach Programs to engage stakeholders in designing criteria and the skills system.
 - Published Guidelines Manual to clarify requirements and provide advice for the NSSB system.
 - Initiated Key Contacts Program to maintain dialogue with human resource professionals to provide feedback on implementing the NSSB system.
-

1996

- Initiated the funding process for industry coalitions
 - Defined the overall framework for the skill standards system
 - Implemented Quality Control Systems to provide technical assistance for standards development and research and evaluation to the Voluntary Partnerships and Convening Groups.
-

1995

- Established International Clearinghouse (Accessible via the NSSB website at <http://www.nssb.org>)
- Funded Pilot Skill Standards Projects- individual projects designed to identify standards in select industries.

Initiated the “Building Linkages” program in partnership with school-to-work implementation states that explores ways to integrate academic and industry-recognized skill standards into multi-state career pathway systems.

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The NSSB: A Brief Description

The National Skill Standards Board (NSSB)

The NSSB is an unprecedented coalition of leaders from business, labor, employee, education, and community and civil rights organizations created in 1994 to build a voluntary national system of skill standards, assessment and certification systems to enhance the ability of the United States workforce to compete effectively in a global economy. These skills are being identified by industry in full partnership with labor, civil rights and community-based organizations. The standards will be based on high performance work and will be portable across industry sectors.

(Authorized
through
Goals 2000)

The NSSB has categorized the workforce into 15 industry sectors, which, under the guidance of the NSSB, are assembling skill standards, assessment and certification for their respective industries. The sectors are:

- ♦ Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing
- ♦ Business and Administrative Services
- ♦ Construction
- ♦ Education and Training
- ♦ Finance and Insurance
- ♦ Health and Human Services
- ♦ Manufacturing, Installation and Repair
- ♦ Mining
- ♦ Public Administration, Legal and Protective Services
- ♦ Restaurants, Lodging, Hospitality and Tourism, and Amusement and Recreation
- ♦ Retail Trade, Wholesale Trade, Real Estate and Personal Services
- ♦ Scientific and Technical Services
- ♦ Telecommunications, Computers, Arts and Entertainment, and Information
- ♦ Transportation
- ♦ Utilities and Environmental and Waste Management.

Skill standards development is nearing completion in two important sectors - manufacturing and the retail/wholesale industries. The Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC) and the Sales & Service Voluntary Partnership, Inc. (S&SVP), plan to complete initial standards development in their respective industries this year. On October 1, 1999, the education and training convening group was recognized as the Education and Training Voluntary Partnership (E&TVP), which plans to release skill standards in 2001. In January of this year,

the Utility Industry Group (UIG) was created to begin the development of skill standards in the utility industry. Finally on May 16, 2000, the NSSB recognized the Hospitality and Tourism Industry Coalition as the organization's fourth Voluntary Partnership. Coalition building efforts continue for the finance and insurance, business and administrative services, and telecommunications industry sectors.

The NSSB is benchmarking the US system at the international level to ensure that it is world-class. In the past year, leaders from Singapore, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, the United Kingdom and several other nations have visited the NSSB. Their intent was to share their progress with us, and to learn more about our system development plans and ways they might benefit from our research and experience to apply in the development of their own skill standards systems.

To keep up with NSSB's progress, check out **NSSB Online**. Our site contains the most extensive collection of skills-related information on the Internet. The site also hosts an electronic version of the NSSB Clearinghouse, which houses nearly 1,600 skills-related documents; a categorized system of nearly 200 links to domestic and international skills certification programs; and detailed information on all our industry coalitions. You can also visit the websites of our partners in the national skill standards system via links on our homepage by simply clicking on the logos for each voluntary partnership found at the bottom of the page.

Please feel free to contact the NSSB for more information at: information@nssb.org or by telephone at (202) 254-8628 or toll free at (877) THE-NSSB (843-6772).



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NATIONAL SKILL STANDARDS BOARD ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

CONVENING GROUPS AND VOLUNTARY PARTNERSHIPS

- **Recognized the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC)** as the first Voluntary Partnership, which represents 19.5 million workers (1998) and boasts groups such as General Motors, General Electric, Ingalls Ship Building, the National Association of Manufacturing (NAM), the National Coalition for Advanced Manufacturing (NACFAM), and the AFL-CIO as leaders of its coalition. Core skill standards are being validated and scheduled for Fall 2000 distribution.
- **Recognized the Sales & Service Voluntary Partnership, Inc. (S&SVP)** as one of the first Voluntary Partnerships, which represents 25 million workers (1998) and has the National Retail Federation (NRF), United Food and Commercial Workers (UCFW), JC Penney's, and Sears Roebuck as leaders of its coalition. Core skill standards are being validated and scheduled for Fall 2000 distribution.
- **Recognized the Education and Training Voluntary Partnership (E&TVP)** as a Voluntary Partnership, which represents 12.5 million workers (1998) and has the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the National School Boards Association (NSBA) as leaders of its coalition. Core standards are being developed for early 2001 distribution.
- **Recognized the Hospitality and Tourism Industry Sector Convening Group**, which represents 11 million workers (1998) and credits Hyatt Hotels, McDonald's Corp, the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union, and the Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education as leaders of its coalition. Core standards are anticipated in 2001.
- **Established the Utility Industry Group (UIG)** with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) and Edison Electric Institute (EEI) to expand the process of developing skill standards for the utility industry.
- Received an application for Voluntary Partnership recognition from the Financial Services Industry Sector Convening Group.
- Continued coalition-building efforts in the Communication/Information Technology Industry Sector with the focus on the development of non-vendor specific, core skill standards and certification.

NSSB CLEARINGHOUSE AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- Increased information offered through the Clearinghouse to more than 1,300 documents and database entries (i.e., an **increase of more than 33 percent** from 1998).
- Redesigned the NSSB web site (www.nssb.org) and added network links to the Voluntary Partnership and Industry Coalition sites. The site now averages **more than 150,000 hits per month** and contains more than 1,300 skill standards related documents such as *Information Technology Skill Standards* by NWCE, the *Certification and Accreditation Directory* by Gayle Research, and a directory of apprenticeships and certification programs from throughout the United States.
- Increased the number of links to other skill standards-related web sites to 188 (i.e. **an increase of almost 33 percent** from 1998).
- Developed a State Skill Standards Information database that will summarize the skill standards initiatives of all 50 states including Workforce Development Board (WIA) and State Directors of Education.
- Signed Memorandum of Understanding with America's Learning eXchange (ALX), the National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE), the Mexican Council for Normalization and Certification of Competency Standards (known by its Spanish acronym – CONOCER), and the National Governors' Association (NGA) to promote informational exchanges and research on skill standards.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

- Presented the NSSB Best Practice Award to Automotive Youth Educational Systems, Inc. (AYES), a national school-to-work partnership established by General Motors in partnership with Chrysler and others for the creation of automotive dealership and education partnerships to meet the shortfall of qualified automotive technicians.
- Presented NSSB Recognition Awards to the Northwest Center for Emerging Technologies (NWCET), the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), and the National Institute for Metal Working Skills (NIMS) in recognition of their development of skill standards in their respective industries.
- Joined Washington state government representatives and representatives from Boeing, Microsoft, and the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges in a conference entitled, "Strengthening the Use of Skill Standards Through Partnerships."
- Participated as speakers and facilitators in the SkillsUSA Championship in support of Vocational Instructional Clubs of America (VICA).

- Disseminated more than 45,000 pieces of information through the NSSB Washington, DC administrative office regarding NSSB activities and the Voluntary Partnership efforts.
- Gave presentations to more than 150 groups including: the European Union, Rotary International, American Society of Training and Development, Vocational Industrial Clubs of America, American Management Association, New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals, National Association of Private Industry Council, and the Council of Great Lakes Governors.
- Established international links with Mexico, Australia, United Kingdom, Chile, Singapore, Canada, Ireland, Brazil, and Saudi Arabia.

PUBLICATIONS

- Developed a user-friendly assessment and certification guide for the Voluntary Partnerships and system users entitled *Credentials for Success* and a series of five publications of in-depth assessment guidance for Voluntary Partnerships, beginning with *Getting Started*.
- Developed and published a manual for community-based organizations and civil rights groups entitled *Achieving Equality Through Opportunity* to provide civil rights legal guidance in developing a skill standards system.
- Published a *Standards Development Manual* to provide guidance to Voluntary Partnerships during the initial stages of skill standards development.
- Developed and distributed to Voluntary Partnerships and Convening Groups a *Reference Manual for Achieving a World Class Skill Standards System* providing criteria for the development of a skill standards system and guidance, advice, and procedures on courses of action to meet the criteria.
- Provided additional legal guidance to the Voluntary Partnerships through the addition of a Civil Rights tab in the *Reference Manual*.
- Developed and published a user-friendly guide, *Built to Work*, which explains the use of the NSSB framework, format, and common language.
- Supported the following pilot products:
 - *Building Foundations for Excellence*
 - *Making Skill Standards Work*
 - *Highlights from the Field*
 - *Pathways to Success: A Guide to Best Practices Using National Skill Standards in Workforce Development Activities*

STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

- Initiated work with leading specialized certifiers to design a pathway for existing certifiers to align with the common skill standards criteria, format, and language.
- Developed an endorsement process for the approval of core standards.
- Sponsored nine one-year grants in June 1996 to 12 industry and research groups, which were former industry pilot projects funded by the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education in 1992 and 1993. These projects served as living laboratories of the national skill standards system and covered the following industry sectors and sub-sectors:
 - advanced manufacturing
 - banking
 - chemical lab and process technicians
 - electronics
 - health care
 - heavy construction
 - human/social services
 - photonics, bioscience and agricultural biotechnology
 - restaurants and hotels
 - retail trade
- Completed and disseminated skill standards materials which were developed by NSSB-funded pilot projects.
- Created a strategy for the development and successful implementation and integration of strategies to promote NSSB-endorsed skill standards systems into larger systems of education and workforce development throughout the United States.
- Organized the State Skill Standards Working Group (SSSWG) to align state skill standards systems with the national system.
- Established an Ad Hoc Committee on Curriculum to understand the utility of skill standards in developing curricula and training materials, and to promote their use to develop tools and criteria to ensure that assessment tools and curricula are aligned with skill standards.
- Established a state/community-based pilot project in Mississippi for developing a statewide skill standards partnership that may become the model for other states to emulate.

- Sponsored pilot projects in Alabama, Alaska, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and South Dakota to coordinate state skill standards with both academic standards and school-to-work efforts.
- Commissioned the following papers on topics related to civil rights and access issues:
 - *The Civil Rights Debate Surrounding Skill Standards*, Carey O' Connor
 - *Increasing Diversity and Avoiding Bias in Developing Skill Standards Pursuant to the National Skill Standards Act*, Carolyn P. Osolink and Eileen Penner (June 1997)
 - *Access, Diversity, and Civil Rights Issues in the Development of Skill Standards*, Marc Bendick, Jr. (December 1997)
 - *Skill Standards and Equal Opportunity*, Robert M. Guttman (April 1997)
- Commissioned the following papers on topics related to the development of the skill standards system:
 - *Assessing Workplace Competencies in a National Skill Standards System*, Alan Lesgold and Lauren B. Resnick (June 1997)
 - *Creating Skill Standards for the High-Performance Workplace*, Sandra Katz, et al (June 1997)
 - *Creating World-Class Standards: A Process for Relating U.S. Skill Standards to International Quality and Skill Standards*, David Finegold (May 1997)
 - *Developing an American Skills Certification System*, John H. Bishop (1997)
 - *Marketing and Disseminating Voluntary Industry Skill Standards*, Mary Moorhouse (December 1995)
 - *Standards for Standards: Recommended National Skill Standards Board Criteria for Describing Work, Performance, and Standards*, Kenneth Pearlman (June 1997)
 - *Management of National Skill Certification: A Mechanism for Issuing Skill Certification Throughout the 50 States of the USA*, David Lythe (June 1997)

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Total Pages: 8

LRM ID: BCR49

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
Washington, D.C. 20503-0001

Thursday, February 3, 2000

LEGISLATIVE REFERRAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislative Liaison Officer - See Distribution below

FROM: Robert J. Bellicci (for) Assistant Director for Legislative Reference
OMB CONTACT: Bennie C. Rogers
E-Mail: Bennie_C._Rogers@omb.eop.gov
PHONE: (202)395-7754 FAX: (202)395-6148

SUBJECT: LABOR Report on HR____ Pregnancy Discrimination Act Amendments of 2000

DEADLINE: COB Thursday, February 10, 2000

In accordance with OMB Circular A-19, OMB requests the views of your agency on the above subject before advising on its relationship to the program of the President. **Please advise us if this item will affect direct spending or receipts for purposes of the "Pay-As-You-Go" provisions of Title XIII of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990.**

COMMENTS: Labor is requesting clearance of its letter to Congresswoman Maloney expressing support for her new bill, H.R.____, the "Pregnancy Discrimination Act Amendments of 2000 (not yet introduced.) For your convenience, a copy of the referenced bill is attached.

On October 26th, OMB cleared a Labor letter to Congresswoman Maloney, supporting the goals of H.R. 1478, the "Pregnancy Discrimination Act Amendments of 1999." However, Labor wanted to work with Congress on a few drafting issues. Labor has now provided technical assistance to Congresswoman Maloney on H.R.____, the "Pregnancy Discrimination Act Amendments of 2000.

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Amendments of 2000

_____ Concur
 _____ No Objection
 _____ No Comment
 _____ See proposed edits on pages _____
 _____ Other: _____
 _____ FAX RETURN of _____ pages, attached to this response sheet

DRAFT (to OMB 02/03/00)

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Maloney:

This is in response to your request for views on H.R. __, the "Pregnancy Discrimination Act Amendments of 2000". The Administration supports this bill, which would clarify that the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 (PDA), 42 U.S.C. 2000e(k), 2000e notes (amending Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964), prohibits the harassment and discrimination of women who breastfeed or express milk during their own lunch or break times at work. This clarification of the law would help workers to balance their work and family obligations, and ultimately would improve the health and well-being of children and their mothers. In addition, this clarification would serve the interests of judicial economy and efficiency by reducing the need for litigation over the coverage of the PDA.

This bill addresses an important workplace issue for new parents.

The significant health benefits that breastfeeding provides to children (and to their mothers) are numerous and well-documented. The American Academy of Pediatrics therefore recommends that mothers breastfeed for at least the first twelve months of a child's life, and that arrangements be made to provide expressed milk if mother and child must separate. The health benefits of breastfeeding in turn mean that working parents miss less time from work due to their baby's illness. Thus, support for nursing mothers makes good business sense for employers.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' surveys of the characteristics of working families show that in 1998, 58 percent of mothers returned to the labor force before their babies were one year old. Because nursing mothers need to express their milk every three to four hours, working mothers must have one or more opportunities during an eight-hour work day to express milk in order to meet the goal of providing breast milk for their babies for a full year.

Although the Administration believes that the PDA's coverage of "pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions", 42

U.S.C. 2000e(k), already encompasses breastfeeding or expressing milk, a number of courts have concluded that it does not. This bill would clarify that breastfeeding and expressing milk in the workplace are covered under the PDA. In so doing, the bill would reduce the need for costly litigation about the issue.

It should be noted that the bill is modest in scope. The bill would not require employers to give special breaks to these employees. Accordingly, an employer that has a policy of not giving any employees breaks during the workday would not be engaging in discriminatory conduct under the bill by denying a woman a break to breastfeed or express milk. Similarly, it would not be discriminatory for an employer to refuse to modify a woman's schedule to give her short split-shifts so as to effectively provide her breaks, or to discipline a woman who, in order to express milk, takes a longer break than company policy allows. And, of course, like Title VII and the PDA, the bill would not apply to employers that employ fewer than fifteen individuals.

As we noted to you previously, the Administration has been working to enhance opportunities for women to express their milk in the workplace in a safe, private, and healthful environment. On May 24, 1999, the President announced his support for providing Federal employees with on-site nursing mothers' programs. The President directed Federal agencies, among other things, to appoint a "family-friendly work/life coordinator" whose duties include establishing and promoting on-site nursing mothers' programs. To date, the Departments of Labor, Agriculture, State, and Transportation, as well as the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, the U.S. General Accounting Office, and the National Security Agency, have all implemented some form of nursing mothers' program.

In addition, the Office of Personnel Management's Family-Friendly Workplace Advocacy Office issued a publication in Spring, 1999 that provides practical information to Federal agencies about establishing a worksite nursing mothers' program. This publication, entitled "Establishing A Nursing Mothers Program -- A Guide for the Federal Workplace", also contains a comprehensive listing of organizations that can provide additional information on breastfeeding issues.

We understand that some private sector employers also have established working mothers' programs in their workplaces.

You, as well as the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau Honor Roll Report, have identified a number of private sector employers that have established such programs. These employers go beyond merely not discriminating against working women who choose to care for their babies by breastfeeding or expressing milk -- they recognize the value to their companies of providing opportunities to their employees to do so.

The Department congratulates you on your efforts to clarify that the PDA prohibits the harassment and discrimination of women who breastfeed or express milk during their own lunch or break times at work. We look forward to continuing to work with you on our mutual goal -- to help working people to balance successfully their work and family responsibilities.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that there is no objection to the submission of this letter from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Sincerely,

Alexis M. Herman

Post-it Fax Note	7671	Date	2/3/00	# of pages	2
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Ben - 4 p.m. - 1st

(Original Signature of Member)

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mrs. MLOYER of New York introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to protect
breastfeeding by new mothers.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

4 This Act may be cited as the "Pregnancy Discrimina-
5 tion Act Amendments of 2000".

1 SEC. 2 AMENDMENT TO TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS
2 ACT OF 1964

3 Section 701(k) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42
4 U.S.C. 2000e(k)) is amended—

5 (1) by inserting “(including lactation)” after
6 “childbirth”; and

7 (2) by adding at the end the following: “For
8 purposes of this subsection, the term ‘lactation’
9 means a condition that may result in the feeding of
10 a child directly from the breast or the expressing of
11 milk from the breast.”.