

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 11, 2015

Honorable Thomas Perez  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Responding to widespread and significant layoffs, principally in the energy industry, WorkForce West Virginia submitted an emergency comprehensive workforce training proposal to you on May 29, 2015.

The WorkForce West Virginia and West Virginia Community and Technical College System Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant seeks \$7 million between July 1, 2015, and June 30, 2017. The grant proposes to focus on long-term unemployed West Virginians and individuals determined likely to exhaust unemployment benefits, with particular attention to the continued needs of the unemployed coal mining industry community, and individuals dislocated from industries related to and affected by continued mining layoffs.

Current data tells us there are 2,914 unemployed individuals in mining in West Virginia. Dislocations continue: in May 2015, Murray Energy and Alpha Natural Resources announced more than 2,000 new layoffs in our state.

The Mountain State's nine community and technical colleges and seven Regional Workforce Investment Boards would be contractually responsible for meeting the grant proposals objectives.

The proposed Sector Partnership project will build upon sector-driven efforts in West Virginia including the foundation established through the TAACCCT-funded West Virginia Bridging the Gap initiative, Regional Sector Consortia, and strong industry training partnerships with Toyota, DuPont and the ShaleNet consortium. With this strong regional planning work and expertise in Energy and Manufacturing sectors as a basis, West Virginia will develop new sector-driven training initiatives in those sectors, plus build new sector initiatives in the Health Care and Information Technology industries.

Workforce West Virginia and the community/technical colleges plan to serve 700 dislocated workers through accelerated programs that lead to high-wage, high-skill jobs. This grant is a partnership between WorkForce West Virginia, the Community and Technical College System of West Virginia (which will lead the project), industry partners and a host of community

organizations. Skills training will focus on integrating classroom and on-the-job learning, build on models developed through WV Bridging the Gap, and integrate enhanced support services and career coaching into industry-driven programs. Displaced homemakers (spouses and children of dislocated workers) will also be a target of this initiative.

Our state's prior Coal Mining National Emergency grant was targeted to help only 700 miners, and you can see there are far more newly unemployed West Virginians who need our help.

We appreciate your agency's partnership in addressing this significant downturn in the state's energy economy, and encourage you and your colleagues at the Labor Department to give all possible favorable consideration to this proposal. Please let us know the status of your deliberations as well as your final funding decision.

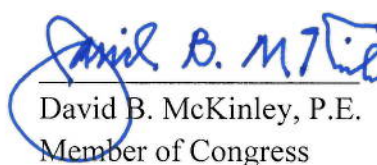
Sincerely,



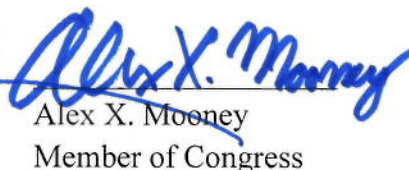
Joe Manchin, III  
United States Senator



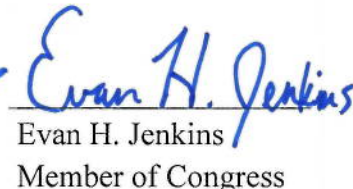
Shelley Moore Capito  
United States Senator



David B. McKinley, P.E.  
Member of Congress



Alex X. Mooney  
Member of Congress



Evan H. Jenkins  
Member of Congress