MASS WORKFORCE ASSOCIATION
ONE SYSTEM – ONE VOICE

**Massachusetts Workforce Association**
**Public Policy Committee Meeting Notes**
Tuesday, July 18 , 2023 2:00PM

In attendance: Ron Iacobucci, Kathleen Weislein, Maura Geary, Mary Sarris, Judi Vigna, Sezan McDaniel, Karen Pelletier, Kevin Coughlin, Kelly Hanlon, Raija Vaisanen

Notes

**2023 Talent and Competitiveness Survey, *Tonja Mettlach, Executive Vice President, Mass Business Roundtable***

- See slide deck here.

**FY24 Budget Update**

- Budget is still in conference. MWA will keep the committee updated on any developments.

**Data Bill Testimony**

Raija and Tonja testified in support of our data bill that the Workforce Solutions Group has been advocating for - H.1862/S1187. You can watch a recording of the testimony here. We are still waiting for the data governance bill H530/S343 to come up for a hearing in the Education Committee. Along with the Friends of Longitudinal Data Systems we are organizing a data briefing at the state house later this fall. If you would like to send your own written testimony to support the bill, you may do so by emailing the committee at the email on the left shown here. Here is a link to MWA's testimony you can use as a template.

**Federal Budget Update**

The broader funding picture for the entire federal government is unclear at best. Assuming there is not a shutdown, provisions in the debt limit deal would mean across the board cuts if there is a continuing resolution in place into April 2024.

The FY24 House Labor HHS Education Appropriations draft offers significant cuts to WIOA and other programs. Given the level of these cuts, there is some doubt the House Appropriations Committee (Full Committee) can advance the bill. The Senate Appropriations Committee scheduled a markup of its FY24 Labor, HHS, Education bill in Committee 7/27 as a counterpoint. to It includes a National Apprenticeship Reauthorization Act (S 2122), JOBS Act (S 161; Short Term Pell), Expand Youth Apprenticeship (S 2363), Gateway to Careers Act (S 2402), and Sectoral Partnerships. Some of these measures are bipartisan (Gateway to Careers, Youth Apprenticeship,

and JOBS Act) but the broader bipartisan discussions broke down earlier last week around National Apprenticeship Act and Sector Partnerships.Unclear now how the markup will go.

**Proposed Workforce Skills Cabinet Legislation - H.3009/S.256**
Brief discussion making committee aware of this legislation which would put the Workforce Skills Cabinet into statute, require reporting from the group, and expand the individuals and organizations that would be required. It also allows for a staff person. Members expressed concern about whether this would make the cabinet more like any other government mandated commission or board, which doesn't necessarily allow for real policy decision-making. These bills have not come up for a hearing yet and MWA will continue to follow them.

**SkillWorks Fellowship - Advocacy Academy Update**

- Developing application, scheduling dates/locations- hoping to kick off in October, securing subject matter experts to participate. More to come in August!

**Wagner Peyser Proposed Merit Staffing Rule**

- DOL has published a notice in the federal register that they could publish a final rule sometime in August. This doesn't mean they will, but it does indicate they intend to.
- MWA reached out to affected regions to see if they have updated or different data from last year's estimations of the impact the change would have. MWA will send another letter to DOL and to our congressional delegation.
- NAWB is communicating with the states impacted by the change like MI, CO, and MA, and may be convening us soon.
- MWA will keep the committee and regions posted.