



June 6, 2012

**Don't Dismantle Federal Job-Training Programs  
Vote against H.R. 4297**

The Honorable John Kline  
Chairman  
Committee on Education and the Workforce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable George Miller  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Education and the Workforce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kline and Ranking Member Miller:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition charged by its diverse membership of over 210 national organizations to promote and protect the rights of all persons in the United States, we urge you to **vote against H.R. 4297, the Workforce Investment Improvement Act of 2012**. We urge you to reject H.R.4297 because we believe it will result in significant reductions in education, job training and supportive services to the most disadvantaged populations across our coalition, including low-income youth and adults, women, minorities, seniors, persons with disabilities, those recently incarcerated, single parents, and those lacking a high school diploma and basic literacy skills.

Numerous provisions in H.R. 4297 are unacceptable to members of the civil and human rights coalition. The following are among the most alarming:

1. The bill repeals 16 programs, including Job Corps and YouthBuild. It also repeals other vital programs that meet the needs of unique populations, including:

- a. Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO)
- b. Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCEP)
- c. Section 231 of the Second Chance Act, which seeks to improve federal prisoner reentry through reentry planning and assistance.
- d. Programs serving Native Americans, migrant farm workers, and veterans.

2. The bill consolidates 27 additional programs into a new block grant. In light of the approximately 50% high school dropout rate in minority communities, we are particularly concerned about the consolidation of programs offering education, training and support to low-income and disconnected youth.

3. The bill eliminates the priority of service requirement for low-income people and those in public housing, who are disproportionately women, people of color, and single parents.

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4. The bill also repeals an allowance for local programs to provide supportive services, such as transportation and child care, that are necessary in order for many people to participate, including parents, the elderly, and those with disabilities.
5. Finally, the bill prioritizes the needs of employers to increase their earnings over the needs of workers to achieve economic self-sufficiency and to earn a living wage. Both sets of needs should be addressed and balanced in the legislation. We especially object to the new requirement for a two-thirds employer majority on local workforce boards and the elimination of requirements to include diverse groups of stakeholders – including labor, youth and community-based organizations – on the state and local workforce boards.

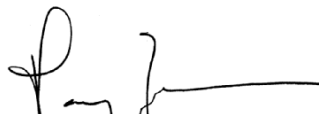
The Leadership Conference believes it is imperative that all Americans are given an opportunity to acquire the education and training they need to earn a living wage and to contribute to our nation's economy. We are united in our belief that we need a balanced, bipartisan approach to updating our federal education and workforce development programs, including WIA. We need to grow our economy, prepare more skilled workers and provide a pathway to the American dream for all persons in the United States. At the same time, we must also address the impact of inequity in our public K-12 education system, along with the disproportionate impact of poverty and discrimination on women, minorities, the elderly and those with disabilities.

Solid education and training is essential. Therefore, we urge you to vote "no" on H.R.4297. Please direct any questions or comments to Dianne Piche, senior counsel, at [Piche@civilrights.org](mailto:Piche@civilrights.org) or 202-466-3311.

Sincerely,



Wade Henderson  
President & CEO



Nancy Zirkin  
Executive Vice President