

Using Evidence to Improve WIOA Outcomes

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WIOA funding is insufficiently tied to performance, which hampers training outcomes and promotes government inefficiency. Furthermore, fragmented data make it difficult for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers to understand and analyze workforce outcomes. Existing research indicates that when training programs are backed by research and evidence, earnings [increase by between 12% and 34%](#), underscoring the potential for evidence-based reforms to improve worker outcomes and protect taxpayer dollars.

The below proposals build upon the recommendations in Results for America's [Moneyball for Workforce Development](#) report:

- **Direct WIOA resources towards what's proven to be effective at training workers**, for example promoting a positive return on investment (ROI). This can be accomplished in several complementary ways:
 - Promote evidence-based grantmaking for workforce programs by developing an agency-wide evidence definition ([H.R.2058](#)) and creating incentives for investing in evidence-based approaches.
 - Authorize a Workforce Innovation Fund to test and scale promising interventions that improve worker outcomes. This approach would pilot innovative training methods, and provide additional funding to interventions that successfully improve workforce outcomes. ([S.4008](#))
- **Authorize grant funding supporting partnerships between education institutions and workforce development entities** that support the development and implementation of career pathways programs. ([S.2402](#))
- **Authorize grant funding for workforce development for formerly incarcerated individuals** using evidence-based approaches. ([H.R.1633](#))

- **Promote performance-based contracting**, through:
 - An overhaul of the Pay-for-Performance contracting authority to eliminate the red tape that has hindered its use to date;
 - Allowing all WIOA funds obligated for performance-based contracting to remain available until expended, making performance-based contracting more appealing and viable systemwide while eliminating the need for separate Pay-for-Performance contracting authority.
- **Improve workforce data infrastructure** by:
 - Authorizing the Workforce Data Quality Initiative grants. **(S.5401)**
 - Enabling states to leverage the National Directory of New Hires for the first time.

