



October 14, 2015

Governor Jay Inslee  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Chair Perry England  
Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board  
PO Box 43105  
Olympia, WA 98504-3105

**Subject: Input on Seattle-King County's Designation as a Workforce Region**

Dear Governor Inslee and Chair England,

As the Chief Elected Officials, Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (the "WDC") Chair, and Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County CEO, we thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on Washington State's regional designation under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act ("WIOA"). This letter reiterates the position we expressed in our June 30<sup>th</sup> letter, which is that King County should be designated as a single region.

As we embark upon implementation of WIOA, we see the many opportunities it provides us to build upon the many workforce development successes in our state and in Seattle-King County. We are excited for the opportunities WIOA provides local workforce development boards in leading and convening industry, education, and labor leaders to develop job-driven solutions that connect jobseekers to the skills that employers demand.

The Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County, hereinafter referred to as WDC, has historically partnered with entities within Seattle-King County, throughout the Puget Sound, and across the state to innovate across city and county lines. The WDC has a strong and extensive history of partnering and planning regionally, and hopes to continue to work with other workforce development boards across the state, and between states, with workforce development areas that are both contiguous and non-contiguous.

The WDC serves and oversees a workforce development system in a vast area in size and scope, a region that comprises urban and rural areas, diverse residents, and a wide range of industries.

- **Seattle-King County's Economy:** King County's jobs number 1.2 million and represent over 30% of the state's economy. There are over 74,000 businesses within the County and 23 Chambers of Commerce. Whereas just over 9 percent of Washington residents live in the City of Seattle, Seattle comprises nearly 19 percent of the nearly 3 million jobs statewide. **King County's economy represents 40% of the jobs and half of the payroll of Washington State.**
- **Seattle-King County's Workforce:** Within King County, there are 39 cities as well as sub-regions with large populations themselves that have distinct workforce needs and opportunities. As the largest County in Washington State, King County's population of over 2 million makes up 30% of the state's population. King County residents speak over 170 different languages and are increasingly diverse as the County continues to grow. Approximately 23 percent of Washington State's \$150 billion in wages are earned in Seattle, and 16 percent of the state's nearly \$110 billion in taxable retail sales occur in the city. **In fact, 85% of King County's workforce works in King County.**
- **Seattle-King County's Sector Strategies:** The size and scope of King County's economy and workforce parallel no other county in the state, and thus necessitate the WDC to develop sector partnerships with neighboring workforce development areas as well as those across the state and nation. In our swiftly changing economy, the WDC must remain flexible in its ability to most effectively serve the dynamic needs of businesses. Physical location is rarely static for business, and closures and startups are impossible to forecast. **The WDC is able to shift local strategies to address workforce needs of industries moving in and out of the area because of its Seattle and King County focus.**
- **Seattle-King County's Distinctive Service-Delivery Model:** The WDC's distinctive service-delivery model has led the State in transforming its local WorkSource system to better meet the needs of jobseekers, workers, and employers. Quite different than the other three local areas proposed in the Puget Sound Region, the WDC led WorkSource Seattle-King County efforts to identify system-wide needs of (1) career services redesign and integration, (2) staff training and curriculum development, and (3) marketing and in-community outreach. Fostering strong relationships with 11 King County colleges and 19 King County K-12 school districts has been integral to identifying key partners in this transformation. With 1 WorkSource Full Service Center, 6 WorkSource Affiliate Sites, and 22 WorkSource Connection Sites, the WDC continues to strategically locate its WorkSource sites based on community need. **Seattle-King County's model currently leads integrated service-delivery efforts across the state and its ability to adapt to the workforce needs of its jobseekers, workers, and employers is essential to its success.**

The recommended Puget Sound region would include six counties and four local workforce areas with incongruent local economies, dissimilar one-stop customer demographics, and distinctive service-delivery efforts. The data included in the State Board's recommendation takes none of these points into account. A region this large would also constrain the WDC's ability to collaborate across areas due to additional expenses, limited staff capacity, and inflexible guidelines for partnering. Seattle-King County's unique workforce development system characteristics demonstrate the necessity and importance of designating King County as its own region.

As described above, the WDC has excelled in its ability to convene industry leaders regionally and statewide to effectively serve a vast and diverse economy and workforce. Maintaining the designation of King County as its own workforce region will allow the WDC to continue to build on strong partnerships that lead to innovative workforce solutions. **For these reasons, we strongly recommend that Seattle-King County be designated as a region unto itself for the purposes of regional planning as described in WIOA.**

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration and look forward to our continued collaboration.

Sincerely,



Executive Dow Constantine  
King County



Edward B. Murray  
Mayor, City of Seattle



Tom Peterson  
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King  
County Chair



Marléna Sessions  
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King  
County CEO

"Ann Rudnicki" <exedir@kacewa.org> 10/13/2015 11:36 AM >>>

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the proposed workforce planning regions.

I wish to express concerns regarding the five county configuration of Region 2. I recognize that there are some shared conditions between and among some of these counties that might make joint planning advisable. But I believe those shared conditions are dramatically outweighed by the differences in local economic and employment situations. This is a challenge that has been experienced in other regional planning boards. For example, when a regional health planning board consisted of Pierce & Kitsap county, it was really difficult to develop a coherent plan that adequately addressed the more rural characteristics of Kitsap and the urban core of Pierce. This problem would only be exacerbated in the five county region as defined in this proposal.

For example, in terms of Kitsap: It is technically possible to commute to King or Pierce county for work, but the barriers are high, especially for low-income people. The high percentage of federal employees and former military distorts the local labor market, with many jobs unavailable to other segments of the population. This latter situation is dissimilar to that of any other county in the proposed region. I suspect that Clallum and Jefferson counties have characteristics that would make them equally dissimilar to any of the other counties.

I hope that you will reconsider the configuration of this region.

Thank you.

*Ann Rudnicki, Ph. D.*  
Executive Director

Kitsap Addult Center for Education (formerly Literacy Council of Kitsap)  
Phone: (360) 373-1539  
[exedir@kacewa.org](mailto:exedir@kacewa.org)  
[www.kacewa.org](http://www.kacewa.org)

>>> Bob Potter <bpotter@co.kitsap.wa.us> 10/14/2015 3:07 PM >>>  
Hi Workforce Training Board,

I'm formally entering my recommendation that our Olympic Workforce Development Area be its own planning region. It makes sense from a labor commute perspective to have Kitsap County be part of the Puget Sound group of WDAs but that leaves Clallam and Jefferson with less time and attention being paid to their workforce needs. I believe that we can continue to plan our strategy and operations well as a three-county region and still work with other WDAs to address common industry (maritime, advanced manufacturing and healthcare for example) needs. Please let me know if you have any questions for me regarding regions and local WIOA issues. Thank you.

- Bob

**Bob Potter**  
**Director**  
**Olympic Workforce Development Area**  
**1300 Sylvan Way**  
**Bremerton, WA 98310**  
**360-337-4873**

>>> Bryce Humpherys <bhumpherys@yvcc.edu> 10/16/2015 9:31 AM >>>

The Workforce Planning Regions should be the same as the WDC local areas. It will make it simpler and less confusing to implement WIOA.

Bryce Humpherys, Ed.D

*Dean for Basic Skills and the Grandview Campus*

*Yakima Valley Community College*

**From:** Dennis Flabetich [mailto:Dennis.Flabetich@delmonte.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 15, 2015 8:21 AM  
**To:** Gary Chandler <GaryC@AWB.ORG>  
**Cc:** Patrick Baldoz (patrick.baldoz@co.yakima.wa.us) <patrick.baldoz@co.yakima.wa.us>  
**Subject:** WIOA Planning Regions

Gary:

I currently chair the South Central Workforce Council, whose area includes the counties of Kittitas, Yakima, Klickitat, and Skamania a large geographical area primarily rural in nature.

The new WOIA legislation requires Planning Regions be designated, but the process was to include significant local input on any final recommendations.

The recommendation of Planning region areas was recently issued by the state, and quite frankly we are not pleased, and our local officials are extremely upset.

Attached is a letter that will go to Governor Inslee from my Workforce area indicating a strong opposition to the State recommendations, and to the process undertaken. Quite frankly the area proposed for Eastern Washington is literally preposterous. This recommendation appears to disregard local input and completely ignores typical commuting patterns for our existing territories.

I know that Workforce Councils from most other regions are all disappointed and formulating similar responses to be directed to the Governor.

It is our hope that AWB, who represent business on the WTECB will echo our objection to the States recommendation and request more direct information and input from our local elected whose primary initial indication requested that regions reflect the current geographic make up of existing workforce council territories.

I would be happy to have you contact my Council Director, Patrick Baldoz {(509) 574-1950}, or myself for more specific information with respect to our objections.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Dennis Flabetich  
Area Human Resource Manager  
Del Monte Foods, Inc.  
(509)314-7040

# EASTERN WASHINGTON PARTNERSHIP

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

956 S. Main • Colville, WA 99114 • (509) 685-6130 • Fax (509) 685-6094  
<http://www.ewpartnership.org> TDD/TTY (800) 833-6384 or 7-1-1

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October 9, 2015

The Honorable Jay Inslee, Governor  
State of Washington  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee:

I am writing this letter to express our Workforce Development Council (WDC) members' concern about a proposal that is being considered to consolidate twenty counties in eastern Washington into a single regional planning area for the purpose of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) met on September 17 to explore the possible designation of regions in the State for WIOA planning. The WTECB members selected a map for public comment which for our area of the State includes all counties east of the Cascades except Spokane. It is an area that is geographically larger than the entire area of fifteen individual States in the US. If it were to be so designated, it would result in a plan that would have little to no bearing on the strategic workforce development interests for the four WDCs that would be banded together.

Our workforce development area (WDA) is already very large with nine counties going from Canada to Oregon and from Pend Oreille County down to Walla Walla County. The economic conditions throughout our WDA are varied as it is. We share no labor market of any note with the other three WDAs. We have three separate federal economic development agencies and two Rural Transportation Organizations in our WDA. We have a highly developed dryland farming industry which requires workers with very different skill sets than those that are necessary for the agricultural workers harvesting the crops in the other WDAs.

Our board members already make a significant personal contribution to travel to our WDC meetings from the corners of our WDA. We did discuss the proposed region map at our WDC meeting on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Our members were in complete agreement (including the seven County Commissioners in attendance) that creating a regional plan with so many other counties with so few inter-related interests would not be a worthwhile endeavor. We already face significant challenges around our own workforce development issues, and we believe our limited resources would not be well spent by participating in such a mega-region planning process.

I (along with our Chief Local Elected Official, Lincoln County Commissioner, Scott Hutsell) previously expressed this same sentiment in a letter to the WTECB subcommittee chairs on Governance when they were seeking feedback on local areas' views about WIOA regional planning area designation. In fact, I never heard any response to our letter. The next time I heard anything about it was after the WTECB meeting when they voted on releasing the proposed regional planning areas map.

We believe it would be a serious error to designate the four WDAs as a single regional planning area. The law allows for an individual workforce development area to be designated as a WIOA planning region. We urge you to do so with our WDA.

I am looking forward to your response to our WDC's request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "William Clemens", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

William Clemens  
Chairman  
Eastern Washington Partnership Workforce development Council

Cc: Perry England, Board Chair, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board  
Eleni Papadakis, Executive Director, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board  
Xandre Chateaubriand, Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor  
Eastern Washington Partnership Workforce Development Council members  
Scott Hutsell, Chairman, Eastern Washington Partnership Board of County Commissioners

# EASTERN WASHINGTON PARTNERSHIP

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October 9, 2015

The Honorable Jay Inslee, Governor  
State of Washington  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Eastern Washington Partnership Regional Board of County Commissioners (Eastern). Members on this board represent the local elected officials for the nine -county consortium in eastern Washington that carries out the duties and responsibilities of the local elected officials under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The workforce development area (WDA) we represent (Eastern) includes Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Lincoln, Whitman, Asotin, Garfield, Columbia, and Walla Walla Counties.

The purpose of this letter is to raise our objection to the proposed WIOA Eastern Cascade Planning Region that includes every county in eastern Washington except Spokane. This planning region was proposed by the Workforce Training Board at its September 17, 2015 meeting and is now in the public comment stage. We were very surprised to learn that the WTB members thought that four Workforce Development Councils (WDCs) encompassing such a vast area could derive any meaningful benefit by conducting a strategic planning process together.

WIOA requires Governors to designate planning regions which can include either a single WDA or multiple WDAs. The law identifies criteria to be considered when designating regional areas such as shared labor sheds and labor markets, shared federal economic development areas, industrial sectors, commuting patterns, transportation organizations and other State-determined factors. In the case of the proposed twenty-county region, these shared criteria either do not exist or do so at an extremely minimal level. For instance, the data indicates that only about 2,000 Eastern workers commute to the other three WDAs for work out of a total of over 320,000 workers in the region. Eastern has three federal economic development areas (EDA) in our nine counties. Only Lincoln County is part of another EDA. None are shared with either the Tri-Cities or the South Central WDC. While it is correct to note that Eastern has a significant agricultural sector, its workforce needs are completely different than those of the Wenatchee, Yakima and Tri-Cities WDAs. As you are well aware, wheat production is the largest crop in Lincoln, Whitman, Walla

Walla and Columbia Counties. Dryland farming has very different workforce issues than those that the fruit and vegetable farmers in the other WDAs experience.

In addition to not meeting WIOA's proposed criteria for a region, the practicality of creating such an enormous region does not make sense. The Eastern WDA is already so geographically large that it takes some members over 2 ½ hours to get to our board meetings. A majority of the WDC members are private sector representatives, and we work very hard to keep them engaged in the planning and other board responsibilities around the workforce issues that are relevant in our nine-county area. Our board meetings already take them away from their actual jobs for an entire day in order to participate in our meetings. Adding another two hours one-way to get to regional meetings would not encourage their participation. We expect that there would be a decided drop-off in the number of members that would participate in these meetings, particularly in the upcoming winter months when the driving can be perilous at times.

WDC members will be very reluctant to add another eleven counties and an additional sixty to seventy other members in order to develop a regional plan that will have virtually no relevance to the strategic workforce development interests of our WDA. They, along with my fellow County Commissioners, are very skeptical about the cost-benefit ratio of participating in planning for such a large region. We fully discussed this proposed region at our WDC meeting on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Both the County Commissioners and the WDC members were unanimous in their belief that the East Cascade Planning Region would be unable to develop a plan that would produce value for any of the four areas.

Finally, I must express my concern about the process that was used to get to this point in the regional designation issue. WIOA requires that the Governor consult with the local elected officials when designating regional planning areas. I was contacted in writing by members of the WTB WIOA Governance Subcommittee about our thoughts on planning regions. After discussions with our WDC members and the other County Commissioners, I responded to the committee members with the reasons why we believed that our nine-counties already represented a region. We never received any response to our letter. Further, the WTB bypassed the thorough vetting process that it has been using for other important WIOA planning decisions. In the case of designating regional planning areas, the middle steps of the process were completely skipped and the proposed map was not released to anyone until the WTB members saw it during the September 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. I am not sure why this occurred but it is apparent after reviewing the proposed map that it would likely be controversial to the many local elected officials throughout the State who had made recommendations about this that were not accepted.

We urge you to accept our recommendation to designate the Eastern WDA as a WIOA planning region.

Sincerely,



Scott Hutsell  
Chairman  
Regional Board of County Commissioners

Cc: Perry England, Board Chair, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board  
Eleni Papadakis, Executive Director, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board  
Xandre Chateaubriand, Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor  
William Clemens, Chairman, Eastern Washington Partnership Workforce Development Council  
Nathan Davis, Commissioner, Ferry County  
Justin Dixon, Commissioner, Garfield County  
Perry Dozier, Commissioner, Walla Walla County  
Jim Jeffords, Commissioner, Asotin County  
Mike Talbott, Commissioner, Columbia County  
Steve Kiss, Commissioner, Pend Oreille County  
Wes McCart, Commissioner, Stevens County  
Art Swannack, Commissioner, Whitman County  
Keth Goehner, Chairman, North Central WDC Board of County Commissioners  
Rick Bouchey, Chairman, South Central WDC Board of County Commissioners  
Rick Miller, Benton-Franklin WDC, Franklin County Board of Commissioners  
Jim Beaver, Benton-Franklin WDC, Benton County Board of Commissioners

Hello,

I think one possible way to organize the workforce planning regions in our state is to follow the expected boom in health-related workforce growth and use the existing regions designated for the upcoming Accountable Communities of Health. These ACHs will already have geographic boundaries and will have ground-work in place for coordination within those boundaries, especially inclusive of the most vulnerable populations that are often the target of workforce development initiatives.

*Irene Hinkle*

Program Specialist

Washington Health Information Industry-Education Council (WHIIEC)

The Washington State Health Care Authority

626 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE

Olympia, WA

98504

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** David Wallace, Research Manager  
**FROM:** Cheryl Fambles, CEO, PacMtn WDC  
**SUBJECT:** Proposed Workforce Planning Region Public Comment  
**DATE:** October 13, 2015

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On behalf of the Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Local Elected Official Consortium and the Workforce Council, please include this memorandum as part of the official record of public comment.

The affirmation of PacMtn's current boundaries as a workforce planning region is correct. Our region, representing Lewis, Mason, Thurston, Pacific and Grays Harbor counties, has been in place for more than 30 years. PacMtn is a known entity for convening and leading regional planning efforts that benefit the economy and the workforce. Our work is demonstrable and supported by our economic development partners. We continue to do this work because our coordinated and focused work with regional economic development partners is critical to the service of our two primary customers—businesses and career seekers.

The 2007 federal WIRED grant (Workforce Innovations in Regional Economic Development) set the PacMtn region on a course to elevate the purpose of regional planning. We were fortunate enough to be one of only 39 of the 600+ workforce areas in the nation, to receive the funding that solidified our regional commitments and established the necessary relationships, actions and commitments for system transformation. We have strong enduring relationships with our Economic Development Councils (EDCs) in each of the counties. Across the 7200 square miles of this region the economies share many similarities, and its sectors create the pillars that support the skills training and talent development strategies to positively impact the economic landscape of the region. We work to capture those similarities and align our efforts. Examples of this regional collaboration within the workforce area include: funding for our Industry Cluster Study published in 2013; support for the new forestry sector collaborative; development of the PAC5 Economic Development Network focused

around the core of recruitment of new regional investment and employment opportunities, retention of the region's existing employment base, and expanding regional market opportunities; and the annually co-sponsored Regional Economic Forecast & Innovation Expo.

PacMtn is serious about regional collaboration and we routinely reach across to other workforce areas when it serves our outcomes. The relationships that we have and continue to cultivate at the state, local, and across regional levels are not an option for us in PacMtn. The continued contraction of legacy industries like forest products, high unemployment and now multi-generational poverty make it a necessity to be creative and to work together for the collective good. The PacMtn Workforce Development Council is an example of a regional planning area that is and continues to be successful.

Other workforce areas are also committed to regional planning. Examples of those planning efforts are numerous and impactful. As the Workforce Board considers the recommendation for regional planning boundaries we encourage you to evaluate the benefits you intend to receive with regional planning when you combine local areas. An analysis on the proposed return on that investment will help clarify intended outcomes and should enable you to conclude substantial and substantive regional planning is already occurring. Now is not the time to further complicate our system's ability to be nimble, to be inclusive and to meet the needs of those we serve.

**Attachments:**

September 2015, Letter to the Governor from PacMtn CLEO and Chair  
June 2015, Letter to WTECB from PacMtn CLEO and Chair



September 29, 2015

Governor Inslee  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

**Subject: Workforce Planning Regions**

Dear Governor Inslee:

We hope you will affirm the WTECB recommendation that our 5 counties maintain ourselves as the regional workforce planning area. The affirmation of PacMtn's current boundaries as a workforce planning region is correct. Our region, representing Lewis, Mason, Thurston, Pacific and Grays Harbor counties, has been in place for more than 30 years and has historically convened and lead regional planning efforts that benefit the economy and the workforce. Our work is demonstrable and supported by our economic development partners. We continue to do this work because our coordinated and focused work with regional economic development partners is critical to the service of our two primary customers-- businesses and career seekers.

We know the efforts of the State Workforce Education and Training Coordinating (Workforce) Board to comply with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) are complicated and full of multiple perspectives. However, it is essential local elected official partnerships with you remain strong and at the forefront of decision-making. The Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) in workforce areas are champions for jobs and a thriving economy. Our colleagues reviewed a variety of materials and sought knowledgeable counsel to make their recommendation to continue the boundaries of the workforce development council as a planning region. Like ours, we believe their recommendation was based upon data and real experience in their workforce areas. Please carefully consider the feedback sent by the CLEOs and rely heavily upon that local counsel when making this decision.

As you wish, you could preserve your right to consider other planning area boundaries once we are beyond some of the transformations directed by WIOA. Affording this time will enable further review of the data and testing of assumptions in and amongst local areas. It will open other lines of focused communication on the matter. Rushing into such an important decision rarely serves the desired outcome.



We appreciate the support you and your administration gives to the development of our State's workforce. From your efforts to hire veterans to the funding you provided youth and young adults needing employment you have shown your commitment to work with business and organizations to put people to work. We honor that work and know the tangible benefit to our region.

Sincerely,

Steve Rogers  
Commissioner, Pacific County  
PacMtn Chief Local Elected Official

Tanya Dierick  
Simpson Human Resources Director  
Chair, PacMtn WDC

- Cc: Perry England, Chair WTECB Board  
Chandler and Johnson, Co-Chairs WIOA Local Governance Sub-Committee  
Dale Peinecke, Employment Security Division  
Eleni Papadakis, Executive Director WTECB Board  
Xandre Chateaubriand, Governor Policy Advisor  
Cheryl B. Fambles, CEO PacMtn  
The Honorable Charlotte Garrido  
The Honorable Steve Rogers  
The Honorable Ken Dahlstedt  
The Honorable John Lovick  
The Honorable Dow Constantine  
The Honorable Mayor Ed Murray  
Pat McCarthy, Pierce County Executive  
Marilyn Strickland, Mayor City of Tacoma  
The Honorable Dan Cothren  
The Honorable Keith Goehner  
The Honorable Kevin Bouchey  
The Honorable Scott Hutsell  
The Honorable James Beaver  
The Honorable Rick Miller, Commissioner  
The Honorable Shelly O'Quinn, Commissioner  
The Honorable David Condon, Mayor, City of Spokane

June 29, 2015

Agnes Balassa, Employment Security Division  
Co-Chairs of the Local Governance and Sectors Sub-Committee  
Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board  
PO Box 43105  
Olympia, WA 98504-3105

Subject: Planning Regions

Dear Ms. Balassa and Co-Chairs Chandler and Johnson,

Thank you for the work you are doing on behalf of the Washington State workforce development system and the Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council (PacMtn WDC.) We received your correspondence regarding the State Workforce Education and Training Coordinating Board's efforts to comply with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act's (WIOA) requirement for planning regions. The PacMtn Workforce Development Consortium and Council are already functioning as a region envisioned by the Opportunity Act. We think your affirmation of us as a planning region will best serve customers and the evolution of a dynamic workforce system. We greatly value the opportunity to provide consultation concerning this significant matter.

The PacMtn WDC region represents five Local Areas: Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, and Thurston Counties. Throughout the years the PacMtn Consortium (Chief Local Elected Official), PacMtn WDC, staff, and partners representing in the Workforce Area have demonstrated a strong commitment to inclusion and active engagement of the two customers we represent: businesses and career seekers. We have done that across county lines and in concert with each other. Our recent work with the Opportunity Act (WIOA) has enhanced our capabilities to do this work even better.

The Pacific Mountain Workforce Development region, representing the five local areas, has been in place for more than 30 years and has historically convened and lead regional planning efforts. The 2007 federal WIRED grant (Workforce Innovations in Regional Economic Development) set the PacMtn region on a course to elevate the purpose of regional planning. Through the funding afforded only 39 of the 600+ workforce areas in

the nation, PacMtn solidified our regional commitments and established the necessary relationships, actions and commitments for system transformation.

We have strong enduring relationships with our Economic Development Councils (EDCs) in each of the counties. The EDCs are the Washington State Department of Commerce designated Associate Development Organizations (ADOs) who are the lead economic development agencies for their respective counties. The region's economies share many similarities, and its sectors create the foundation that supports the skills training and talent development strategies to sculpt, integrate and transform the economic landscape across our region and beyond. This understanding was the foundation of our published Industry Cluster Study wherein we identified the five key industries that region-wide would benefit from a coordinated strategy. This theme was jointly embraced by the workforce professionals in PacMtn as well as the economic development practitioners.

The EDCs subsequently formed the PAC5 Economic Development Network. The purpose of the PAC5 Regional Economic Development Network is to develop an annual work program and implementation strategy that is focused around the core of recruitment of new regional investment and employment opportunities, retain the region's existing employment base, and the expansion of regional market opportunities, to participate in joint efforts to support the pursuit of resources that will benefit the region and state, and to seek federal designation and recognition as planning area.

The Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council believes in inclusive, common sense process that has shaped powerful collaborations in both contiguous and non-contiguous areas. An excellent example is our Camo2Commerce program, we partner with the Pierce County Workforce Development on a \$5.5 million dollar project to serve 900 transitioning Veterans. We are in discussions to not only continue this project but work with our other Workforce Development Councils across the state to expand this program to all Washington state military installations and their transitioning Veterans. These types of partnerships will continue to naturally form with our without formal boundary requirements, in fact, such boundaries may create barriers without benefit.

We understand that business sector needs move and evolve and that data changes over time, therefore influencing the process for mapping. We have reviewed the materials provided in your correspondence and though we agree that regional planning is imperative we are concerned about delineating regional boundaries beyond what

already exists in our 7200 square mile area. Our years of work and relationship building are culminating to bring new light into our workforce development system, with the discussion of regional planning areas as presented in your letter, begs the question; how often will regions change and at what monetary and collaborative expense?

We identify that now is a time for change and we would like to recognize the efforts and accomplishments that Washington state and its local workforce development areas have made. The relationships that we have and continue to cultivate and forge at the state, local, and cross regional levels are unprecedented in the Nation. The PacMtn Workforce Development Council is an example of a regional planning area that is and continues to be successful. Because of that, we request the Governor designate our workforce development area (WDA 2) as a region that falls within the boundaries of our current area: Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific and Thurston counties.

Sincerely,



**Steve Rogers**  
Commissioner, Pacific County  
Chief Local Elected Official



**Tanya Dierick**  
Simpson Human Resources Director  
Chair, PacMtn WDC

Cc: Cheryl B. Fambles, CEO

October 15, 2015

Honorable Jay Inslee  
State of Washington  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

RE: WIOA Planning Regions

Dear Governor Inslee:

The Consortium of County Commissioners representing Yakima, Kittitas, Klickitat and Skamania Counties (WIOA Workforce Development Area IX) have met and reviewed the state workforce board's recommendation for planning regions under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. After considering the information presented by state staff and their recommendation to combine twenty Eastern Washington Counties into a single planning region, we are compelled to voice both our objection to the proposed planning region and our concern regarding the state's process in implementing the new legislation.

After review of the state staff's recommendation and their supporting information provided to the state board, we cannot find the logic in creating a planning region that stretches from the Canadian to the Oregon borders. Geographically this region is over 41,323 square miles in size, which is larger than 15 states of the union. Driving time from Stevenson (the Skamania county seat) to Colville (the Stevens county seat) is near seven hours. While this represents one of the furthest distances, travel time between major population centers is far as well. From Yakima to Colville is 4.5 hours, to Wenatchee is 2 hours and Kennewick 1.5 hours. Bear in mind the travel times cited represent ideal weather conditions.

Those who have spent time in Eastern Washington are very aware that travel conditions change dramatically in winter months. Icy roads, heavy snow fall and mountainous terrain not only reduces travel time but under extreme weather conditions makes traveling hazardous. The vast distances and severe winter weather conditions not only limits face to face meetings of local boards, but is also a primary reason for limited worker commutes between the Eastern Washington local which was cited in our previous letter.

When considering the commute pattern information provided by state staff, we could not find a logical basis for combining the twenty counties into a single region. While we certainly acknowledge there are workers that travel between lower Yakima County and the Benton-Franklin WDA, we saw no information showing significant commutes between South Central and North Central; and between South Central and the Eastern Washington Partnership.

Regarding common industry sectors in Eastern Washington Counties, state staff pointed to agriculture, clean technology, energy and utilities; and trade, warehousing and transportation. Although agriculture industries are a large part of Eastern Washington economies, this is a very broad classification which is present in every county of Washington State. To simply lump agriculture together ignores the uniqueness of agri-business and their impact on the workforce. For example, the far eastern counties are dominated

by hay and grain crops which are highly mechanized and put lower labor demands on labor supplies as contrasted to the central Washington counties that have higher concentration of soft fruit and row crop farms that require a major supply of manual labor.

While clean technology and energy emerged as high profile industries in the early part of the decade, industries such as, wind, solar and server farms employ relative low numbers of workers. Like agriculture, warehousing and transportation are prevalent across the state, however, for the Eastern Washington counties, these businesses are highly localized which makes it impractical to develop and implement workforce training programs across a vast geographic region.

In closing, we wish to express our disappointment with the process undertaken to transition to WIOA. It is our understanding that the designation of regions required consultation with local elected officials. Our local area did received an invitation to comment and we promptly responded asking that our local area be considered a planning region on its own. Further, we understand that this same sentiment was expressed by all chief local elected officials and their boards for their respective areas; and was communicated to you by our representative Commissioner Kenneth Dahlstedt in a September 15, 2015 letter.

Despite the time and attention put forth on this matter, state staff have moved forward with a recommendation to create planning regions contrary to the wishes of the local elected officials for the twelve workforce development areas. This is concerning for us in Eastern Washington given the limited information provided by staff to serve as a foundation for the decision, as well as the impracticality of forming relationships in a regional area that geographically is larger than almost a third of the states in the union. Finally, in a time with limited workforce funding, we need to focus our energy on developing solutions that address the needs of local area's workers and employers as opposed to diluting our time and precious resources in a bureaucratic process that will truly have little impact to the communities we serve.

Unless there is a compelling argument that would justify creating a planning region this large, we ask that you honor our original request to designate the South Central Workforce Development Area, comprised of Yakima, Kittitas, Klickitat and Skamania Counties as its own planning region.

Sincerely,

Kevin Bouchey, Yakima County Commissioner

Paul Jewell, Kittitas County Commissioner

Dennis Flabetich, South Central Workforce Council Chair

Jim Sizemore, Klickitat County Commissioner

Bob Hamlin, Skamania County Commissioner

Cc: Tom Dent, State Representative, 13<sup>th</sup> District  
Matt Manweller, State Representative, 13<sup>th</sup> District  
Norm Johnson, State Representative, 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Gina McCabe, State Representative, 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Bruce Chandler, State Representative, 15<sup>th</sup> District  
David Taylor, State Representative, 15<sup>th</sup> District  
Judy Warnick, Senator, 13<sup>th</sup> District  
Curtis King, Senator, 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Jim Honeyford, Senator, 15<sup>th</sup> District  
Ken Dahlstedt, Commissioner, Skagit County  
Keith Goehner, Commissioner, Chelan County  
Scott Hutsell, Commissioner, Lincoln County  
James Beaver, Commissioner, Benton County  
Rick Miller, Commissioner, Franklin County  
Perry England, Chair, Workforce Education & Coordinating Board  
Eleni Papadakis, Director, Workforce Education & Coordinating Board



October 14, 2015

Governor Jay Inslee  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Chair Perry England  
Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board  
PO Box 43105  
Olympia, WA 98504-3105

**Subject: Input on Seattle-King County's Designation as a Workforce Region**

Dear Governor Inslee and Chair England,

As the Chief Elected Officials, Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (the "WDC") Chair, and Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County CEO, we thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on Washington State's regional designation under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act ("WIOA"). This letter reiterates the position we expressed in our June 30<sup>th</sup> letter, which is that King County should be designated as a single region.

As we embark upon implementation of WIOA, we see the many opportunities it provides us to build upon the many workforce development successes in our state and in Seattle-King County. We are excited for the opportunities WIOA provides local workforce development boards in leading and convening industry, education, and labor leaders to develop job-driven solutions that connect jobseekers to the skills that employers demand.

The Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County, hereinafter referred to as WDC, has historically partnered with entities within Seattle-King County, throughout the Puget Sound, and across the state to innovate across city and county lines. The WDC has a strong and extensive history of partnering and planning regionally, and hopes to continue to work with other workforce development boards across the state, and between states, with workforce development areas that are both contiguous and non-contiguous.

The WDC serves and oversees a workforce development system in a vast area in size and scope, a region that comprises urban and rural areas, diverse residents, and a wide range of industries.

- **Seattle-King County's Economy:** King County's jobs number 1.2 million and represent over 30% of the state's economy. There are over 74,000 businesses within the County and 23 Chambers of Commerce. Whereas just over 9 percent of Washington residents live in the City of Seattle, Seattle comprises nearly 19 percent of the nearly 3 million jobs statewide. **King County's economy represents 40% of the jobs and half of the payroll of Washington State.**
- **Seattle-King County's Workforce:** Within King County, there are 39 cities as well as sub-regions with large populations themselves that have distinct workforce needs and opportunities. As the largest County in Washington State, King County's population of over 2 million makes up 30% of the state's population. King County residents speak over 170 different languages and are increasingly diverse as the County continues to grow. Approximately 23 percent of Washington State's \$150 billion in wages are earned in Seattle, and 16 percent of the state's nearly \$110 billion in taxable retail sales occur in the city. **In fact, 85% of King County's workforce works in King County.**
- **Seattle-King County's Sector Strategies:** The size and scope of King County's economy and workforce parallel no other county in the state, and thus necessitate the WDC to develop sector partnerships with neighboring workforce development areas as well as those across the state and nation. In our swiftly changing economy, the WDC must remain flexible in its ability to most effectively serve the dynamic needs of businesses. Physical location is rarely static for business, and closures and startups are impossible to forecast. **The WDC is able to shift local strategies to address workforce needs of industries moving in and out of the area because of its Seattle and King County focus.**
- **Seattle-King County's Distinctive Service-Delivery Model:** The WDC's distinctive service-delivery model has led the State in transforming its local WorkSource system to better meet the needs of jobseekers, workers, and employers. Quite different than the other three local areas proposed in the Puget Sound Region, the WDC led WorkSource Seattle-King County efforts to identify system-wide needs of (1) career services redesign and integration, (2) staff training and curriculum development, and (3) marketing and in-community outreach. Fostering strong relationships with 11 King County colleges and 19 King County K-12 school districts has been integral to identifying key partners in this transformation. With 1 WorkSource Full Service Center, 6 WorkSource Affiliate Sites, and 22 WorkSource Connection Sites, the WDC continues to strategically locate its WorkSource sites based on community need. **Seattle-King County's model currently leads integrated service-delivery efforts across the state and its ability to adapt to the workforce needs of its jobseekers, workers, and employers is essential to its success.**

The recommended Puget Sound region would include six counties and four local workforce areas with incongruent local economies, dissimilar one-stop customer demographics, and distinctive service-delivery efforts. The data included in the State Board's recommendation takes none of these points into account. A region this large would also constrain the WDC's ability to collaborate across areas due to additional expenses, limited staff capacity, and inflexible guidelines for partnering. Seattle-King County's unique workforce development system characteristics demonstrate the necessity and importance of designating King County as its own region.

As described above, the WDC has excelled in its ability to convene industry leaders regionally and statewide to effectively serve a vast and diverse economy and workforce. Maintaining the designation of King County as its own workforce region will allow the WDC to continue to build on strong partnerships that lead to innovative workforce solutions. **For these reasons, we strongly recommend that Seattle-King County be designated as a region unto itself for the purposes of regional planning as described in WIOA.**

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration and look forward to our continued collaboration.

Sincerely,



Executive Dow Constantine  
King County



Edward B. Murray  
Mayor, City of Seattle



Tom Peterson  
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King  
County Chair



Marléna Sessions  
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King  
County CEO

October 7, 2015

Eleni Papadakis, Executive Director  
WA Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

Dear Ms. Papadakis,

As the WDC 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair, of the Pierce County Workforce development Council I am in part responsible for ensuring that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act of 2014 (WIOA) is locally implemented as mandated and envisioned in partnership with our Chief Elected Officials.

I am writing to express my concern about the way in which the proposed designation of planning regions was issued for public comment. We understand that this is an important decision for you and we want to make sure that you are provided with a final recommendation from the state Workforce Board that has been vetted by all stakeholders including Local Workforce Development Boards from throughout Washington State and by appointed members of the WIOA transition committees, subcommittees and task forces.

Concerns are as follows:

- The state Workforce Board's Sector Task Force, Sectors and Governance Committee and the Steering Committee did not have a comprehensive discussion on what factors and data to use in evaluating planning regions. In fact, the proposed designation of planning regions was not even brought to these committees and task force for discussion, evaluation, and development of a recommendation before it was unveiled for the first time at the state Workforce Board meeting on September 17<sup>th</sup> for action to release for public comment. This is problematic as the process by which to obtain the expertise and input from partners, as in other key decisions made to date, was not utilized, thus violating the state Workforce Board's commitment to transparency.
- The data used to arrive at the proposed planning regions is incomplete as it did not take into account the federal and non-federal resources necessary to effectively administer WIOA Title 1 activities, commute patterns of Title 1 job seeker customers instead of the general public, key Governor and local sectors were not considered comprehensively, local policies that include minimum wage and sick leave differences, public transportation access, and other factors that the stakeholders from the appropriate committees, subcommittees and task forces could have identified. The use of incomplete data has led to a flawed rationale for the released proposed regions.
- The analysis used to support the proposed planning regions is inconsistent. Some proposed regions had supporting data that demonstrated the similarity and differences of each workforce development area while other regions lacked this analysis.

- No consultation with Local Workforce Development Boards of the proposed planning regions prior to its release for public comment. The WIOA law is clear in Section 106(a)(1) where it reads "...a state shall identify regions in the state after consultation with the local boards and Chief Elected Officials in the local areas..."
- Not honoring the uniform recommendation of Local Workforce Development Boards. Prior to the release of the proposed planning regions designation, the state Workforce Board solicited comment on planning regions designation from Local Workforce Boards from all 12 workforce development areas. After much discussion and consideration my peers and we advised the state Workforce Board that each current workforce development area effectively represents a distinct planning region.

Throughout the 12 workforce development areas, Workforce Development Councils have established a firm foundation for cross regional planning and workforce solutions to meet the intent of WIOA.

Regional collaboration that includes both contiguous and non-contiguous workforce development areas is working well in our state and that these partnerships will continue without formal requirements to conduct regional planning. Identifying single local workforce areas as their own planning regions allows WDCs the flexibility to strategically partner with one another throughout the state to address workforce issues and needs as they emerge as a result of the natural shifts that occur with our workforce and economy.

Given the importance and impact of this decision, I recommend that you take a step back and bring the proposed planning regions back to the appropriate committee, subcommittee and task force for discussion.

Regards,



Joyce Conner, Sr. Business Development Manager  
Volt Workforce Solutions  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair, Pierce County WDC

CC: Workforce Central Executive Board Members  
WDC Members



October 5, 2015

Eleni Papadakis, Director  
Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board  
PO Box 43105  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Eleni:

Thank you for the opportunity to review proposed regions for planning under the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

As we have heard, regional planning has potential to support improved continuity throughout the system, serving workers and businesses across labor markets. The proposed map, for the most part, moves us in that direction. From ongoing conversations my staff have been engaged in at the subcommittee level, it is clear that Snohomish, King and Pierce share a regional economy, as do Southwest with Portland metro.

That said, we question the inclusion of Olympic, which from our experience shares characteristics similar to Pacific Mountain more so than with the I-5 corridor. I feel a three county region, removing Olympic, makes better sense.

Further, I welcome the next step of discussing the contents of regional plans, to ensure this process results in value added to the customers and system moving forward.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey G. Johnson  
President

JGJ:jh  
opeiu8/afl-cio

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**Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO**

Jeff Johnson, President • Lynne Dodson, Secretary Treasurer  
321 16th Avenue South • Seattle, Washington 98144

Phone: 206.281.8901 and 1.800.542.0904 • Fax: 206.285.5805 • Web: [www.wslc.org](http://www.wslc.org) and [www.thestand.org](http://www.thestand.org) • Email: [wslc@wslc.org](mailto:wslc@wslc.org)

October 16, 2015

Honorable Jay Inslee, Governor  
State of Washington  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee:

I am writing as the chief local elected official representing the local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) of Clark, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties.

The State of Washington's Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) is currently discussing the establishment of regions for the purpose of workforce development activities in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. The plans as presented by the WTECB appropriately and correctly identified SW Washington Workforce Development area as a three-county region and we urge you to accept this plan.

Our SW Washington, three-county consortium has a rich and successful history of cooperation and strong partnership in overseeing local workforce programs. Further, for the past ten years, we have engaged in a bi-state, six-county collaborative with two LWDBs in Oregon. The [Columbia Willamette Workforce Collaborative](#) (CWWC) proactively seeks solutions to workforce problems through sector strategies, alignment of the WorkSource service providers and by coordinated information gathering and planning. We have collectively raised more than \$20 million to support regional sector work which we leverage with our Workforce Investment Act, now WIOA, formula funds. As a result, we are serving industry and job candidates quicker and better.

Over the next 6 months, the CWWC will create a regional plan that will involve stakeholders from throughout the six-county region. Our plan will focus on sectors and on creating a validated workforce to serve business needs.

As the state considers the establishment of regions under WIOA, I urge you to carefully consider the information provided by local elected officials. As stewards of our local workforce systems, my colleagues across the state are best suited to understand their area's workforce needs, to create and manage partnerships and to ensure that both businesses and job candidates receive high quality services from the public workforce system.

Thank you for the support you have provided to the development of our state's workforce. We appreciate the emphasis you have placed on training long term unemployed, youth, veterans, and those with barriers to employment while stressing the importance of supporting business needs. We will continue to be your partner in this work and look forward to the full implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in the coming years.

Sincerely,



Dan Cothren, Commissioner  
Wahkiakum County  
Chief Local Elected Official, SWWDC

cc: Perry England, Chair, State of Washington WETCB  
Eleni Papadakis, Executive Director, WTECB  
Xandre Chateaubriand, Governor Policy Advisor  
Dale Peinecke, Employment Security Division  
Commission Michael A. Karnofski, Cowlitz County  
Councilor Jeanne Stewart, Clark County  
John Vanderkin, Chair, Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council  
Jeanne Bennett, CEO, Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council

ph 360.567.1070  
fax 360.567.1054  
[www.swwdc.org](http://www.swwdc.org)