



STATE OF WASHINGTON

WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

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April 28, 2011

Sent to all state legislators
and Washington's congressional delegation

Driven by the immediacy of over 300,000 unemployed Washington workers and a slow economic recovery, local and state workforce professionals and businesses are working together to get our economy and workers back on track through an initiative called Retooling Washington's Workforce. This letter provides you with a brief overview of that initiative and data about the unemployed in your area and statewide.

The initiative involves three strategies, selected for their likelihood to achieve results within 18 months:

- 1) Targeted outreach and coordination of ongoing efforts at the local and state levels to assist the 48,000 (and growing) workers who have exhausted all of their unemployment insurance benefits.
- 2) Coordinated business outreach among a wide range of partners and improving WorkSource Center job matching services.
- 3) More accessible On-The-Job and direct connect training to encourage employers to hire sooner and particularly hire from our ranks of unemployed.

Retooling Washington was spearheaded by the state's Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board and has included the guidance and active participation of hundreds of local and state workforce and economic development professionals, as well as business and labor representatives across the Washington.

We have included a spreadsheet showing the number of your constituents who are claiming unemployment insurance, the economic impact of those benefits and the number of constituents who have exhausted their benefits.



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The state's Employment Security Department is providing the Retooling Washington initiative and its partners detailed data reports on the exhaustee population, including demographics and their field of work. The agency is also currently conducting a survey of this population to learn more about their employment situation.

We will soon review our initial efforts in collecting data, channeling resources and setting performance measures at the six-month mark in June. We would like to report back at a later date on the progress of Retooling Washington. Until then, you can track activities at: www.wtb.wa.gov/retoolingwashington.asp.

Sincerely,



Cindy Zehnder
Workforce Board Chair

Enclosure