

**WASHINGTON STATE
WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD
MEETING NO. 192
October 21, 2015**

REGIONS MAP

Background

Assignment of workforce planning regions is now a provision of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Under the Act, the Governor must develop a policy for assigning workforce planning regions, defining the factors and process to be used, before a state plan is submitted. The Act further requires consultation with local workforce development boards and chief local elected officials prior to the assignment of workforce regions, as well as an opportunity for public comment.

In June, the Workforce Board requested input from local workforce development boards and chief local elected officials concerning assignment of workforce planning regions.

On July 14, 2015 the Regions Taskforce convened to review the Act's requirements. Members asked that the regions policy mirror the Act as closely as possible. They asked that the policy clarify the continued autonomy of local workforce development boards and the expectation that local areas be consulted prior to the assignment of regions. The key points were subsequently approved by the WIOA Steering Committee and the full Workforce Board. These were drafted into the policy, and submitted for public comment.

Employment Security Department and Workforce Board staff developed maps, based on the policy factors including: labor sheds based on population centers, commute patterns, existing economic development regions, and industry concentrations based on location quotients. Additional factors included locally identified sectors and formalized regional planning approaches developed by local workforce development boards.

During September's Workforce Board meeting, staff presented on the regional maps, and provided an analysis of the factors that led to a map recommendation with six designated workforce regions. The Workforce Board approved the recommendation to submit the proposed regional map for a 30-day public comment period.

The public comment period opened on September 18, following the Board's meeting. During the past 30 days, Workforce Board staff officially logged 12 public comments and copies of letters.

On October 6 the WIOA Steering Committee agenda included a regions presentation. Co-chair Gary Chandler shared his concern about ensuring adequate access and time for stakeholder review, based on copies of letters received during the comment period. A motion was made and seconded to recommend to the Workforce Board that a decision on regions be postponed to allow additional time for review and comment. Further, it was recommended that the November

10 Steering Committee agenda include a second discussion on regions, to allow for a fully vetted recommendation for presentation at the November 19 Workforce Board meeting.

Recommendation: The Workforce Board approve a recommendation to delay the proposed designation of workforce regions until the November Board meeting. Further the Workforce Board directs the WIOA Steering Committee to fully vet the regions plan and bring their Committee recommendation to the Board at the November meeting.

**RECOMMENDED MOTION
WORKFORCE REGIONS DESIGNATION**

WHEREAS, The Workforce Board approved a six-region Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) planning map be submitted for a 30-day comment period; and

WHEREAS, The WIOA Steering Committee has requested that they be allowed an opportunity to provide additional review and stakeholder input into the regional planning process; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board approves a recommendation to send the discussion on regional planning areas back to the WIOA Steering Committee for further review and stakeholder input; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The WIOA Steering Committee will bring a recommendation on planning regions to the Board for action at the November meeting.