



Florida Workforce Development Association

Florida 2020 Legislative Agenda

Items one and two, in that order, are the top FWDA priorities.

1. Florida Business and Workforce Competitiveness Fund

Restrictions placed on federal dollars often hamper creativity and nimbleness when trying to respond to the training needs of businesses. Non-federal dollars would give us the flexibility and nimbleness to respond to employer needs in creative ways. For example, when using our workforce funding for Apprenticeships, we are limited to WIOA eligibility requirements which directs the funds to people with barriers to employment. This limits our capability to help many businesses. If you are a student living with your parents and going to school, you are usually under their income requirements.

Since Businesses pay into the unemployment compensation program, it makes sense to use some of that money when the fund is flush to meet employers needs for talent. It would help put the unemployed back to work and move the underemployed up the wage ladder. The proposal seeks no increase in taxes and would be suspended when funding is needed by the unemployment compensation fund.

2. Support full use of the Sadowski Act funding for affordable housing benefiting employers, the workforce and seniors.

Lack of affordable housing has now been identified as a major barrier to attracting and retaining our workforce. The ALICE report shows that a significant number of households young and old are cost burdened in securing housing. We recommend full funding of the Sadowski Act for the purposes of affordable housing.

3. Modify FS446 to continue Apprenticeship Expansion

The 2019 Legislature took bold steps to increase workforce competitiveness with changes to FS 446 to expand Apprenticeship Training. We believe additional changes would continue that expansion and would be in line with Gubernatorial and legislative intent. These changes are:

- a. Have pre-apprentices covered by state worker compensation coverage similar to that which is provided to work experience participants. This would be for pre-apprentices 18 and under.
- b. Allow Bright Futures scholarships to be used to fund apprenticeships and career and technical education.
- c. Eliminate tuition and fee exemption for students in Apprenticeship programs in school districts, or colleges or university degree seeking or career certificate programs. Exemption currently exists in FSS 1009.25.
- d. Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Programs are a recent expansion of the path to apprenticeships by the US Department of Labor. We recommend no further restrictions at the legislative or administrative level. Please allow all the flexibility allowed under the new rules from the US Department of Labor.

4. The CareerSource network should be a single source for a wide range of talent within Florida.

Employ Florida should connect with graduates from our High Schools, State College and State University Systems. Current systems should link with Employ Florida. This would improve the career links for all graduates of our educational system. It would also improve coordination and reduction of unnecessary duplication. Employers would have a single source for all their talent needs.