



Congress Must Tackle the Youth Jobs Crisis By Funding Job Training Programs

An ongoing youth employment crisis is denying millions of young people the opportunity to become engaged citizens and taxpayers, including 6.5 million young adults between the ages of 14 and 24 who are out of school and out of work. **Congress needs to act by fully funding federal workforce programs for youth in fiscal year 2017.**

The situation is dire by historical standards: the Brookings Institution reports that 16-19 year-olds experienced the most dramatic decline in employment rates of any group, **plummeting from 45 percent in 2000 to 26 percent in 2011**—the lowest rate for teens in the post-World War II era.

The youth employment crisis has disastrous consequences for them and for society. According to Opportunity Nation:

- Persistent high unemployment among young people adds up to \$25 billion each year in uncollected taxes and increased safety net expenditures.
- Every unemployed 18-24 year-old costs federal and state governments more than \$4,100 a year in forgone tax revenue and benefits received.
- If youth unemployment were reduced to its pre-recession rate, the federal government would recoup \$7.8 billion, or \$53 per taxpayer, and state and local governments would recoup \$1.1 billion

Congress has acted recently to address this problem. The 2014 passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) increased focus on providing education and employment opportunities for out-of-school youth and connecting them to career pathways leading to in-demand jobs. **Now Congressional appropriations committees need to follow through on its commitment: The House and Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations (Labor-H) Subcommittees need to fund WIOA youth activities in fiscal year 2017 at least at the authorized levels,** and should consider additional funding to erase cuts made in recent years.

House Labor-H Subcommittee Chair: Rep. Tom Cole, (202) 225-6165

Senate Labor-H Subcommittee Chair: Sen. Roy Blunt, (202) 224-5721

The **National Youth Employment Coalition** (NYEC) is a 36-year-old national membership network that collects and disseminates best practices in serving opportunity youth across the fields of youth development, education, and workforce development, and rehabilitation services. Our members include youth program providers, public agencies, workforce boards, technical assistance providers, intermediary networks, research and policy organizations, foundations, and others. For more information, please contact Thomas Showalter, NYEC Director, at thomas.showalter@nyec.org.