

Metro South/West Workforce WIOA Board Meeting
Minutes January 25, 2024

Members on Zoom: Lisa Kubiak, Chair, Bob Bower, Shannon Laingen, Rev. Lloyd , Kevin O’Connor, Rosemary Alexander, John Bogdan, Patrick Davis, Brandy DeBarge, Mark Fegley, Charles Gagnon, Bob Ganong, Walter Gardner, Jennifer Jackson, Sue Medeiros, Tom O’Rourke, Jason Palitsch, Nick Pavone, David Podell, Dan Rediger, Mary Lou Regan Chris Vericker

Members absent: Ernie Houle

Other: General Manger Norwood: Tony Mazucco; Metro South/West Workforce Board Staff: Henry, Bryson, Greg Bunn, Zoie Jaklitsch, Tricia Lucier, Sean Marshall, Louise Meyer, Carol Wolf; Admin Consultant: Cindy Cedrone

Guest: Pablo Suarez, MTF

Welcome, Introductions

Greg Bunn welcomed Pablo Suarez from Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation and had everyone introduce themselves.

Review of Agenda, Approval of October 19, 2023 Minutes

Lisa Kubiak asked for a motion to approve the October 19, 2023 minutes. Bob Bower made a motion, Patrick Davis seconded. Motion passed.

Massachusetts Taxpayer Foundation Presentation: Mass Workforce Investments: Understanding State Investments

Pablo Suarez, Policy Researcher, from MTF gave a presentation on Massachusetts Workforce Investments: Understanding State Investments. (Slides attached.) He said there was a need to identify, organize, and analyze the state’s vast workforce system, by providing an understanding of how the workforce system is structured, showing how investments in state budgets for workforce programs have changed over the past five years, and to identify challenges and make better recommendations for how the system could be improved to maximize investments and better address workforce challenges. He said the research focuses on answering these three questions: 1. How can the state better coordinate workforce investments? 2. How to ensure funding is being effectively invested? 3. How to make federal, state and local workforce investments work together? He noted that support has significantly increased over the past five fiscal years, that programs often overlap in policy goals and target populations and that the lack of timely, consistent, and useful data makes informed resource decisions challenging. He also noted that there is a broad distribution of funds, that increased investments have led to more individuals being served and that several of the largest sector-based workforce programs rely on current regional labor needs. He also said the analysis provides reporting structures that could be considered as a starting framework, while others leave room for improvement. The board members agreed that the overview was a great resource to look at regional needs. Greg noted that it highlights the difficulty of sharing data between agencies, and he would like to see it operationalized. The slides will be sent along with a link for a MTF’s On-line Open House/Governor Healey’s FY25 Budget Briefing on January 25, 2024.

New Migrant Shelter Funding Available

Greg reported that the workforce boards had been notified that there would be funding, from the supplemental budget, to help serve migrant families, MSW's portion being \$266K that, along with other challenging restrictions, had to be spent by June 30. After a public comment forum and revising of the requirements, a proposal was submitted on January 24, 2024. It included two pilot programs. One with Newton Wellesley Hospital/MassGeneral with JVS to serve 50 people with contextualized English and support, to secure jobs and help the hospital fill open positions.

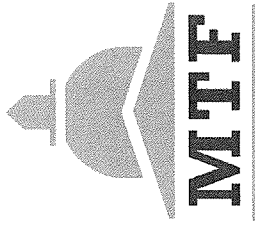
The other is with Marlborough and Framingham with a Behavioral Health program, mapping needs and training 10 individuals with contextualized English and support.

Chris Vericker asked about the connection with the original pilot program. Greg said this was in addition to and would complement the program. He also noted that along with language barriers, housing, transportation and childcare needs were also high priorities.

Other Business

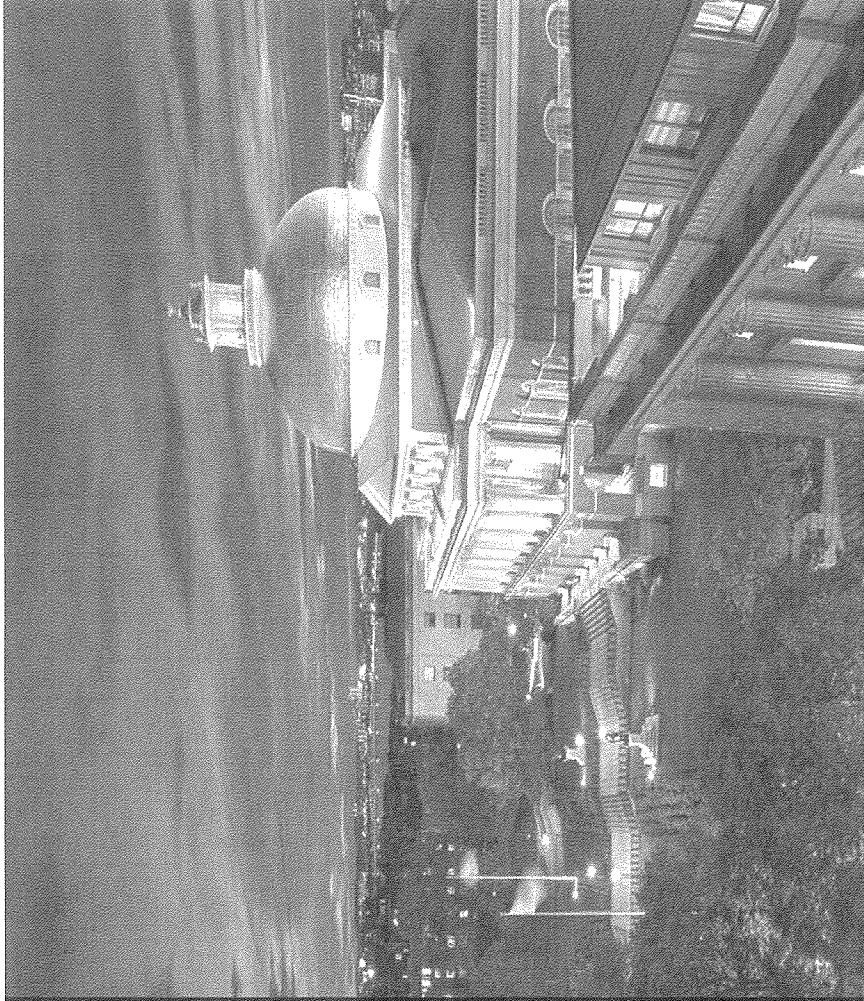
Greg noted the positive news from the FY25 Budget was that the One-Stop funding had been brought up to \$10M. He also reported that a position had been filled for the Director of Business Partnerships, starting on February 12, 2024.

Lisa asked for a motion to adjourn. Charles Gagnon made a motion; Walter Gardner seconded. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.



**Massachusetts
Taxpayers Foundation**

Massachusetts Workforce: Investments: Understanding State Investments



Outline

- I. Purpose of this Research
- II. Defining Workforce
- III. Funding Trends
- IV. Individual Workforce and Sector-Based Programs
- V. Summing Up



About MTF

Founded in 1932, the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation (MTF) is a non-profit, non-partisan public policy organization focused on state and local fiscal, tax and economic policies.

MTF's record of high quality research and non-partisan analysis has earned the organization broad credibility on Beacon Hill and across the Commonwealth.

Our mission is to provide accurate, unbiased research with thoughtful recommendations that strengthen the state's finances and economy to foster the long-term well-being of the Commonwealth and economic opportunity for all.





Purpose of this Research

MTF & Workforce

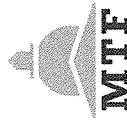
Why Focus on Workforce Development?

- The pandemic expedited pre-existing demographic trends that threaten the state's ability to fulfill its workforce needs and maintain a thriving and equitable economy.
- As result, state workforce investments over the past five years have significantly increased.
- However, the nature of the state's workforce system and a lack of sufficient data collection creates challenges to analyzing and maximizing these additional investments.

Why MTF?

- MTF's mission of promoting sustainable and equitable growth in the Commonwealth is well aligned with policy issues connected to the Massachusetts workforce.
- MTF has a history and expertise in workforce related policy issues (e.g. early education and transportation).

There is a need to identify, organize, and analyze the state's vast workforce system.



Key Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to:

- Provide an understanding of how the workforce system is structured.
- Show how investments in state budgets for workforce programs have changed over the past five years.
- Identify challenges and make recommendations for how the system could be improved to maximize our investments and better address our workforce challenges.

The research focuses on answering three questions:

- How can the state better coordinate workforce investments?
- How do we ensure funding is being effectively invested?
- How do we make federal, state, and local workforce investments work together?



Defining Workforce

Defining Workforce Programs

MTF classifies line items in the state budget as a workforce development program if it includes the following characteristics:

- Provides direct training for employment
- Reduces cost of skill development
- Reduces vocational barriers
- Offers services that support stable and sustainable job opportunities for:
 - Unemployed individuals
 - Underemployed individuals
 - Eligible youth population (e.g., economically disadvantaged or at-risk)

Included

Adult Basic Education (ABE)
The Early College Program

Not Included

Funding for Community Colleges
Local earmarks for individual organizations



System Overview

There are 43 workforce programs that are administered by at least 16 distinct public entities that fall under secretariats, departments, and quasi-public agencies.

Most workforce development line items fall under three secretariats:

- The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development
- The Executive Office of Education
- The Executive Office of Health and Human Services

MTF's analysis includes workforce programs administered by two quasi-public agencies:

- The Commonwealth Corporation
- The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative

These efforts are coordinated by the Workforce Skills Cabinet



Workforce Skills Cabinet

The Workforce Skills Cabinet was created to better coordinate the state's response to workforce needs by:

- conceptualizing cross-sector initiatives
- promoting inter-agency collaboration
- sharing information on best practices
- pursuing funding for workforce programs

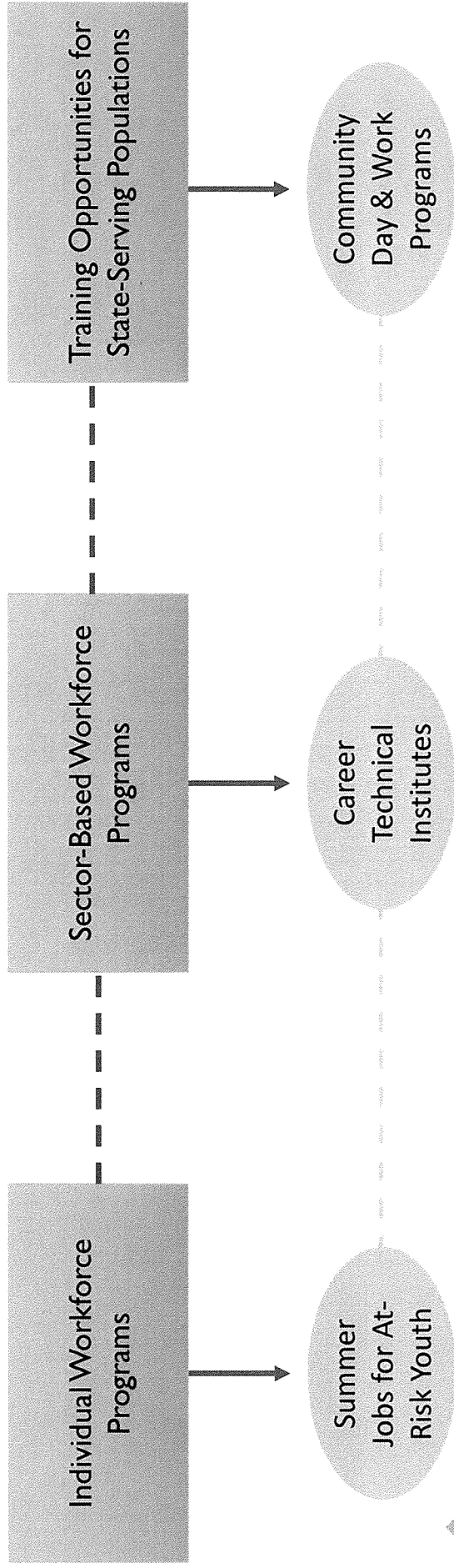
The Cabinet consists of the Secretaries from the following offices:

- Executive Office of Education (EOE)
- Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD)
- Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED)
- Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS)



MTF Workforce Categories

To help policymakers and stakeholders better analyze workforce spending trends over time, this brief uses three categories to identify workforce programs and spending levels.



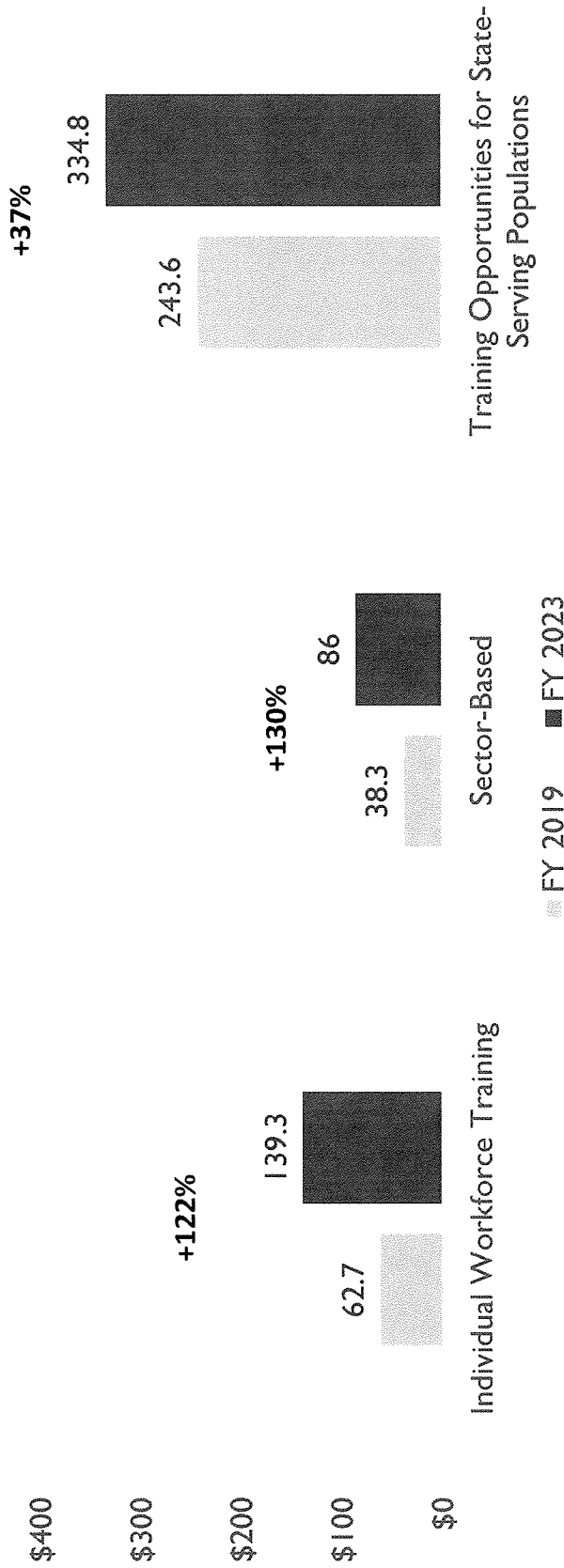


Funding Trends

State Budget Workforce Spending Trends

Since FY 2019 the state's investment in workforce programs has increased by \$214.1 million

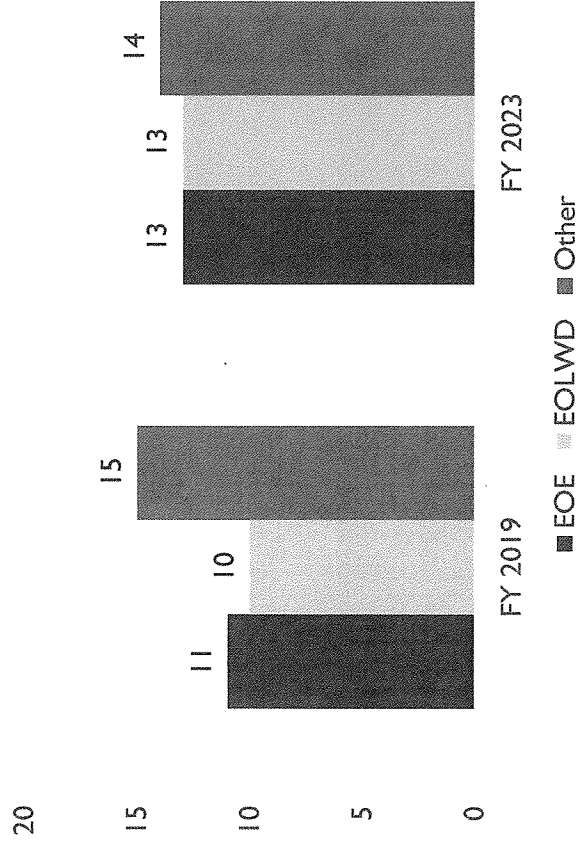
Funding Difference FY 2019 - FY 2023



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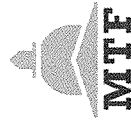
Additional State Budget Line Items

Number of Workforce Line Items in FY 19 vs. FY 23



In addition to increased spending over the past five years, the number of workforce-related line items has also increased.

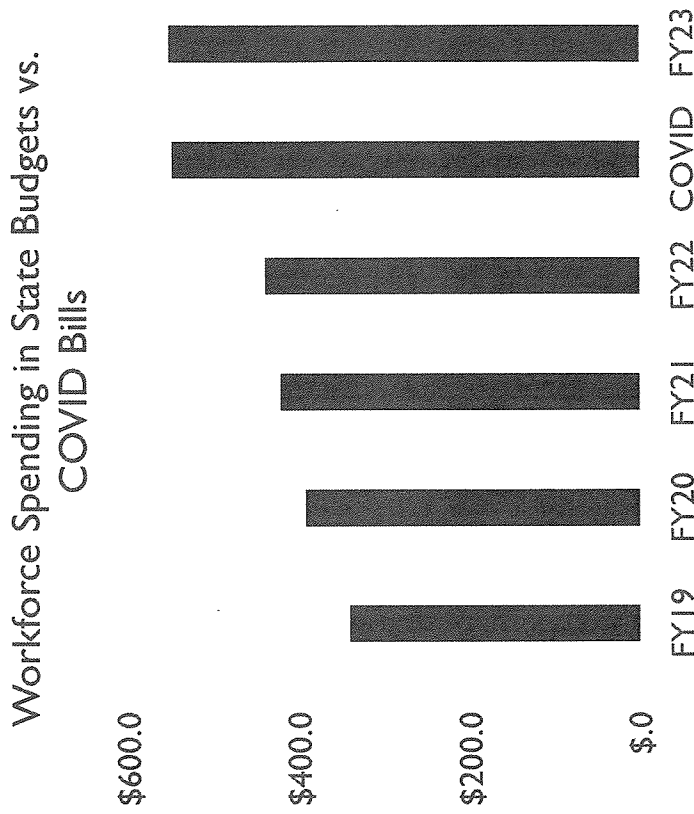
In FY 2023, over half of workforce-related items were funded by either EOLWD or EOE.



COVID Recovery Funding

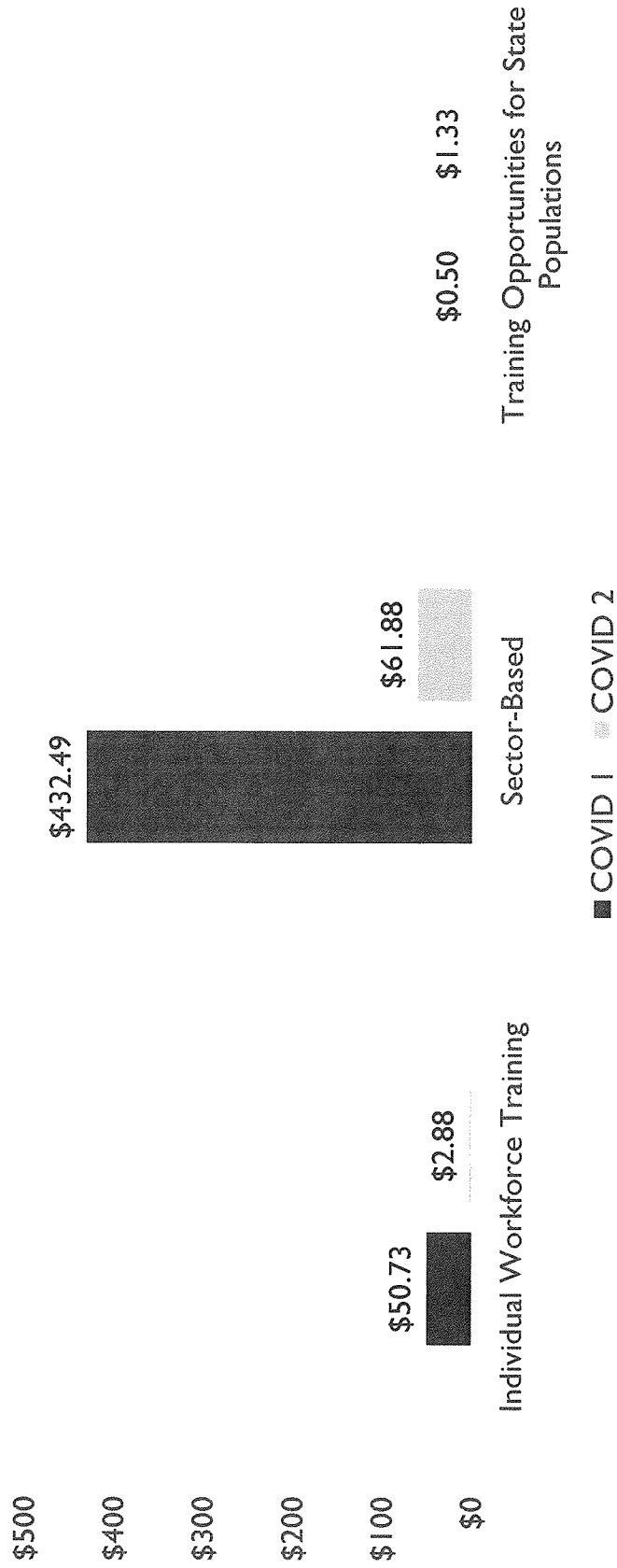
Over \$500 million was appropriated in both COVID recovery and economic development bills for workforce development programs:

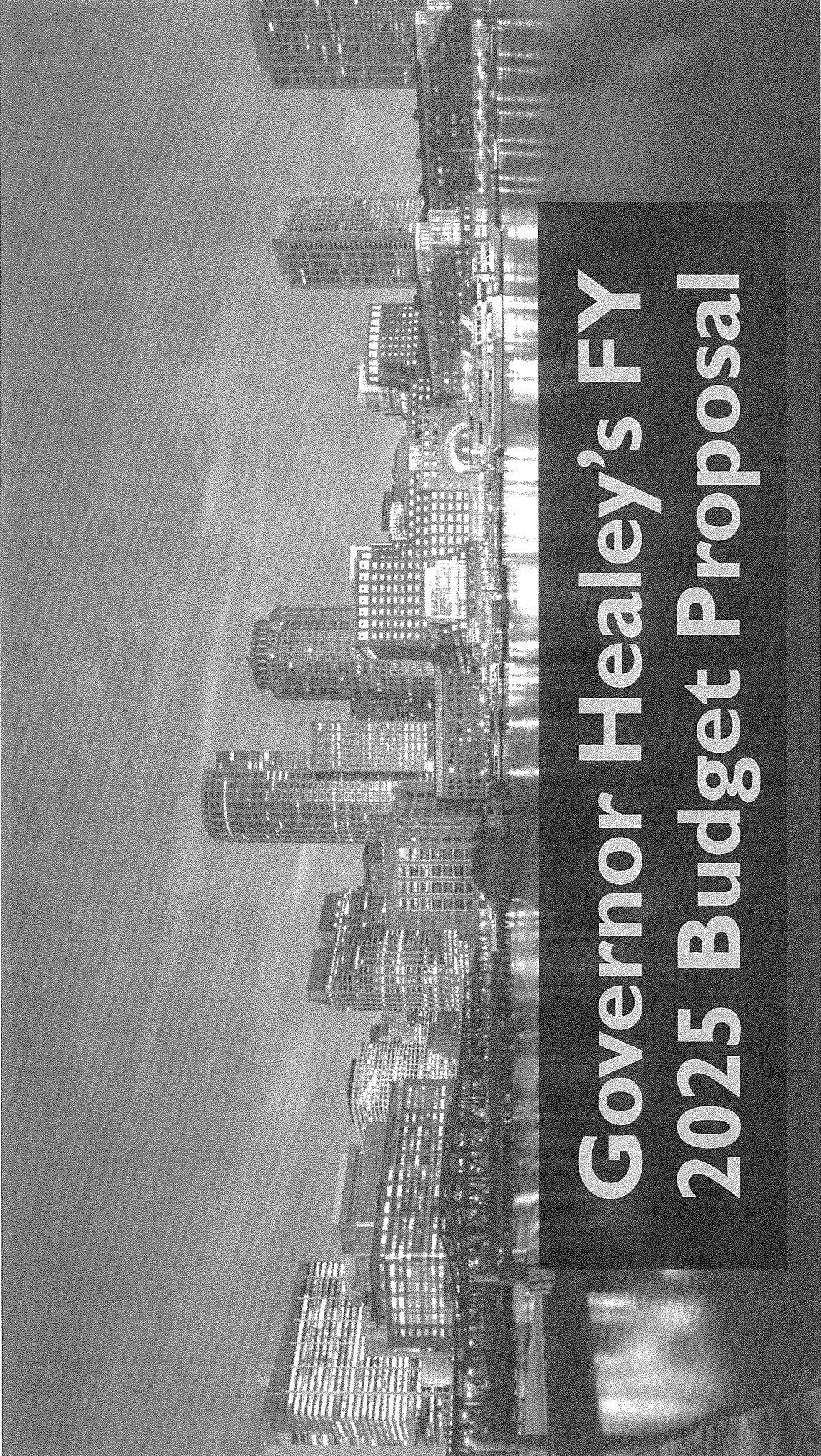
- The first COVID relief bill passed in 2021 dedicated \$483.7 million to workforce investments.
- The Second COVID relief bill passed in 2022 dedicated \$66.1 million to workforce investments.



COVID Recovery Funding by Category

Workforce Program by COVID Relief Bills

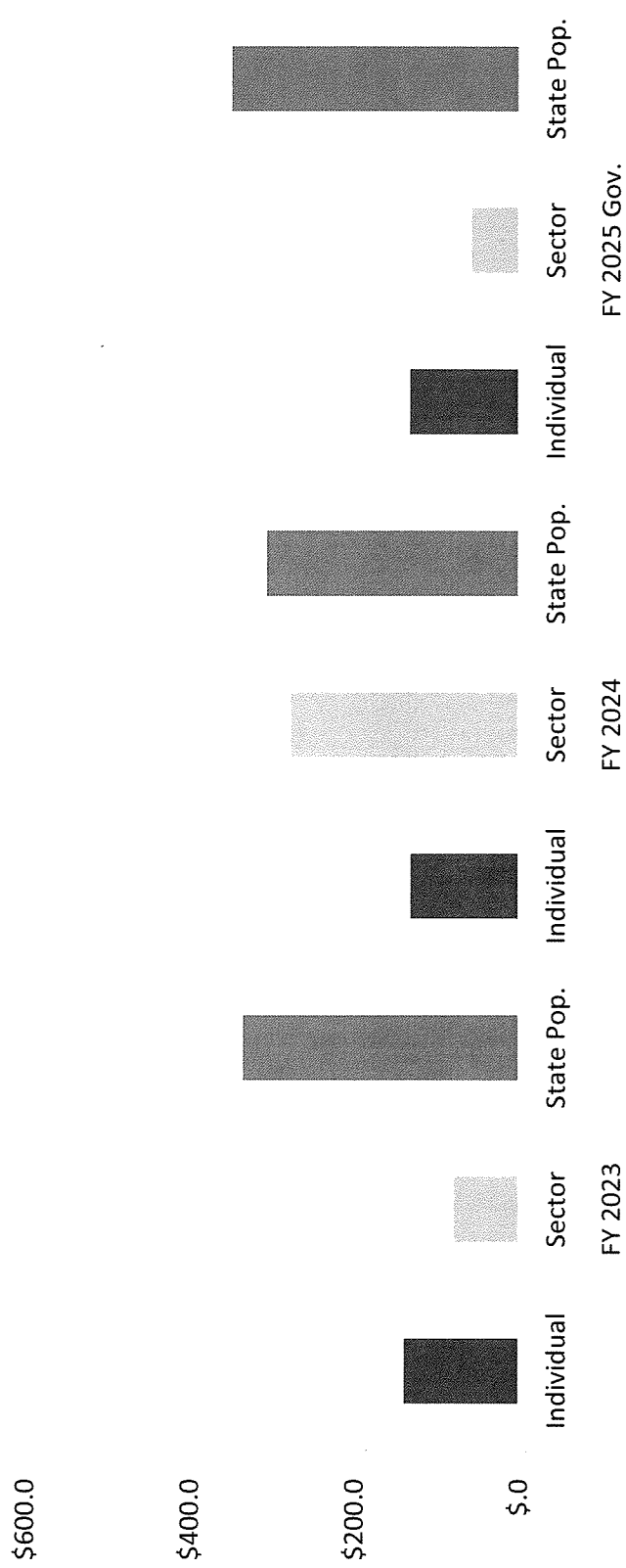


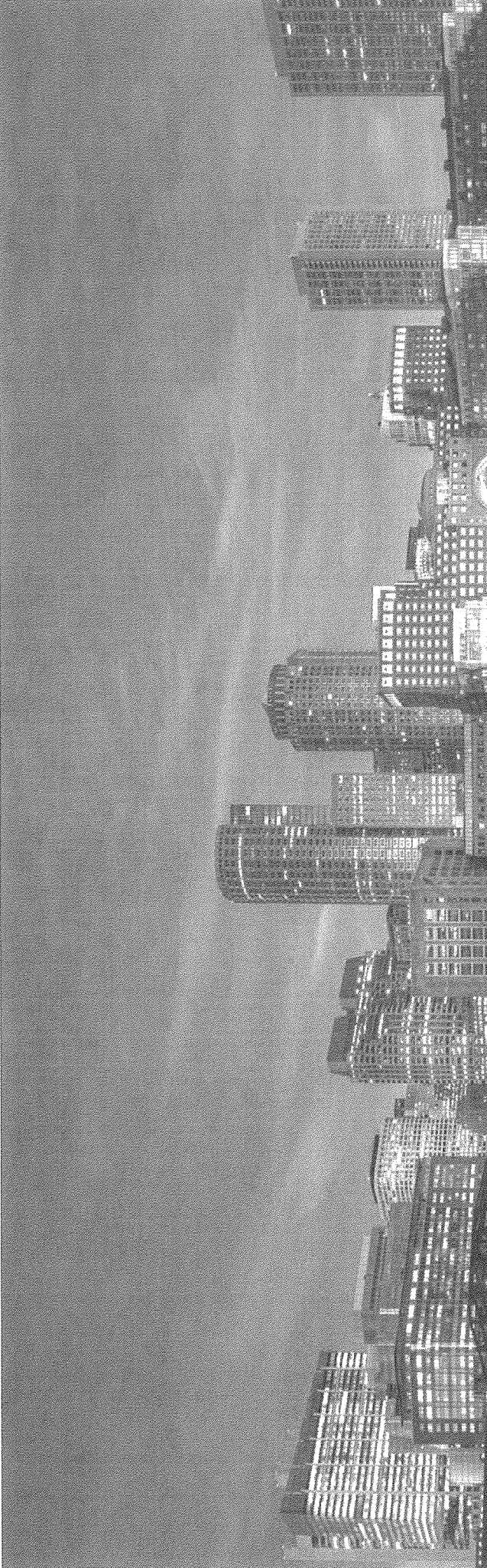


Governor Healey's FY 2025 Budget Proposal

FY 2025 Workforce Spending

Recent Workforce Spending Compared to Governor's FY 2025 Proposal





Individual Workforce Training & Sector-Based Programs

What are These Programs?

Individual Workforce Training Programs

- These programs provide vocational and basic skill development.
- These programs are supported across 11 different line items.
- Most of these line items fall within the:
 - Executive Office of Education
 - Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

Sector-Based Programs

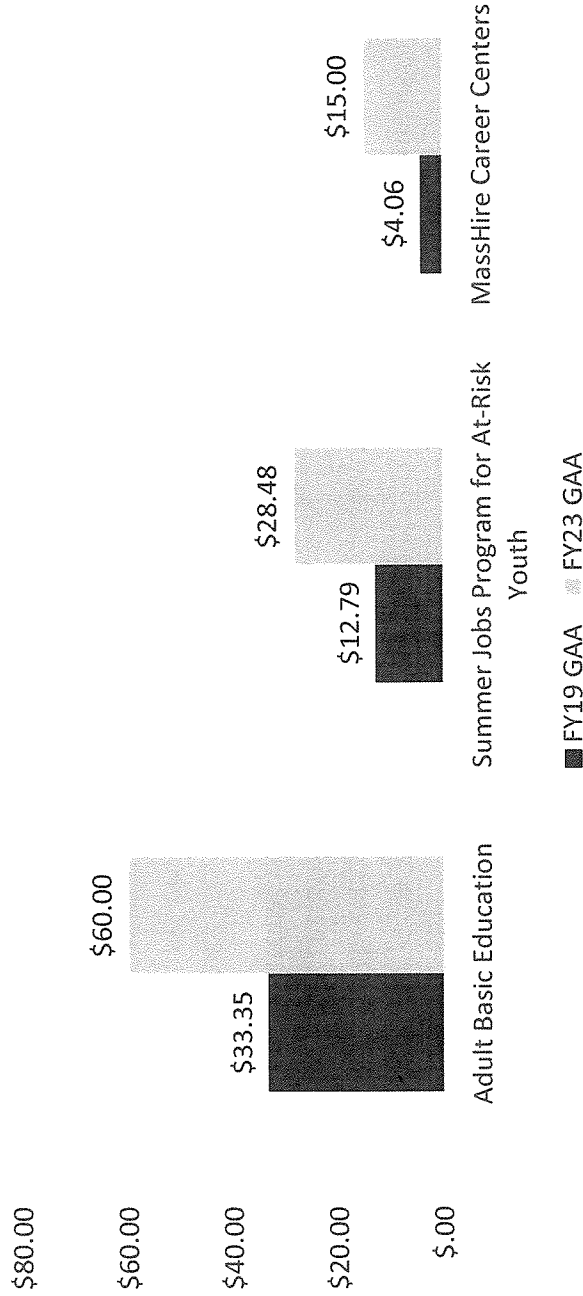
- These programs create talent pipelines to critical job sectors.
- These programs are supported across 22 different line items.
- Most of these line items fall within the:
 - Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development
 - Executive Office of Education



Largest Individual Workforce Training Programs

In FY 2023, the three largest individual workforce training programs represent 74% of all spending within this category.

Largest Individual Workforce Training Programs FY 2019 vs FY 2023



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Adult Basic Education (ABE)

What is it?

- The line item is funded by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to support Adult Education and Literacy programs.
- Funds are available to community-based organizations, school districts, and community colleges through a five-year competitive grant cycle.

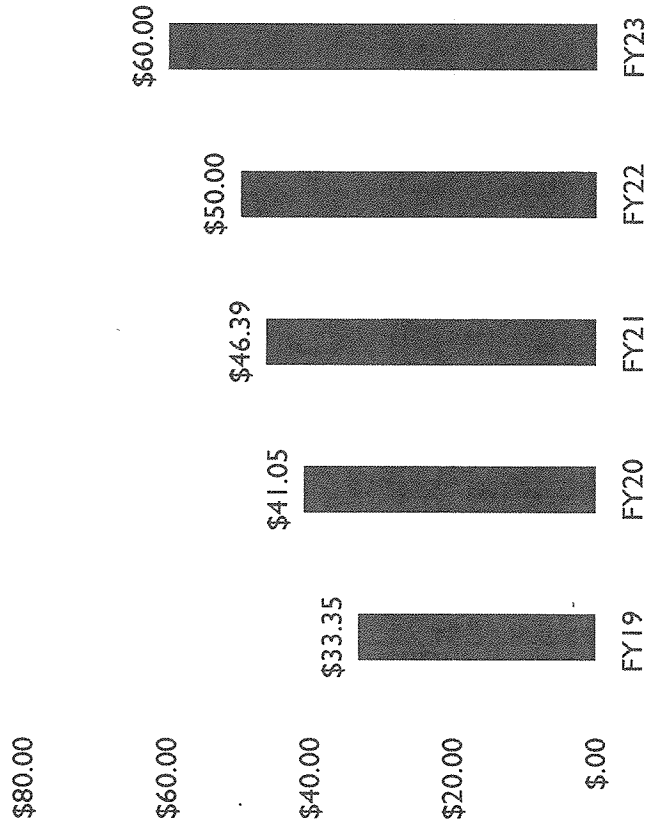
Are there reporting requirements?

- DESE is not required to submit annual reports, but data is released by the National Reporting System for Adult Education.

Governor's Proposed Funding (FY 2025)

- \$59.4 million (\$1 million reduction compared to FY 2024 GAA)

Adult Basic Education Funding Trends



Summer Jobs Program for At-Risk Youth

What is it?

- The line item is funded by EOLWD and primarily funds the YouthWorks program administered by the Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp).
- YouthWorks is a year-round program for at-risk individuals ages 25 and younger to develop vocational skills.

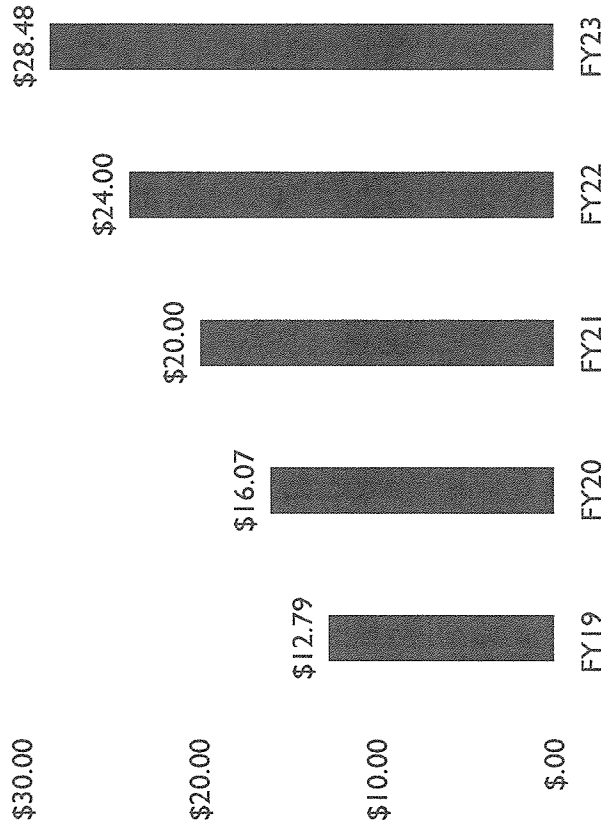
Are there reporting requirements?

- CommCorp is not required to submit annual reports and the most recent report covers 2017.

Governor's Proposed Funding (FY 2025)

- \$15.7 million (\$0.5 million reduction compared to FY 2024 GAA)

Summer Jobs Program for At-Risk Youth
Funding Trends



MassHire Career Centers

What is it?

- The line item is funded by EOWLD and supports the statewide workforce infrastructure of 25 one-stop career centers.
- Career centers service both job seekers and employers.

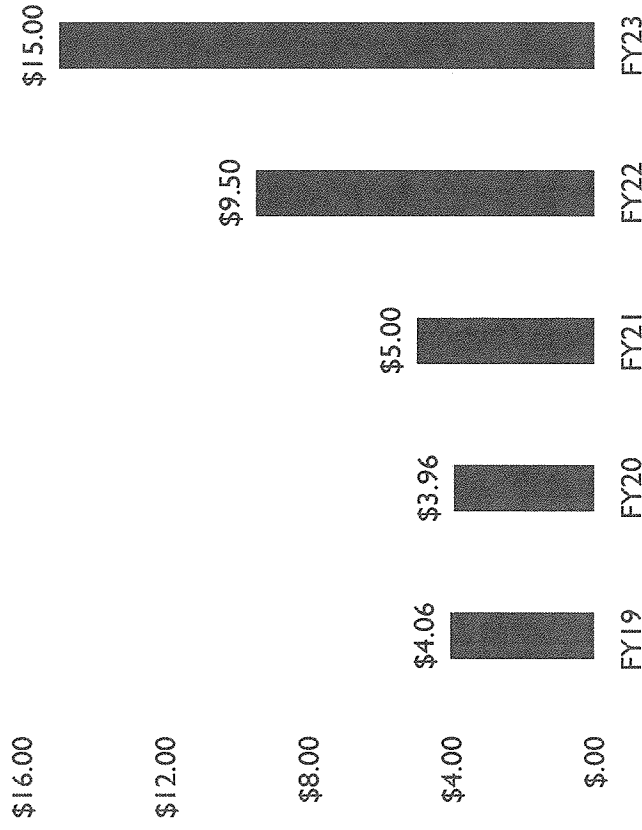
Are there reporting requirements?

- The Department of Career Services is required to submit reports and does so on a quarterly basis.

Governor's Proposed Funding (FY 2025)

- \$10 million (\$4 million increase compared to FY 2024 GAA)

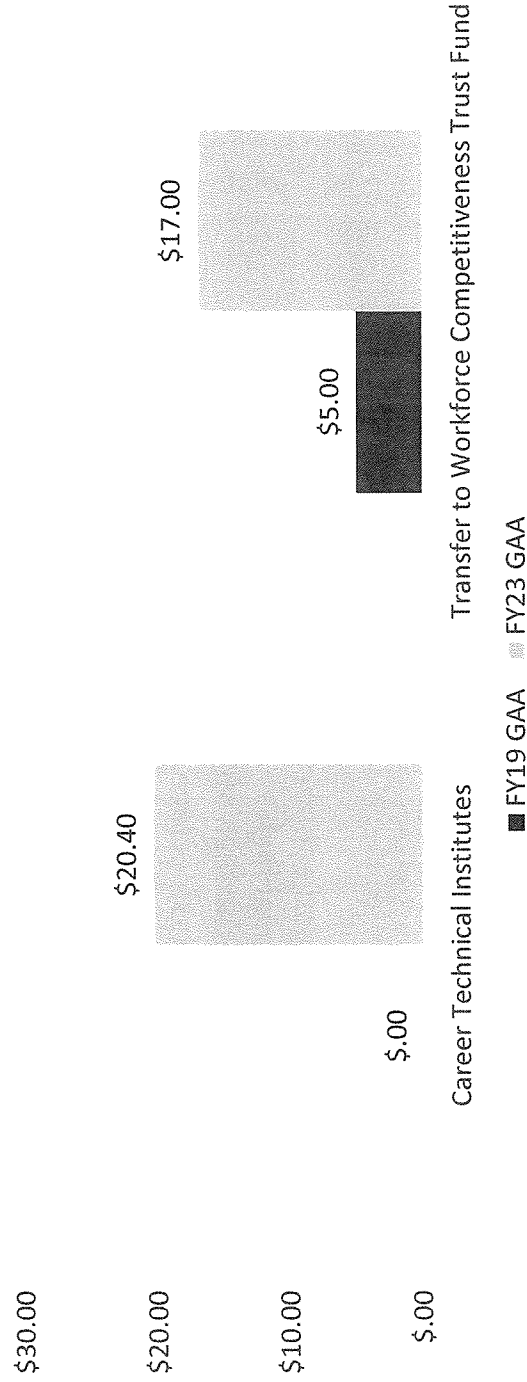
MassHire Career Centers Funding Trends



Largest Sector-Based Workforce Programs

In FY 2023, the two largest sector-based workforce programs represent 48% of all spending within this category.

Largest Sector-Based Programs FY 2019 vs FY 2023



Insight. Influence. Impact.

Career Technical Institutes

What is it?

- The line item is funded by EOWLD and supports Career Technical Institutes at vocational high schools to train incumbent workers through after-hours shifts and improve training infrastructure.
- Focuses on in-demand sectors (manufacturing, construction and trade).

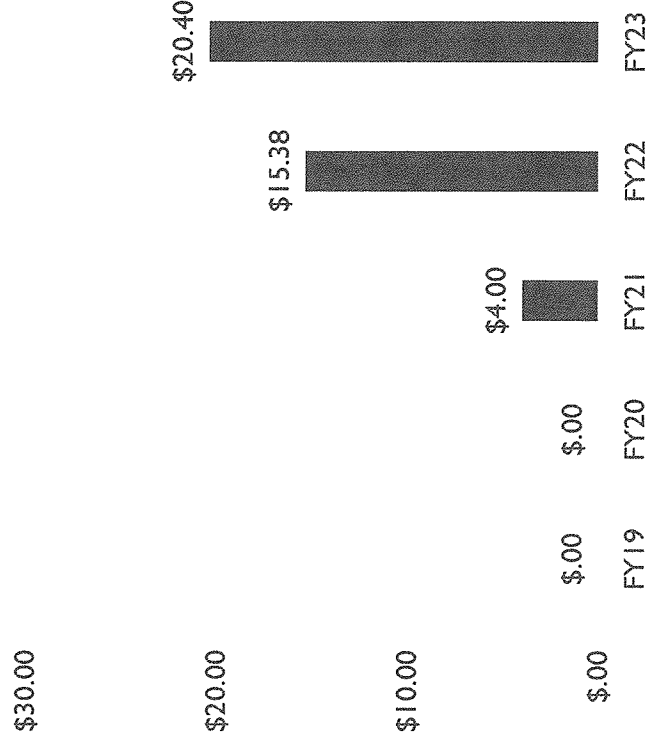
Are there reporting requirements?

- EOLWD is required to submit a report to the Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development and the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means.

Governor's Proposed Funding (FY 2025)

- \$10.4 million (\$5 million decrease compared to FY 2024 GAA)

Career Technical Institutes Funding Trends



Transfer to the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF)

What is it?

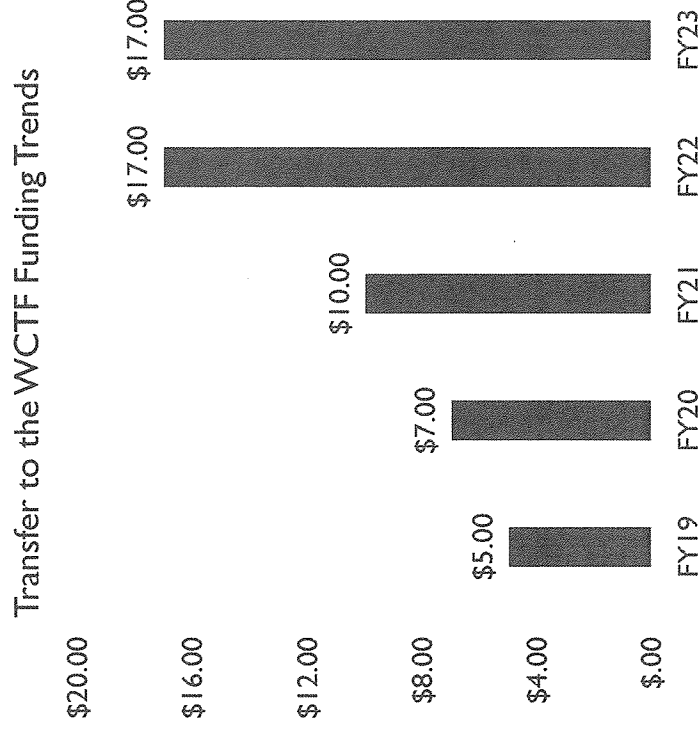
- This appropriation transfers funds to the WCTF and supports several grant programs administered by CommCorp.
- Funding is awarded to programs to expand training capacity and diversify the workforce in key high-demand industries.

Are there reporting requirements?

- CommCorp must submit an annual report to the Secretary of Administration and Finance and several joint legislative committees.

Governor's Proposed Funding (FY 2025)

- \$10 million (funding maintained at FY 2024 level.)





Summing Up

Themes

After providing an overview of notable individual workforce training programs, several themes emerge:

- Support has significantly increased over the past five fiscal years.
- Programs often overlap in policy goals and target populations.
- The lack of timely, consistent, and useful data makes informed resource decisions challenging.

Aside from the themes highlighted above, additional themes emerge when looking at sector-based programs:

- There is a broad distribution of funds.
- Increased investments have led to more individuals being served.
- Several of the largest sector-based workforce programs rely on current regional labor needs.

Data Reporting Variances

The analysis also provides reporting structures that could be considered as a starting framework, while others leave room for improvement.

Example: Adequate Data

MassHire Career Centers

- ✓ The language in the line item requires reporting.
- ✓ Data is timely and consistent.
- ✓ Reports include several levels of data for job seekers and employers.
- ✓ Data is broken down by each MassHire workforce region.

Example: Room for Improvement

Summer Jobs for At-Risk Youth

- There is no language in the line item requiring a report.
- Most recent annual report covers 2017.
- Lack of sufficient employment and wage data.

Thank You!

Please feel free to email me if you have any questions about today's presentation!

Psuarez@masstaxpayers.org

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LinkedIn: [Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation](#)

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Appendix

State Budget Workforce Spending History

Overall Workforce Program by Category FY 2019 – FY 2023

Category	FY19 GAA	FY20 GAA	FY21 GAA	FY22 GAA	FY23 GAA	Total by Category
Individual Workforce Training	\$62.68	\$78.51	\$91.40	\$110.11	\$139.29	\$481.99
Sector-Based	\$34.18	\$31.82	\$45.18	\$60.32	\$78.55	\$250.04
Training Opportunities for State Serving Populations	\$245.14	\$283.25	\$286.37	\$269.75	\$335.34	\$1,419.86
Total by Year	\$342.0	\$393.58	\$422.95	\$440.18	\$553.18	\$2,151.90

\$ in millions

Programs that have received the largest increases in FY 2023 compared to FY 2019 funding include:

- Community Day and Work Programs- \$67.9 million increase
- Adult Basic Education- \$26.7 million increase
- Summer Jobs for At-Risk Youth- \$15.7 million increase



Understanding the Workforce Training Fund

What is a pre-budget transfer?

Pre-budget transfers are set aside automatically, and policymakers do not have direction over how to spend these funds.

What is the Workforce Training Fund transfer?

The pre-budget transfer to the Workforce Training Trust Fund is supported through a 0.056 percent employer surcharge on the unemployment insurance tax.



Workforce Training Fund Program (WTFP)

What is it?

- This pre-budget transfer funds the WTFP that is administered by CommCorp.
- Employers can apply for either the General or Express Program that provide training in areas such as process improvement and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

What are the funding trends?

- The transfer amount in FY 2023 increased by \$500,000 over the FY 2019 transfer amount.

Are there reporting requirements?

- CommCorp is required to submit an annual report. Below are notable data from the most recent report released in 2021.

