
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: GOVERNOR
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: 5/9/01 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING
DATE 5/16/01
CC: FILE

The State Workforce Development Council discussed the following at its May 9 meeting:

1. Jim Lott of MDA reported:
 - The State Workforce Investment Board did meet on May 7 and George Schloegel of Hancock Bank is chairing the Board. The Board will meet again on August 15 and will be developing a strategic plan.
 - Mississippi had approximately \$390 million from all sources for workforce training in FY 01. The state will receive \$89 million in federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds next year, including \$30 million that can be spent to assist displaced workers. The state spent less than 30% of its WIA funds this year, with less than 10% of this being spent on training.
 - The question is how to coordinate all workforce training, especially the efforts of the Workforce Development Council and the Workforce Investment Board.

2. The Council expressed concern and frustration as to the apparent disconnect between the federal and state workforce development systems. Council members expressed repeated concerns as to the “politics” associated with the State Workforce Investment Board, specifically that the PDDs are running things on the local level and will not support coordination. Harry Martin expressed concern that Mississippi stands to lose unspent federal funds. The Council voted to have the SBCJC staff draft a letter to you expressing the Council’s frustration and concerns and requesting that you appoint an ombudsman to coordinate the federal and state training. There was discussion that Jim Lott could serve this role and that the person ought to be housed in MDA.

Dr. Olon Ray suggested that the Workforce Development Council invite the chairs of the local Workforce Investment Boards to a meeting to discuss workforce development issues in the state and to develop a plan, with staff assistance, to resolving the issues.

The Council will discuss the federal/state issue again at its June meeting. Armerita has expressed interest to me in representing this office at future meetings due to the importance of workforce training on our population.