

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

- There are quotes and reports that we have left over \$43 million in workforce training funds on the table. This is inaccurate. In my years in office, we have not returned one penny in training funds to the federal government.
- We did not leave \$43 million “on the table.” We CARRIED FORWARD \$43 million dollars by design. A design that ensures a convenient, easy to use system of one-stop job centers and provides that dislocated workers and those in need of training can receive meaning training in demand occupations.
- We have never and will never turn workforce money back to the federal government because of failure to spend in the allotted time.
- Of course we set aside dollars to meet future obligations.
 - It would be like purchasing a car, but not planning to make the payment every month. Once you make an obligation, you can't overspend to the point where you can make the payment for the original obligation.
- The State just completed another year. This year we will probably carry forward around \$30 million.
 - \$30 million that will ensure our commitment to meeting the training and employment needs of the people of Mississippi.
- Indeed, Mississippi is doing an excellent job of using and managing federal Workforce Training dollars. All of the funds we have available are committed to training and to assist individuals in finding jobs.
- We are currently providing more than 8,000 individuals free training in areas such as Nursing, Computer Programming, Truck-driving, and more than 100 occupations. Many of these training programs take more than one year. So we commit the entire funds for each individual up front to ensure that the person can complete the training.
- Another misconception about WIA is that it is a “state” program. The fact is that 85% of the funds we receive are allocated by a federal formula to six local workforce areas, where the boards of supervisors and the WIA boards that they appoint oversee the workforce funds and the system.
- I'm proud of this system that we have built in a state-local partnership. We have established 60 WIN Job Centers where any Mississippian can go to get help in finding a job, in preparing a resume, and in getting training. Over the past three years, more than 600,000 Mississippians have used the WIN Job Centers.
- Another use of the WIA funds is to serve people who lose their jobs due to layoffs and company closures. My Rapid Response team provides transition services, training, and job placement to all of those who have lost their jobs.
- The very nature of this program requires that we manage the funds prudently and maintain enough funds to ensure services to future closures and layoffs.