



1001 North 23<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Post Office Box 94094  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9094

(O) 225-342-3110  
(F) 225-342-2051  
[www.laworks.net](http://www.laworks.net)

John Bel Edwards, Governor  
J. Robert Wooley, Secretary

**Office of the Secretary**

November 22, 2023

The Honorable Bill Cassidy  
Ranking Member  
Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee  
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building  
Washington, D.C., 20510

**Re: Letter of Support**

Dear Senator Cassidy,

The Louisiana Workforce Commission's (LWC) mission is simple and straightforward – *"We Put People to Work."* Our vision is to make Louisiana the best place in the country to get a job or grow a business, and our goal is to be the country's best workforce agency. Louisiana has 15 comprehensive American Job Centers across the state with approximately 50 affiliate sites. While the state's current unemployment rate is the lowest in history, and the job market is strong, the state's workforce system is not immune to the worker shortage and high worker turnover that is troubling the rest of our nation.

LWC administers the state's Wagner-Peyser Employment Services activities by placing state-merit staff in each of the 15 local area's comprehensive American Job Centers across the state and many of their affiliate sites. Under the proposed rulemaking, only state-merit staff can provide these services and activities. Although the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires colocation, if there is no state-merit staff person, but only local area staff, these services are not provided at that site. The proposed amendment of Section 9 of the Wagner-Peyser Act *"Pathways to Paychecks Act"* which would allow states to use not just state-merit staff, but other staff that are allowable under part 200 of title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations, in carrying out the duties of the employment services offices goes beyond mere colocation. The amendment would encourage stronger partnerships with our subrecipients and increase the level of service provided to jobseekers and employers in the local job centers by removing the separation of duties that exists under the current version of the law.

LWC fully supports amending Section 9 of the Wagner-Peyser Act to allow continued flexibilities that will ensure continued holistic approaches to providing employment services. This alone speaks to the core and underlying intent of WIOA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert J. Wooley", is written over a horizontal line.

Robert J. Wooley  
Secretary