



March 3, 2017

Stephen Baiter, Executive Director
Oakland Workforce Development Board
250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza,
Suite 3315, Oakland CA 94612

Herb Garrett, Chair
Oakland Workforce Development Board
250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza,
Suite 3315, Oakland CA 94612

VIA EMAIL

RE: PUBLIC COMMENT FOR OAKLAND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT LOCAL STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRAM YEAR 2017-2020

Dear Stephen Baiter and Herb Garrett,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations and the Alliance for Boys and Men of Color (ABMoC), a statewide coalition with over 100 organizations dedicated to improving the life outcomes for boys and men of color (BMoC), we thank the Oakland Workforce Development Board for your leadership in developing the local development strategic draft plan for Program Year 2017-2020. The strategic plan draft lays out a comprehensive and innovative strategy to build an effective and more aligned workforce system.

The City of Oakland Workforce Development strategic plan presents a unique opportunity to improve the delivery of workforce development programming, services, and implementation to meaningfully address training and employment challenges of our highest need communities.

Below are several recommendations, and we urge you to integrate them into your final strategic plan:

- **Specify the terminology describing “quality jobs with good wages and benefits”**
 - **Page 4** of the draft plan states the Oakland Workforce Development Board’s (OWDB) commitment to expanding access to high quality jobs. We urge OWDB to specify what comprises good jobs specifically, wages and benefits. Specifically, OWDB should ensure that Oakland residents benefit from jobs that provide living wage and comprehensive benefits, such as health and dental coverage. OWDB should also outline how they will engage employers in adopting new and equitable hiring policies; examples include:
 - A description of how OWDB will prioritize working with employers who offer quality jobs with good wages and benefits
 - Encouraging employers to adopt hiring policies that build a diverse workforce. Furthermore, OWDB should specify how it will serve WIOA target populations -- such as boys and men of color, women, and disconnected youth -- who are disproportionately affected by discrimination and unemployment.

- **Guarantee comprehensive support services (i.e., trauma-informed care, transportation stipends, etc.) that promote successful participation of individuals facing barriers to employment**
 - **Page 12** of the strategic plan refers to providing support services as a policy priority from the state draft plan. In addition, OWDB should support the successes of the most vulnerable populations including, but not limited to, formerly incarcerated individuals, disconnected youth, immigrants, foster care youth, young people who have cycled through the justice system, and limited English proficient individuals. Support services should also be trauma-informed, such that they ensure healing, mentorship, life-coaching, and other vital services. These types of services are critical to low income individuals’ ability to participate, complete workforce training programs, and secure and retain employment.

- **Align high demand sector job growth with efforts to reduce employment disparities among disadvantaged populations**
 - As outlined on **page 10**, health care and the growing environmental sectors are one of the top five industries in the City of Oakland. **Page 1** refers to the total unemployment rate at 4.7 percent. Data suggests that communities of color suffer from much higher rates of unemployment, which reinforces the need to reduce the disproportionate impacts on communities of color. Furthermore, this presents a unique opportunity to outreach to our most vulnerable communities, such as out-of-school youth, and integrate them into workforce development programming such as career pathways. By integrating out-of-school youth into job trainings and into high demand sectors, such as health care, health and racial disparities will decrease and contribute to a stronger regional economy.
 - By 2020, the health sector in California is projected to create 450,000 new jobs
 - One third of these jobs provide an annual salary of at least \$35,000

- **Track, disaggregate, and share all outcome data in a publicly accessible form**
 - On **page 22 and 25**, the strategic plan highlights workforce development activities and assessment of specific populations (i.e., adult and youth). In accordance with provisions of WIOA pertaining “(d) information to be included in reports,” outcome data must be disaggregated to include important demographic markers such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, income and educational level. By doing so, we will have a clearer understanding of which groups are having specific challenges and needs.
 - The local plan should include an analysis of disaggregated data. The analysis report, along with the outcome, data should be publicly accessible for everyone to view, analyze, and understand. If the analysis has yet to happen, we urge that the local plan includes the methodology of how OWDB will gather disaggregated data, and its proposed data analysis.
 - For Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI), the disaggregated groups should be reflective of the growing diversity of California’s AANHPI population: accounting for each major Asian group including but not limited to Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, Asian Indian, Laotian, Hmong, Bangladeshi, Indonesian, Malaysian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Taiwanese, Thai, and Cambodian; and each major Pacific Islander group, including but not limited to, Hawaiian, Guamanian, Fijian, Tongan, and Samoan.

- **Include and specify supportive services for immigrant workers such as legal services and cultural competent care**
 - Immigrants are the backbone of California’s economy and make up 18 percent of youth from the ages of 16 to 24. **Page 26** mentions the demographic population of Oakland: 26 percent identify as foreign born and 27 percent speak a language other than English. We applaud the bilingual services under the Equal Access Office to increase participation of underrepresented groups such as immigrants and limited English speaking individuals. It is also critical to provide legal services and cultural competent care into supportive services for immigrant workers.

- **Realign funds from corrections to rehabilitation**
 - On **page 19**, the strategic plan has identified the California Department of Rehabilitation as a partner. OWDB must allocate WIOA funding to systems impacted individuals, such as the reentry population, and individuals on parole. By aligning priorities and funding resources from corrections to rehabilitation, OWDB can play a leadership role in combating the stigma of hiring individuals with records and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to gain employment. In addition, expand the definition of reentry population to include individuals under state parole and require CBOs to be a part of reentry workforce development training programs.

- **Expand partnerships with community-based organizations to provide workforce development and training.**
 - On **page 5**, youth services goals included partnerships between public, private, and community-based organizations. CBOs have direct, grassroots networks with the most vulnerable populations. Uplifting the work of CBOs will advance an equitable workforce development system and provide best practices for other

organizations and employers when engaging with limited English individuals and the reentry populations. Furthermore, partnering with community based organizations that provide financial education and access to safe and affordable financial products will support workforce providers to bring financial management skills to their participants, in line with WIOA mandates'.

Adopting these recommendations will promote employment and economic mobility for Oakland residents. The recommendations add clarification and guidance in directing Oakland Workforce Development Board to best identify and address the workforce needs of high demand industries in your communities. This will expand entry to well-paying jobs and careers for low income communities and communities of color, ensuring that every Oakland resident has a fair chance to contribute and thrive, while maximizing economic outcomes for the city and state.

Thank you again for your commitment and leadership to advancing workforce and career opportunities for disadvantaged populations. We respectfully ask that you prioritize these important recommendations into your strategic plan. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Daniel Cano, with The Greenlining Institute, at danielc@greenlining.org

Warmly,

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About the Alliance for Boys and Men of Color

The Alliance for Boys and Men of Color is a statewide coalition of change agents committed to improving the life chances of California's boys and young men of color. The Alliance includes youth, community organizations, foundations, and leaders in government, education, public health, and law enforcement. Members of the Alliance include:

Advancement Project
Advocates for Health, Economics & Development
Alliance for Children's Rights
Amer-I-Can
Anti-Defamation League
Anti-Recidivism Coalition
APAYL
Attendance Works
Black Organizing Project
Black Youth Leadership Project
Bloom
Boyle Heights Building Healthy Communities
Brightline Defense Project
Brotherhood Crusade
Brotherhood of Elders Network
Brothers, Sons, Selves Coalition
Brown Boi Project
Building Healthy Communities-Richmond
California Association of African-American Superintendents and Administrators
California Alliance of African American Educators (CAAAE)
California Black Health Network
California Center for Civic Participation
California Coverage and Health Initiatives
California Immigrant Policy Center
California Pan Ethnic Health Network
California Partnership to End Domestic Violence
California Program on Access to Care
California School-Based Health Alliance
California School Health Centers Association
Californians for Justice
Californians for Safety and Justice
CA Health Workforce Alliance & CA Health Professions Consortium
CA Primary Care Association
Center on Juvenile & Criminal Justice
Center for Youth Wellness
Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Law and Social Policy
Children's Defense Fund California
Children's Movement – Fresno
Civicorps
City Heights Building Healthy Communities
Coalition for Responsible Community
Communities for a New California Education Fund
Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice (CURYJ)

Community Asset Development Re-defining Education (CADRE)
Community Coalition
Community Health Improvement Partners
Community Rights Campaign
Contra Costa Interfaith Supporting Community Organization (CCISCO)
Del Norte and Adjacent Tribal Lands Building Healthy Communities
East Bay Asian Youth Center
East Oakland Building Healthy Communities
East Salinas Building Healthy Communities
Eastern Coachella Valley Building Health Communities
Educators 4 Excellence-Los Angeles
Ella Baker Center
Every Neighborhood Partnership
Faith in Community - Fresno
Fathers and Families of San Joaquin
Fenton Communications
First Five Fresno
Focus Forward
Forward Change
Fresno Barrios Unidos
Fresno Building Healthy Communities
Fresno Street Saints
Gay Straight Alliance Network
Game Changers Project
Greenlining Institute
Hope Now for Youth
IDEATE CA
Inner City Struggle
Intertribal Friendship House
Haywood Burns Institute
LA Black Workers' Center
Khmer Girls in Action
Labor/Community Strategy Center
Latino Coalition for a Healthy California
Legal Advocates for Children and Youth
Legal Services for Prisoners with Children
Liberty Hill Foundation
Lifelines to Healing
Long Beach Building Healthy Communities
Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)
Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce
Marcus Foster Education Fund
Mentoring Center
MILPA East Salinas
Movement Strategies Center
National Employment Law Project
National Center for Youth Law
National Compadres Network
National Council of La Raza
National Latino Fatherhood and Families Institute

Neighborhood Thrift
New America Media
PolicyLink
PICO Network California
Planned Parenthood Mar Monte
Public Counsel
Reading and Beyond
Reinvent Communications
Sacramento Building Healthy Communities
Santa Ana Building Healthy Communities
SCOPE LA
Social Justice Learning Institute
South East Asian Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
South Los Angeles Building Healthy Communities
Street Positive
Unity Council
United Roots/Urban Peace Movement/Determination
Urban Strategies Council
Weingart East Los Angeles YMCA
West Angeles CDC
West Fresno Family Resource Center
Western Center on Law and Poverty
Village Connect
Young Invincibles
Youth Alive!
Youth Leadership Institute
Youth Policy Institute
Youth Justice Coalition
Youth Uprising