

## 7.E.2 Redistricting of the Workforce Development Areas (Information)

The configuration of workforce development areas (WDAs) was formulated with the inception of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in 1998. At that time, the number of workforce areas declined from seventeen (17) to the current eleven (11) WDAs.

**Attachment (1)** shows the current WDAs.

The Council on Workforce Investment (CWI) is the committee advising the Governor on workforce development issues. About a year ago, CWI heard a presentation by Terry Ludeman, at the time, chief economist for the Department of Workforce Development (DWD). Mr. Ludeman identified seven (7) economic regions in Wisconsin. He theorized that the counties in each of the seven regions shared common economic interests that created natural relationships for workforce development. The seven economic regions are shown in **Attachment (2)**

The CWI Workforce Systems Development Committee, at its meeting on May 3, 2006, considered six (6) recommendations for the committee's focus. The immediate plan of the committee is to choose one or two recommendations to focus on and then develop detailed recommendations that could be advanced to the full Council and to the Governor. The six recommendations included:

- Redesign the Workforce Development Areas to coincide with the seven regional economic areas and continue to fund state workforce initiatives aligned with the seven regional economic areas.
- Establish measurable goals with an annual accountability system to reward workforce partner co-location and/or WDB regional activities and collaborative efforts.
- Define the workforce infrastructure "system" as a single unit and begin to put that system in all operational activities beginning with a seamless, single, front-end for all customers.
- Improve the participation of private sector employers for training, job placement and retention by eliminating liabilities and providing incentives to employers engaged with on-site training and hiring of Job Center job seekers.
- Enforce the WIA requirement that WDBs must have completed Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) for all required partner programs that includes the defined outcome of genuine coordination of program and service delivery elements and establish benchmarks for continuous improvement of the MOUs.
- DWD to provide a comparison on the existing and planned comprehensive and access point of service Job Centers relative to the criteria for job center service standards, certification of comprehensive job centers, and elements of the WDAs business services.

It is the first recommendation – *Redesign the Workforce Development Areas to coincide with the seven regional economic areas* – that has raised the greatest concern. It seemed to come forward with little previous discussion or warning. After discussion, the committee finally prioritized the redesign recommendation as 4<sup>th</sup> out of the six items

## **ENCLOSURE 12**

DWD has stated that it does not intend to pursue reconfiguration of the workforce areas. Federal regulations also prevent redesign of the local workforce areas pending reauthorization. Therefore, the likelihood of redesigning the WDAs appears unlikely in the immediate future. However, it is a proposal CWI appears to favor and will discuss further in the future.

This item is presented for information and no action is required.