

Chapter One

METHODOLOGY AND CASE STUDY SUMMARIES

Patricia Billen, Rockefeller Institute of Government

The Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government, the public policy research arm of the State University of New York, was awarded a contract in 2002 by the U.S. Department of Labor to conduct a study of service delivery under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. This two-volume set of state case studies is the result of eighteen months of work by the project's researchers to understand how states and localities interpreted and operationalized the provisions of the act. The project took a close look at the orientation, governance, structure, and services of the workforce investment systems in eight states, and two local areas in each state, to provide information for the reauthorization of WIA. Federal legislation reauthorizing the 1998 act was not yet enacted when this volume was finalized for publication.

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 replaced the Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA) to provide employment and training services to the unemployed, underemployed, and to employers seeking workers. WIA made significant changes to the nation's workforce development system through a series of principles and parameters set forth in legislation, while leaving the details of program administration and service delivery to states and localities. Research to date indicates that states and local areas are using the flexibility provided by WIA to design and implement new processes and packages of services resulting in workforce development systems that vary across states and local areas.

Major changes made by WIA include:

- Increasing the role of employers in the workforce development system by requiring business to constitute the majority of members on state and local Workforce Investment Boards.
- Institutionalizing the concept of the One-Stop Career Center by requiring local boards to establish at least one full-service center in each service delivery area. The act designates as mandatory partners for One-Stop delivery systems, seventeen programs administered by four different federal agencies — the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Housing and Urban Development.¹

- Sequencing services to customers and documenting their movement through three tiers of services. The three tiers are core services, intensive services, and training, which are defined in WIA legislation.² Many state and local officials initially interpreted the sequencing of services to be a “work first” requirement similar to that of the federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program.
- Providing universal access to core services. This is a departure from the JTPA program’s income eligibility standards for adult and youth services.
- Increasing reliance on market mechanisms by delivering training services using Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) that allow the customer to select training from an eligible provider list that includes information on the performance of providers.
- Linking performance incentives to achieving placement, retention, earnings, and skill attainment rates for WIA-funded programs and meeting performance requirements in adult education and literacy, and vocational education programs.

Given the changes that the Workforce Investment Act made to the nation’s workforce development system, it is important for federal officials, and other stakeholders in the system, to be informed on how states and localities interpreted and operationalized the requirements of the 1998 act as reauthorization proposals are considered.

Methodology and Products

This study was conducted using the field network methodology that involves:

- Reliance on a network of knowledgeable field researchers who are experts in the policy area being studied;
- Use of structured field reporting guides;
- Preparation of state-level reports by field researchers; and
- Production of synthesis reports by central project staff in collaboration with field researchers.³

Beginning in the summer of 2002, project staff completed field research in the eight states, and 16 local areas included in this study (see the textbox below for researchers, states, and local areas). The sample was selected purposefully, and in consultation with U.S. Department of Labor, staff of the National Governors Association, and state officials, to include states and local areas that were beyond early implementation of the Workforce Investment Act.

Field researchers for each state conducted a series of interviews with members of state and local boards and their staff, state and local elected officials and their staff, state agency officials responsible for workforce development and welfare programs, service providers, advocates, and other interested parties. Researchers also studied sample One-Stop Career Centers in each state.

Rockefeller Institute Field Researchers and States and Local Areas Studied

Florida	First Coast (Region 8), Chris, Levy, and Marion Counties (Region 10) Burt Barnow, Amy MacDonald Buck
Indiana	Fort Wayne (Northeast), Indianapolis/Marion County Patricia Billen, Richard Nathan
Maryland	Baltimore City, Frederick County Burt Barnow, Amy MacDonald Buck
Michigan	Lansing (Capital Area), Traverse City (Northwest) Dan O’Shea, Christopher King
Missouri	Kansas City and Vicinity, Central Region Peter Mueser, Deanna Sharpe
Oregon	Salem, The Oregon Consortium Laura Leete, Neil Bania
Texas	Austin (Capital Area), Houston (Gulf Coast) Christopher King, Dan O’Shea
Utah	Salt Lake City, Moab Christopher King, Dan O’Shea

Field research was conducted in accordance with a guide developed by central project staff. The guide contained sample interview questions to elicit information on the system’s leadership and governance, system planning, system administration including structure and funding, One-Stop Career Center organization and operations, services and participants, market mechanisms, information technologies, and reauthorization issues.

Researchers analyzed information from their interviews as well as public documents and reports. The case studies for four states — Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, and Oregon — are included in this volume. The case studies for the four remaining states — Florida, Indiana, Texas, and Utah — are included in volume two.

The case studies provide information on the governance, structure, administrative processes, and services of the workforce development systems in each study state and for the local areas visited. Readers will notice some variation in the information presented,

as authors were asked to focus on the special characteristics of the state and local systems. These materials were prepared to be used by members of central project staff to write the study's reports, and for use by the Labor Department. We are grateful to the Labor Department for making these documents available for public use.

Presented below are summaries by the case study authors for the four states included in this volume. The summaries and the case studies that follow, depict state and local systems in place at the time research was completed in 2002. Three of the study states in this volume — Maryland, Michigan, and Oregon — have new governors since the field research was completed. Where possible, the case studies have been updated to reflect the new administration's early plans for workforce development.

MARYLAND

Burt Barnow, Johns Hopkins University
Amy MacDonald Buck, Johns Hopkins University

Maryland's workforce development system gradually evolved over the past decade. In the early 1990s, the state's CareerNet initiative established 40 One-Stop Career Centers across the state. This system was extended to the entire state with the passage of WIA. At the state level, Maryland's workforce services remain somewhat fragmented. The Governor's Workforce Investment Board sets state policy for the provision of workforce development services and is responsible for the state's strategic five-year plan. Maryland is one of the few states that established a state youth council. State partners in the workforce development system are the Departments of Aging; Business and Economic Development; Human Resources; Juvenile Justice; Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; the Maryland Higher Education Commission; and the Maryland State Department of Education.

The Governor's Workforce Investment Board is responsible for Maryland's unified planning process. Although technically a unified plan, partner agencies retain separate strategic plans.

Maryland's local boards are relatively centralized and autonomous. They have been granted a great deal of discretion and flexibility to develop policy and oversee One-Stop Career Center operations. Local boards influence the state system through their participation in the Maryland Workforce Development Association, an association of local board directors and top administrators in the workforce development system. This association has successfully lobbied for several alterations in the state's early approach to WIA implementation.

The Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation provides training, guidance, and technical assistance to the local boards. The department's Wagner-Peyser Act employees provide employment service functions in One-Stop Career Centers and work alongside other One-Stop Career Center staff. The Department of Labor, Licensing, and

Regulation has developed memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with the One-Stop Career Center partner agencies and has provided a template MOU and guidance to local areas.

Maryland did not develop a model structure for One-Stop Career Center design and operation. Local boards are responsible for selecting center operators subject to the approval of the local elected official. Operators of the One-Stop Career Center vary by local area, but most arrangements are consortium oriented, with the employment service playing a major role. However, on the Eastern Shore, the county Departments of Social Services are also center operators. Montgomery County uses a for-profit entity. All One-Stop Career Centers are “branded” as CareerNet, but they may also include local subtitling.

The degree to which One-Stop Career Center partners participate in the centers varies widely across local regions. Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation and One-Stop Career Center operators indicated that vocational rehabilitation, veterans’ services, and Job Corps referral do not fit well into the One-Stop delivery system. Unemployment insurance (UI) staff is located in call centers, but all One-Stop Career Centers provide telephones so individuals can apply for UI benefits or file continuing claims. Employment service staff receives weekly lists of initial claimants and claimants profiled as likely to exhaust benefits. Staff uses these lists to schedule individuals for customized job search workshops.

Most boards have grandfathered One-Stop Career Center operators. Cost sharing distributions among partners are locally negotiated and vary across the state. In the two local areas visited for this study, One-Stop Career Center partners pay only staff costs to co-locate at the centers. In Frederick, the county, which operates the One-Stop Career Center, provides \$900,000 of its own cash annually for center operations and provides the physical building for all center partners. In Baltimore City, there is also no cost sharing between required partners. The Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation provides free rent and telephone services in one of four centers.

Local One-Stop Career Centers vary in the extent to which they maintain a special focus on serving low-income individuals and families. Baltimore City, Montgomery County, and Prince George’s County have used the state-funded Skills-Based Training for Employment Promotion pilot program to focus on this target group. Some officials interviewed suggested that welfare recipients should be able to access training services through the One-Stop Career Centers to meet WIA’s “universal service” focus, while others suggested that the presence of TANF recipients would damage the formation of business-friendly One-Stop Career Center atmospheres.

In addition, Maryland provides services for professional and managerial employees at its Professional Outplacement Assistance Center in Columbia. Center staff travel to deliver services in other locations as needed.

ITAs are used to provide adult training. The Maryland Higher Education Commission is responsible for approving programs for the state eligible provider list and for maintaining the state list of programs that can be supported by ITAs. The Maryland Higher Education Commission maintains lists of eligible providers organized by county, workforce area, and desired field of training. The Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation posts local training performance information provided by the commission on its website. Customer choice is constrained by the reluctance of many potential providers to sign up to serve WIA participants. In the local areas visited, One-Stop Career Center operators explained that training choices tend to be guided both by staff knowledge and expertise and by customer choice. In some areas training options are limited by the number of training providers and by the amount of resources available for each training participant. In one local area we visited, the community college and One-Stop Career Center operator formed a partnership to provide fee-for-service customized training.

The Governor's Workforce Investment Board developed nine system measures for the entire workforce system. Both the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation and Governor's Workforce Investment Board staff believe that the current federal performance management system does not work as well as the system used under JTPA because the standards were imposed rather than negotiated and for some measures there was no basis for setting standards.

Maryland joined a four-state consortium to develop a management information system. The new CareerNet will link One-Stop Career Center partners and staff to the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation. CareerNet will also serve business by enabling employers to search a talent bank and track those referred to their job openings.

There was widespread agreement among individuals we interviewed that the requirements for reporting on eligible training providers are negatively affecting WIA implementation.

Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation officials believe the system could better meet local labor market demands if funding for incumbent worker training was increased.

MICHIGAN

Dan O'Shea, University of Texas at Austin
Christopher King, University of Texas at Austin

Michigan implemented WIA in July 2000 with basic oversight and delivery structures already in place. Michigan introduced One-Stop Career Centers in 1993. By 1995, Michigan Works! Service Centers were fully institutionalized as its One-Stop delivery system. In 1996, the Michigan Jobs Commission and local leadership began establishing employer-led local workforce development boards with policy and planning responsibilities for the 25 local, public/private Michigan Works! Agencies. In 1999,

Governor John Engler restructured the commission to become the Michigan Department of Career Development, bringing in career-related education, workforce development and employment functions and rehabilitation services, and separating out economic development functions into a more specialized, quasi-public/private agency, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

Governor Engler was the main catalyst for the comprehensive Michigan Works! System, which emphasizes state direction and strong local control. Michigan originally “grandfathered” the Governor’s Workforce Commission and local Workforce Development Boards under WIA. Governor Engler reconstituted the state board, enlarging it to the full WIA complement in 2002. Local boards maintained their grandfathered status.

The state WIA strategic plan is primarily a compliance document. The Michigan Department of Career Development prepared the state Youth Transition Plan based on local youth plans. Local planning efforts are strong and, led by Education Advisory Groups and the local boards working with an array of stakeholders, exceed the requirements of WIA.

Michigan prepared a template for MOUs addressing broad roles and responsibilities between agencies and programs that was shared with local boards. Local boards must sign MOUs with partners in order to meet minimum certification standards. Coordination between education and workforce programs is orchestrated locally. Regional Intermediate School Districts frequently serve as Michigan Works! Service Centers contractors and administer adult and other education funds.

Most Michigan Works! Service Centers are full-service centers that have met the Michigan Works! Governance and Minimum Standards requirements. Michigan has a hybridized staffing model combining merit system with other private contractor staff. Michigan is a “demonstration state” in which Wagner-Peyser Act labor exchange and other services are provided by merit staff, but not necessarily state merit staff. Michigan Works! Service Centers staffing arrangements are determined locally.

Business engagement is structured through the Michigan Department of Career Development, the Michigan Works! Agencies, and the state and local boards given their business majority. In addition, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation serves to attract and retain business and expand economic growth. Employer services are locally configured.

Employment Service and WIA registration may occur at different stages in the process within and across local sites. Generally, as participants move into staff-assisted services, they will be registered on the employment service system and may also be registered for WIA. Use of ITAs and customized training and access to on-the-job training also varies by boards. Customized training is not widely accessible for incumbent workers. Michigan Technical Education Center facilities can provide such training but have not been fully utilized to date.

Michigan's labor market information efforts are very active at the state and local levels. Michigan had already implemented a consumer-oriented voucher process for work-related education and training so adapting to WIA was not difficult. An estimated 3,000 ITAs were authorized in PY 2001, and approximately 3,600 eligible training providers were listed on the state's Career Education Consumer Report system. The Michigan Department of Career Development has established core performance measures for nearly all programs, as well as broad system measures known as the Career Development System Indicators, which give a global portrait of the relative accomplishments of state workforce development efforts.

The Michigan One-Stop Management Information System has replaced disparate substate systems and provides state and local capacity to share information across programs affiliated with Michigan Works! Service Centers. The Internet has provided a platform for access to information regarding employment, training, education, and career-related resources. Michigan Department of Career Development opened the Michigan Talent Freeway as the main web portal through which the Michigan Talent Bank, the Michigan Virtual University, the One-Stop labor market information database and other resources are accessed.

WIA has increased the capacity of its Michigan Works! Service Centers network to attract more community partners, improve the breadth and depth of job seeker services, enhance business services, increase private sector participation, and provide better technical assistance. However, WIA performance measures, the continuation of federal silo funding and reporting requirements, and the over-stipulation of board composition are commonly voiced concerns. Funding issues in Michigan include the perceived shortage of training funds, declining Wagner-Peyser Act funds, and escalating One-Stop Career Center costs. There is also concern over pay equity between public merit system and private contractor staff, elimination of the "hold-harmless" clause, inadequate funding for summer youth employment, and limits on unspent WIA funds that can be carried over from the previous year. Additional concerns include the need for more systemic measures, clarification of when to register and exit a WIA participant, a standard definition of what constitutes a "credential," and simplification of provider certification requirements.

MISSOURI

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Deanna Sharpe, University of Missouri-Columbia

The Missouri Employment and Training Council began work in the mid-1990s to establish a coordinated workforce investment system that could provide seamless service in consolidated centers. Most of the significant organizational changes specified in the federal Workforce Investment Act were already in place in Missouri by the end of the 1990s, well in advance of WIA's implementation in July 2000. State agencies housing

job-training programs of all kinds—including labor exchange, training for the disadvantaged, technical training, and TANF —had been designated as partner agencies, corresponding closely to the structure that would be required by WIA. The Division of Workforce Development, established in 1999 in the Department of Economic Development, brought together Wagner-Peyser Act, JTPA/WIA, and related services, and after passage of WIA became the lead agency at the state level in administering the act.

The administration of Governor Mel Carnahan (1993-2000) played a central role in instituting reforms in the workforce development system, with members of the governor’s staff and occasionally the governor himself involved directly in the process. Following the implementation of institutional reforms, detailed implementation of policy has been left to state agencies. At the local level, as might be expected given the emphasis placed on private sector involvement, leadership for reforms under WIA has often come from the business community, although planning requirements of WIA may have encouraged local areas to broaden their focus.

State policy-making structures emphasize the importance of training as a means of helping workers acquire the high level of skills deemed necessary for state economic growth, but local boards control the details of WIA service provision. Consequently, substantial variation can exist in the extent to which actual implementation focuses on a “work first” approach in contrast to long-term training goals.

Local boards are allocated federal funding according to the WIA formula, and they contract with local providers for One-Stop Career Center operation and provision of WIA Title I services. Direct employees of the Division of Workforce Development who are stationed in One-Stop Career Centers and satellite centers across the state provide Wagner-Peyser Act services, as well as direct services under displaced worker provisions of Title I and several smaller programs.

The roles and level of engagement of each state and local partner at the One-Stop Career Centers varies widely across the state. U.S. Department of Labor programs, which are administered by Division of Workforce Development, are generally available in every Missouri One-Stop Career Center. Typically, vocational rehabilitation, adult education and vocational education (Perkins) programs, administered by the state’s Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, have representatives in One-Stop Career Centers, although the focus of their activities is elsewhere. Community and technical colleges, overseen by the Department of Higher Education, almost never locate services in the One-Stop Career Center. The state’s UI program, administered by the Division of Employment Security, is formally part of the One-Stop Career Center partnership, but all claims are processed through the telephone or Internet. TANF services, including counseling services focused on employment, Food Stamps, and related services, are provided in separate facilities, although in some cases they have representatives in the One-Stop Career Centers.

While institutional barriers to co-location often exist, other factors related to the mission of the programs also limit direct involvement of partners in the One-Stop Career Centers. Clients in some programs are believed to require specialized attention, and even where these programs locate in the same building as the One-Stop Career Center, they often maintain separate office space.

The service mix available at One-Stop Career Centers varies by location, as does the composition of their clientele. In large part, this reflects the fact that centers are, in essence, cooperative arrangements between existing organizations, with services reflecting their focuses. WIA has increased cooperation and collaboration, providing a greater emphasis on triage, but resources to provide highly trained professionals who could identify needs of all clients and direct them to the right provider are not available.

Ties to employers are idiosyncratic in the local areas. There is pervasive interest in serving employers. This interest has grown more important over the past few years and has been reinforced by WIA, in part due to the provision that requires a majority of local board members represent business interests.

Registration of participants in the system varies. Although the state provides a set of definitions for staff-assisted core services, intensive services, and training services that correspond closely to WIA specifications, local boards have some latitude regarding how they define a service. Local boards generally limit training funds available for each individual in recognition of the scarcity of available support.

Although the sequencing of services requirement of WIA altered the procedures by which training services were offered, among those we interviewed there was little concern that individuals were being denied training as a result of this requirement. Most respondents believed the basic structure of WIA facilitated improvements in the system. This is not to say that the effects of WIA requirements have been large or that all areas have been affected. State policy, even in the absence of WIA, supported moves in the direction of assessing client needs and sequencing services. In some areas existing procedures dominate.

A list of accepted training providers existed prior to the passage of WIA, so movement to ITAs caused little disruption. The provider certification process is centralized, and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, which maintains the list, has taken on much of the burden of assuring that data necessary under WIA are gathered. Missouri maintains a very good web-based information system about training providers, allowing clients to examine information on programs statewide, although WIA training participants are often dependent on counselor advice to determine appropriate programs.

In contrast to most other areas, where the impacts of WIA have been incremental and reinforced changes already in place, the impacts of WIA performance standards on the system have been marked and pervasive, especially over the last year, as difficulty in meeting negotiated levels has threatened state funding. The Division of Workforce

Development has provided extensive training to help local areas recognize the impact of their actions on performance statistics. Local areas are responding by managing exits from the system and working to guide participants toward programs with the most promising prospects. Although the state's long-standing goals and stated policies focus on assuring access to the system, it is clear that as increased pressure mounts to improve performance statistics, those service outcomes that are not measured will face reduced emphasis.

The primary way that clients are served with information technology is through MissouriWORKS!, an Internet-based job matching service. Having workforce development information available online has changed the way services are delivered, shifting the system dramatically toward self-service for those who come to the One-Stop Career Center, and broadening access to those not physically present at the center.

In summary, Missouri's workforce development system incorporated the more important elements of WIA prior to state implementation of the act but WIA clearly reinforced reform. Nonetheless, the state has moved only part way toward having a fully coherent workforce system that provides seamless services to those in need. This situation reflects, at least in part, the fragmented funding that continues to characterize the system. But it would be naïve to assume that a partner's misalignment with the mission of the One-Stop Career Center was due solely to separate funding streams. Forcing the funding stream of partner agencies with differing missions to funnel through the One-Stop Career Centers might seriously inhibit their ability to provide the services their clientele require.

Revisions of WIA need to give careful attention to the incentives inherent in the performance measures. The more pressure states face to meet and increase specified performance levels, the greater the certainty that programs will evolve to yield those outcomes to the exclusion of others. It also appears that benefits would be gained by further consolidation of relevant programs, perhaps transferring greater control over to state and local units. The appropriate level of that transfer must be a matter of debate, however, as it would clearly alter the relative influence of federal, state, and local governments in the implementation of workforce development policy. While program consolidation could create some efficiencies and would certainly be favored by state officials who are often frustrated by WIA's separate funding silos, elimination of the separate programs would ultimately replace the priorities specified in the current federal legislation with those of state legislators and local officials.

OREGON

Laura Leete, Willamette University
Neil Bania, Willamette University

The concepts embodied in the Workforce Investment Act were not new to Oregon when it was implemented. Early in the 1990s, Oregon began a process of coordinating

workforce service delivery among partner agencies. This included the establishment of state and regional workforce quality councils, the establishment and certification of a network of One-Stop Career Centers, and the development of systemwide performance measures. Oregon received federal One-Stop Career Center planning and implementation grants in 1995 and 1997, respectively.

Major leadership for Oregon's workforce investment system comes from the Governor's Office, the Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, and the Oregon Employment Department. The governor is also advised by a Workforce Policy Cabinet, comprised of directors and staff from partner agencies, which is a key element in interagency cooperation and information dissemination as it relates to workforce policy. However, in keeping with much of Oregon's political tradition, a significant amount of the control of the workforce development system is retained at the local level.

Oregon has a two-level hierarchy of local and regional workforce areas. For federal and state reporting and governance purposes, Oregon's 36 counties are divided into seven *local* workforce areas. Six of these consist of two- and three-county areas; the seventh encompasses 23 (mostly) rural counties and is known as the Oregon Consortium/Oregon Workforce Alliance (TOC/OWA). TOC/OWA is further subdivided into nine *regional* workforce areas. Each of the nine regional areas has a regional workforce investment board, Title IB contract, and One-Stop delivery system of its own. Thus, for federal and for many state purposes, there are seven *local* workforce areas, but much local control is retained within the full complement of 15 *regional* workforce areas (the six *local* workforce areas outside of TOC/OWA are also considered *regional* workforce areas). This arrangement appears to have been quite successful in providing remote rural areas strong representation and support, while still yielding a significant amount of local control to them.

Oregon's local and regional boards have direct administrative control over WIA Title I funds only and are expected to have indirect influence over other programs and services via collaboration. Each of the 15 workforce regions has one or more certified One-Stop Career Center. Regional variation is the rule rather than the exception; the design of One-Stop delivery systems has intentionally been left to local control. Most One-Stop Career Centers are characterized by the physical co-location of all mandatory partners as well as any number of other organizations and services. Success at achieving coordination and integration among partners varies widely across the state and in some cases co-location is more virtual than physical and is achieved via referrals and electronic resources. Oregon's One-Stop delivery systems do retain some commonality, however, from the presence of staff and systems from the Employment Department and the Department of Human Services, both centralized state agencies. The state also provides guidance to One-Stop Career Centers in the form of a checklist for core services that should be present in each center, a statewide recertification process, and a statewide workforce system logo.

Oregon's One-Stop Career Centers provide universal service to all adults. While special services are available in some locations, centers do not generally specialize in serving one kind of clientele. A "work first" philosophy is not espoused at either the state level or in *most* of the local areas or regions, although a *few* have officially adopted a "work first" stance. Instead, most center staff interviewed referred to the need to provide services that are appropriate for each individual client as well as to provide universal access. However, most also agree that in a world of real budget constraints and a commitment to universal access, access to training is very limited. Many view the system as having effectively become a "work first" system due to limited funding, regardless of intent and underlying philosophies.

Oregon state agencies involved in the workforce system have a long history of working together on a systemwide performance measurement system. To date, three measures have been implemented while ten others are in progress. There is a strong sentiment that systemwide measures are more conducive to collaboration and coordination among agencies than the individual and disparate reporting that each is required to do in response to separate federal legislation.

Under WIA, a number of related issues involving performance measures, eligible training provider certification, the definition of training, and ITA use have posed complications in Oregon that have been resolved at the state level by adopting a number of policies. Oregon's stringent consumer protection laws limit the kinds of programs that can be certified as post-secondary education and training to those that provide 400 contact hours or more. Limiting the use of ITAs to these programs would have severely limited the feasibility of training for most clients, as well as putting Oregon's measured credential rate considerably out of line with other states. For the purpose of ITA use, Oregon adopted new definitions of intensive services and training consistent with more generally recognized definitions. The state workforce agency has also taken on the responsibility of collecting the necessary provider performance data for those on the eligible training provider list.

There have also been issues that relate to the performance measures mandated by WIA. These include: state data confidentiality restrictions regarding the sharing of UI data, the perceived subjective nature of negotiated performance level standards and the absence of the local regression models that were used under JTPA, and the lack of performance evaluation measures that can be used for management improvement on a real-time basis.

Those involved in the workforce investment system in Oregon uniformly agree with the underlying concept embodied in WIA of unifying and coordinating workforce development efforts at both the state and local level. Many laud the goal of accomplishing universal access and note that WIA has done an excellent job of promoting the use and importance of labor market information systems. However, Oregon has long had a well-developed labor market information system and had already embarked on a path towards coordinated workforce efforts. While some believe that WIA helped Oregon move further along that path; others disagree, believing that it has

been a hindrance. The major difficulties that have arisen in Oregon in implementing WIA include the:

- Difficulties associated with the initial MOU drafting process;
- Lack of funding dedicated solely to One-Stop Career Center operations, inadequate funding, for local WIB activities, and the difficulty of operating an integrated system within the shadow of existing funding silos;
- Tensions inherent in involving centralized state agencies in decentralized local partnerships;
- Concern that “one-size-fits-all” One-Stop Career Centers do not meet the needs of all clients equally well;
- Lack of performance evaluation measures that can be used for management improvement;
- Unwieldy nature of large workforce investment boards;
- Difficulty in maintaining sustained involvement in the business community;
- Concern that current universal access mandates inherently detract from the ability to provide more intensive services and training; and
- Lack of integration between the workforce investment system and the state Department of Human Services, including the development of human service multi-service centers that are separate from the workforce One-Stop delivery system.

In addition to the two-volume set of case studies, the products of this Rockefeller Institute implementation-research project include an interim and final report. The interim report, entitled *The Workforce Investment Act in Eight States: Overview of Findings from a Field Network Study* (U.S. DOL-ETA Occasional Paper 2003-03), written by Burt Barnow, Johns Hopkins University, and Christopher King, University of Texas at Austin, was issued in July 2003. It is included as published as an appendix to this volume. The report summarizes the field data across the eight sample states and presents recommendations. Barnow and King are writing the final project report that will include the history of federal programs in this field along with a longer and deeper cross sectional analysis of the study states, comparing them in a manner that takes into account major findings and differences in goals, approaches, organizational structures, and operations. The final report is scheduled for issuance in spring 2004.

Notes

¹ The mandatory partners include WIA, the Employment Service, Unemployment Insurance, Welfare-to-Work, Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Veterans' Employment and Training Programs, Job Corps, Senior Community Service Employment Program, employment and training for migrant and seasonal farm workers, employment and training for Native Americans, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education and Literacy, Vocational Education (Perkins Act), Community Services Block Grant, and Housing and Urban Development administered employment and training.

² **Core services** are defined as an initial assessment, job search assistance, career counseling, and providing information regarding the labor market and work services. **Intensive services** include comprehensive and specialized assessments and development of employment plans as well as work experience activities, case management for participants seeking training services, and provision of literacy activities for basic workforce readiness. **Training services** include a variety of training opportunities to increase the skill level of the participant.

³ For more information on the field network approach to public policy research, see Nathan, Richard P. *Social Science in Government: The Role of Policy Researchers* (Albany, NY: Rockefeller Institute Press, July 2000).