

OPPOSE HOUSE BILL 2195 & SENATE BILL 1470: STOP OVERHAUL OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

House Bill 2195 and Senate Bill 1470 represent a complete overhaul of Virginia's workforce development. This legislation guts both the Virginia Employment Commission and Department of Labor and Industry in place of one mega agency that operates at the whim of the Governor in office. Consolidating the functions of four agencies charged with workforce development as described in HB 2195 (Byron) and SB 1470 (Ruff) will cause enormous harm.

A complete reinvention of Virginia's workforce program requires due diligence and transparency as well as a full understanding of its ramifications. Question is whether the proper due diligence has been done and if an appropriate legislative review is even possible during a short session?

A rapid adoption of this legislation could very well coincide with a slight or major recession in 2023. A federal government shutdown is also possible over raising the debt ceiling. Is this the best time while dealing with these two economic challenges to overhaul our entire workforce system?

This Consolidation = One Mega Agency

- This legislation hands over unprecedented power to the current Governor in office and concentrates it to their appointed Secretary of Labor.
- No surprise that the Executive Branch would want nearly unrestricted control of millions of workforce development funds.
 - Line 2184: *The Governor may transfer appropriations or portions thereof within any state agency established or otherwise affected by the provisions of this act, or from any such agency to another, to support changes in organization or responsibility resulting from or required by the provisions of this act.*
- Consolidates functions of the Virginia Community College System, Department of Education's adult education programs, Virginia Employment Commission, and the Department of Labor and Industry.

Threatens Registered Apprenticeship Programs

- The creation of an agency this large will mean that Virginia's registered apprenticeships will likely lose much of their current identity including service to both its individual and joint programs.
- Removes the ability of Department of Labor and Industry to oversee apprenticeship programs.

Guts and Defunds the Virginia Employment Commission

- This bill defunds the VEC with the exception of unemployment insurance and diverts significant resources away when the agency is resource challenged.
- Threatens the ability of the agency to serve customers in a timely manner especially in an economic downturn.
- Some of the main programs that could be negatively impacted are the job placement services used by unemployed Virginians.

