

Testimony before the Senate Commerce Committee

Thursday, March 5, 2015

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Kansas City, KS

Chairperson Lynn and members of the Committee,

I am Scott Anglemyer, Executive Director of Workforce Partnership. Our organization serves Johnson, Leavenworth, and Wyandotte counties. While these three counties are our “official” service area, which we use for eligibility for certain services, the labor market we serve includes the entire Kansas City metropolitan area. Nearly 20% of the residents of our three counties work in the metro area, but outside of our three counties, so we are guided by metro-wide labor market data.

In fact, we are oriented toward serving the key economic sectors of the metro area, because these sectors provide the most jobs, the greatest employment growth, and generally the best jobs. The new federal legislation discussed earlier in this hearing encourages us to develop sector strategies tied to key regional economic sectors. To be better able to do so, we are in the final stages of reorganizing our staff so that all of our staff members who work directly with either job seekers or employers are now part of one of four sector-based teams. The purpose of this reorganization is to help develop greater industry expertise among all of our staff and deepen relationships with employers, which we think will enable us to provide better and more customized service to both our employer and job seeker customers. Those sectors are healthcare, professional services/information technology, manufacturing/construction/supply chain, and general/other.

We have undertaken special initiatives or customized services to meet the workforce needs in each of these sector areas. I will give you a very brief description of some of these initiatives and services.

Healthcare – We train more participants in healthcare occupations than any other industry. We partnered with Full Employment Council, our partner that serves five counties on the Missouri side of the metro area, on the Greater Kansas City Healthcare and Health IT grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. Under this grant, we trained hundreds of people in healthcare careers. A particular area of our focus was health information technology training. We paid for approximately 75 people to receive training in this growing field through a new program at Johnson County Community College. We found that field experience was a critical factor in getting these individuals placed, so we partnered with JCCC on a grant that expanded the training and funded internships, allowing program completers to gain that vital experience.

Professional/IT – We have taken advantage of the H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant that the Department of Commerce received to provide on-the-job training to individuals with

engineering degrees. To date we have placed 74 people in our region. We also partnered with Metropolitan Community Colleges and Kansas City Kansas Community College on the Earn IT and Learn IT grant, providing on-the-job training in IT careers. We have placed over 400 individuals at Cerner, and dozens more in the Kansas City Startup Village, helping to meet a critical shortage of IT workers in the region.

Manufacturing/Construction/Supply Chain – NorthPoint Development, the developer of Logistics Park Kansas City (LPKC) recently announced that they are partnering with JCCC and us to locate a supply chain training facility at LPKC (the BNSF intermodal facility). NorthPoint donated the space for JCCC to provide training and for us to locate full time staff at LPKC to provide a range of workforce services to serve the companies located at LPKC and the residents of southwest Johnson County. Because we anticipate that a significant number of the workers at LPKC will come from Miami County, we are partnering with Southeast **KANSASWorks** to share the staffing of this facility so that both regions will be served effectively through this location.

General – While the remaining industries include a wide range of businesses and occupations, many of the jobs in this final category are not what we would ordinarily consider to be “good” jobs, in terms of pay, benefits, or working conditions. We are launching what we are calling “employer development,” which is a set of strategies designed to help turn employers into good employers, and make more of their jobs good jobs. This concept is still in the developmental stages, but it will focus on helping improve employers search processes, pay practices, benefits, and work design to help them attract better candidates, provide better opportunities for our job seekers, and ultimately be more profitable.

I welcome the opportunity to answer any questions you may have.