

Dear Colleague:

The Private Industry Council of Milwaukee County Inc. has served Milwaukee County and the municipalities within as the local Workforce Development Board for over 20 years. The PIC is governed by a Board of private and public sector leaders and provides a range of services for businesses and residents of Milwaukee County including employment assistance, job training, education assistance, and summer employment for youth.

Recently, the Mayor of Milwaukee submitted a request to Governor Doyle requesting the City of Milwaukee be designated a workforce development area and that the funding directed toward the PIC be transferred to the Mayors Office of Workforce Development. In the same request, the Mayor indicated his desire to include the remaining municipalities under the jurisdiction of the Mayors Office of Workforce Development.

The proposal disconnects Milwaukee County and the other municipal governments from workforce development initiatives. It also de-funds the partnerships and programs of the Private Industry Council. The Governor has accepted the Mayor's request.

The Governor did, however, ask the State Council of Workforce Investment to accept public comments through March 23, 2007 and subsequently provide a recommendation to the Governor at its next meeting March 27, 2007. I strongly urge you to contact them.

Ultimately, the real question that must be asked is simple: What will the City of Milwaukee do that the PIC does not do now (or cannot do in the future)? I do not believe that anyone has answered that question, thus I believe that we should continue to support the work of the PIC. Unless someone can honestly answer that question, it really begs that question of why we are creating a brand new bureaucracy.

Finally, as a municipal leader in Milwaukee County, you should consider the impact of moving the workforce development issue from an agency with a board appointed from across the county to a department within the City of Milwaukee. Clearly, the PIC has a mission that focuses the majority of its resources on residents within targeted areas of Milwaukee, but there are programs that benefit potential workers from outside of Milwaukee too. Changing to a city department makes it less likely that those programs will continue.

I encourage you to contact the state council and mention your concerns.

Sincerely,

Scott Walker
Milwaukee County Executive