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## DIGEST

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HB 680 Original

2026 Regular Session

Wyble

**Abstract:** Provides relative to waivers under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Present law requires the secretary of La. Works to design and implement a state and local planning process for workforce training and services, including the certification of business/career solution centers and the chartering of local workforce development boards, provided through the programs under the jurisdiction of the office of workforce development.

Proposed law instead requires the secretary of La. Works to design and implement a workforce system planning process consistent with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and to the extent allowed by federal law or approved federal waiver.

Proposed law provides that the planning process may include statewide, regional, or other governance or service delivery structures as designated by the governor, including the certification of one-stop centers and, when applicable, the establishment, oversight, consolidation, or restructuring of local workforce development boards or successor governance entities

Present law provides that, unless superseded by federal law, the commission may use an amount not to exceed 20% of the amount of funds available to the commission for workforce training and services to implement state-level responsibilities, including administration, research and planning, system design and development, and training and technical assistance.

Proposed law instead provides that, unless otherwise provided by federal law, La. Works may reserve and expend funds for state-level administration, planning, research, system design and development, performance management, oversight, technical assistance, and other statewide workforce system responsibilities in amounts consistent with federal requirements and approved waivers.

Proposed law allows the governor to designate La. Works to act as the fiscal agent for grant funds associated with WIOA, and to the extent allowed by federal law or approved federal waiver.

Proposed law provides for legislative intent.

Present law provides for the purposes of executive branch organization, the council is placed within the executive office of the secretary pursuant to present law (R.S. 36:301(C)(1)).

Proposed law instead provides that the council shall be placed within the office of management and

finance under the purview of the secretary of La. Works.

Present law provides the goals of the Workforce Investment Council (council). Two of those goals included the following:

- (1) To advocate for the development of an integrated workforce development delivery system that provides competitive quality services addressing the needs of businesses and workers in La.
- (2) To ensure the equitable distribution of quality education, training, and employment services statewide, especially to distressed and rural areas and areas serving the economically disadvantaged citizens of this state.

Proposed law revises these goals to instead provide the following:

- (1) To establish a unified statewide planning, performance, and accountability framework to ensure consistent service delivery and standards across regions.
- (2) To allocate and administer workforce funds in order to prioritize measurable employment outcomes, employment engagement, and efficient use of state and federal resources while preserving meaningful regional input.

Present law requires the council to develop, prepare, adopt, and submit to the governor a comprehensive state combined plan that establishes strategic goals, objectives, and measures that provide direction for the provision of services and coordination of resources by the state's workforce development delivery system.

Proposed law instead requires the council to develop, prepare, adopt, and submit to the governor a comprehensive state plan that establishes strategic goals, objectives, and measures that provide direction for the provision of services and coordination of resources by the state's workforce development delivery system.

Present law requires the plan to establish benchmarks for each measure and to provide recommended strategies for implementation by state agencies and private entities.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law requires the combined plan to be updated on a biennial basis.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Proposed law provides that the state plan, which shall also serve as the regional plan, shall be developed and updated in accordance with the WIOA, and applicable federal regulations.

Present law provides for the duties and functions of the council, which includes some of the

following:

- (1) Recommending to the governor the geographic designation of workforce development areas for the delivery of workforce development services funded through the WIOA.
- (2) Assisting the department in requesting waivers allowed under WIOA.
- (3) Performing all duties required by the WIOA for the state workforce development board, including carrying out the federally and state-mandated duties and responsibilities for all advisory councils under applicable federal and state workforce development programs.

Proposed law revises the aforementioned duties and functions to instead provide the following:

- (1) Recommend to the governor the designation, redesignation, consolidation, or restructuring of workforce development areas, planning regions, or other governance or service delivery structures for the administration of workforce development services funded through the WIOA.
- (2) Assist the department in developing and submitting requests for federal waivers authorized pursuant to the WIOA, and applicable federal regulations, for the purpose of modernizing and improving the administration of the state's workforce development system, including but not limited to waivers that would fulfill certain responsibilities required by proposed law.
- (3) Perform all duties required by the WIOA, and applicable federal regulations, for the state workforce development board, and, when authorized by federal law or approved waiver authority, perform the duties otherwise assigned to local workforce development boards or related governance entities. The council shall also carry out federally and state-mandated responsibilities for advisory councils, committees, or successor bodies established by applicable federal and state workforce development programs.

Proposed law repeals present law (R.S. 23:2065(A)(9)), which provides for the duty of the council to develop recommendations for a marketing and communications plan, including the design of a logo.

Present law requires the council to perform the responsibilities assigned to the state advisory council pursuant to certain federal laws.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law requires the council to assume the responsibilities formerly exercised by the following state advisory councils:

- (1) The Louisiana Employment and Training Council.
- (2) The State Council on Vocational Education.

- (3) The State Occupational Information Coordinating Council.
- (4) The Adult Education Advisory Council.
- (5) The State Apprenticeship Council.
- (6) The Governor's School-to-Work Council.
- (7) The Louisiana Employment Security Advisory Council.
- (8) Such other state advisory commissions or councils as the council recommends and the governor approves.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law provides that, upon approval of the governor, the council may, by administrative rule, assume the responsibilities of other state advisory councils or commissions and perform all duties and responsibilities related to them.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that there shall be a local workforce development board for every workforce development area.

Proposed law removes that requirement and instead allows the governor to designate workforce development areas, planning regions, or other governance or service delivery structures in accordance with the WIOA and other applicable federal laws.

Proposed law further allows the governor to designate one or more local workforce development boards, authorize the state to operate as a single statewide local workforce development area, or assign such duties to the council or another entity as permitted by federal law or approved waivers.

Proposed law allows the governor to, pursuant to federal law, approved federal waiver authority, or an approved state plan modification, designate the council to perform any or all duties otherwise assigned to local workforce development boards.

Present law requires the governor to designate local areas within the state after consulting with the council, chief elected officials, and local boards, and after an opportunity for comments from businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, other primary stakeholders, and the general public.

Proposed law instead requires the governor, when making designations, redesignations, consolidations, or structural modifications, to consult with the council and provide an opportunity for public comments from businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, local

officials, workforce partners, and other stakeholders.

Present law provides that federal funding for the operation of the federal advisory councils shall be allocated to the council according to federal requirements.

Present law requires the council to develop a budget to carry out its duties and responsibilities and submit its budget to the House and Senate committees on labor and industrial relations and the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget.

Present law requires the budget to identify funds appropriated for planning, evaluation, and implementation of a workforce development program under the jurisdiction of the council.

Present law allows the council to apply for, contract for, receive, and expend for its purposes any appropriation or grant from the state, its political subdivisions, the federal government, or any other public or private source.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law requires each agency, on approval of the plan by the governor, to submit an annual action plan to the council on how it intends to implement its workforce development programs in accordance with the strategic plan.

Present law requires each agency to report to the council at least once a year on its activities toward meeting the benchmarks established in the plan.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law provides that for the first two operating years of the WIOA, the governor shall approve a request for initial designation as a local area from any area that was designated as a local area for purposes of federal law, if the local area performed successfully and sustained fiscal integrity.

Present law provides that after the period for which a local area is initially designated, the governor may redesignate workforce development areas not more than once every two years, unless the governor determines that the area failed to, as determined by the council, perform successfully, sustain fiscal integrity, and, if required, failed to prepare and submit a regional plan.

Present law provides that a redesignation shall be made not later than four months before the beginning of a program year.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law requires the governor, after receiving recommendations from the council, to publish a proposed designation of local workforce development areas for the planning and delivery of workforce development.

Present law provides that a local workforce development area may be:

- (1) Composed of one or more contiguous units of general local government that includes at least one parish.
- (2) Consistent with either a local labor market area or a metropolitan statistical area.
- (3) Of a size sufficient to have the administrative resources necessary to provide for the effective planning, management, and delivery of workforce development.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law provides that the units of general local government, business and labor organizations, and other affected persons and organizations shall be given an opportunity to comment on and request revisions to the proposed designation of a workforce development area.

Present law provides that after considering all comments and requests for changes, the governor shall make the final designation of workforce development areas.

Proposed law repeals present law.

(Amends R.S. 23:20, 33, 2041, 2056, 2061(2), 2062(2) and (4), 2063(A)(1), 2065(A)(4), (7), and (8), 2091, and 2191; Repeals R.S. 23:2054, 2063(2) and (3), 2065(A)(9), and 2192 - 2195)