

Boston Business Journal

From the January 13, 2006 print edition

Reader feedback

Work force solutions weighed on Beacon Hill

To the editor: David Begelfer ("Tending to our work force," December 30-January 5, 2006) correctly identifies that the lack of skilled workers in Massachusetts is a dangerous constraint on economic growth. He is equally correct in his assessment that more and better job training and work force development programs are critical elements of the solution to this economic crisis.

The good news is that some of the tools he recommends are already under consideration by the legislative conference committee negotiating the final shape of the economic stimulus bill. Specifically, legislators are debating a proposal by the House to invest \$11 million in the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, a program that would train 10,000 workers for jobs in sectors with high labor demand and the \$3 million Educational Rewards program, which would allow 2,000 low-skill adults to go to community or state college part time in order to acquire the skills that employers need.

They are also debating the creation of a Workforce Accountability Task Force that would review the work force development system in its entirety and ensure that all investments meet the needs of both employers and employees in the most efficient and effective possible way.

We as a commonwealth must ensure that the work force solutions become law.

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