Honorable Bruce Rauner, Governor
Capitol Building
401 South Second Street – Room 207
Springfield IL 62706

Dear Governor Rauner,

The Illinois Workforce Investment Board (IWIB) is looking forward to working with you on expanding employer-driven workforce solutions. These approaches support the work of the Illinois Pathways Initiative mentioned in the Education Reform and Job Growth Agenda Blueprints. The IWIB leadership operates through a Sector-Based Task Force structure as well as the Learning Exchanges developed through Illinois Pathways. We are asking for the Administration’s support in ensuring the Illinois Pathways Initiative remains embedded in the vision of the IWIB. Realizing this priority will require securing private sector support and changing the IWIB bylaws to align with this vision.

During the December 2014 IWIB meeting the board approved building on the Illinois Pathways Initiative to respond to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s call to action, “Managing the Talent Pipeline: A New Approach to Closing the Skills Gap.” Illinois is the first state/WIB to take official action related to the Chamber’s initiative. Accepting this call to action and being at the forefront in creating business-driven training approaches puts Illinois at an advantage for implementing the recently passed Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

WIOA lays out a strong agenda for change that ties workforce and education to economic development, increases the focus on industry partnerships, and provides states with needed flexibility to tailor training to meet the employer’s need for skilled workers. The strategies emphasized in WIOA open the door for greater use of “work-based” learning options that meet the needs of the employers.

The IWIB supports utilizing federal workforce training dollars to fund public/private initiatives with employers, local associations, economic development entities, and community colleges that create sector-based models, develop career pathways, and customize training solutions for a skilled workforce including special populations such as people with disabilities, veterans, and youth.
This experience has taught us that creating employment solutions in collaboration with business-led boards, economic development and industry partnerships is the best approach. Now is the time to increase those solutions by tying them to approaches in talent pipeline management. We are committed to working with you in continuing to build the capacity of our Illinois workers in securing the skills our businesses need.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

John Rico, Co-Chair of IWIB and CEO of Rico Enterprises, Inc.  
on behalf of the business members of the Illinois Workforce Investment Board

JR:kjs

cc:  Sean McCarthy, Governor’s Office  
Andria Winters, IL Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity  
Jeff Mays, Director, IL Dept. of Employment Security  
Business Members of the Illinois Workforce Investment Board  
  Tom Ashby, President - Coordinated Transportation Development, Inc.  
  Henry Beards, Director of Human Resources - United Parcel Services  
  Elizabeth Dickson, Director of Human Resources - Engineered Glass Products, LLC  
  Scott Frick, Manufacturing Executive - Kraft Foods  
  Justine Hood, HR/Employment Development & Training - Centerpoint Properties  
  Michael Massie, Attorney at Law - Massie and Rennick  
  Sandeep Nain, President - SNtial Technologies, Inc.  
  Janet Payne, VP of Human Resources - Provena United Samaratin Medical Center  
  Tom Prinske, CEO - T. Castro Produce  
  Margi Schiemann, Director, Infrastructure Programs and Support - Nicor Gas  
  Sophia Shaw, President and CEO - Chicago Botanic Gardens  
  Gary Swango, Vice President, Human Resources & Compliance - Growmark, Inc.  
  Grover Webb, Owner - Tanglefoot Ranch  
  Tom Wendorf - DuPage United