



May 2012

The Honorable Henry Cuellar
U.S. House of Representatives
Office of 28th District Texas
Laredo, TX. 78041

Dear Congressman Cuellar:

Please accept this as a letter of support for Job Corps programs funded under the Department of Labor in general, and the Laredo Job Corps Program, in particular.

On behalf of the employers and businesses in our communities, we urge you to oppose the closure of Job Corps centers as currently proposed by the U.S. Department of Labor. The Job Corps program performs a vital service to our communities as a workforce training option for at-risk youth. Any reduction of services currently available would simply result in the elimination of opportunities available to youth for stable marketable employment.

Job Corps works for employers. No national career preparation program is more closely allied with local and regional employers and their needs. These employers actively work with their local centers to customize training to meet their needs in 100 different trades in 11 major industries. No other program offers local employers a comparable opportunity to shape curricula in so many occupations. Small businesses in our communities work closely with their Job Corps centers because these centers reliably produce skilled and responsible workers who can contribute to a small business' growth.

Job Corps also works for our local communities. Every dollar invested in the program results in about \$2 in economic activity in the local economy because of the purchasing of goods and services in the community. As a result, the average Job Corps center directly and indirectly supports 228 local jobs. Nationally, the 125 Job Corps centers support 30,000 jobs, the vast majority of which are in the private sector.

Most importantly, Job Corps works. It is our nation's most effective career preparation program for economically disadvantaged youth ages 16 to 24, who might otherwise cost our communities and taxpayers billions of dollars over the course of their lifetimes. Job Corps reverses that drain, because 85 percent of graduates secure a job, enter higher education, or enlist in the military.

To ensure our country has continued economic growth and a well-trained workforce, our nation has a responsibility to invest in smart programs that have a proven track record of success. Job Corps is one of the most worthwhile investments toward these goals. For the sake of the youth the program services, the employers who hire them, and our communities, Congress should prevent the closure of any of the 125 Job Corps centers across the country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Miguel A. Conchas".

Miguel A. Conchas
President/CEO