

May 10, 2012



The Honorable Senator Orrin G. Hatch

Dear Senator:

Higher education including all aspects of workforce development is a main focus of the Ogden/Weber Chamber of Commerce mission. Individual business development and community and economic development all depend on a supply of well educated and trained workforce. When new business consider locating or expanding in our communities, their first question relate to the supply of educated and well trained workforce in their individual discipline. They ask about cooperative support from the public and private education and colleges and universities. Workforce and education questions always preclude location, cost of buildings and operating costs in the community. In northern Utah we are fortunate to have a number of higher education alternatives including Weber State University, Ogden Weber Applied Technology College, Job Corps and private colleges. All serve an important role in targeting sectors of potential job market to provide students (potential employees) with the tools needed to be successful.

Job Corps provides niche education for individuals who are intelligent and motivated but have not successfully navigated normal educational paths and may not have had the family or community support to fit the "normal" mold if there is one. These individuals when provided with a structured environment to develop their character and values along with specific educational opportunities that meet their skills and personal objectives, will succeed.

Job Corps provide the structure, nurturing and discipline to have one of the highest rates of student success in attaining the educational and job expectations of all form of post high school education. Our nation more than ever needs to move individuals and families moved from the rolls of unemployment and welfare to the role of self sufficient, self directed and employed citizens paying their fair share of taxes. The only way to overcome poverty and crime is with education, not just academic but rigorous academics coupled with discipline and soft skills needed to be a participative citizen and have a family that breaks the poverty chain.

The cost of education is small in comparison to the social costs of individuals without education never attaining independence. Education broadens the mental horizon of personal opportunity and expectation. The revenue and social benefit of flipping individuals from tax users and to tax payers is almost immeasurable.

Currently the jobless rate in Utah is 5.8% well below the national rate of 8.2% and job growth of almost double the national rate. Even with this stellar performance there are many jobs going without being filled. All unfilled positions are a result of not having individuals with the skill sets and experience to meet the technical and character requirement. Some of the highly technical jobs including engineering and professional services require a four year degree or higher but a higher percentage of the jobs require technical training and soft skills that are not always the outcomes of traditional higher education. Technical Colleges and Job Corps fill that need and produce qualified workers that can then pursue additional education with their employer's help if they wish.

Keeping Job Corps to fulfill the gap it currently fulfills and expanding the number of students touched is an important piece in solving our country's social and economic puzzle.

The Chamber and its employer members urge our lawmakers to keep this important part of education that gives individuals a fishing pole and teaches them to fish rather than handing out fish on a daily basis. For questions please call or email me, 801-814-3283 or dave@ogdenweberchamber.com

Thank You

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Dave Hardman
President/CEO
Ogden/Weber Chamber of Commerce

May 10, 2012



The Honorable Senator Mike Lee

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Dave Hardman
President/CEO
Ogden/Weber Chamber of Commerce

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US Representative Jason Chaffetz:

Dear Sir:

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Dave Hardman
President/CEO
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US Representative Jim Matheson:

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Dave Hardman
President/CEO
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US Representative Rob Bishop:

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