



Recover, Renew, Rebuild: Workforce Policies for a Strong and Fair Economy

November 12, 2008

"I don't believe that government can or should try to solve all our problems," but it "should ensure a shot at success, not just for those with money and power and influence, but for every single American who's willing to work. That's how we create not just more millionaires or more billionaires, but how we create more middle-class families. That's how we make sure businesses have customers that can afford their products or services. That's how we've always grown the American economy -- from the bottom-up."¹

President-Elect Barack Obama

On January 20, 2009 President-Elect Obama will take office and assume leadership over a nation in economic crisis. The new administration will face many urgent needs—both new and long deferred. None will be more imperative than bolstering economic security and strengthening the economy. Since the beginning of the year, the American economy has shed 1.2 million jobs and unemployment has risen to 6.5 percent. One in nine workers is unemployed and looking for work, discouraged from job search or working part-time because full-time hours are not available.² Many economists predict that this recession is likely to be longer and deeper than any in decades.

While shoring up the economy will be job one, the administration also must address a less visible crisis—the ability to achieve the “American Dream.” For too many people, our nation’s promise of prosperity and opportunity for upward mobility is broken. In 2007, even before the current recession, one in eight Americans³ and close to one in four African-Americans⁴ lived in poverty, and more than 90 million people—close to one-third of all Americans—had incomes below 200 percent of federal poverty thresholds.⁵ Too many workers are stuck in low-wage jobs, and most low-wage workers experience little or no earnings growth over time.

Restoring the “American Dream” will require new policies informed by a new vision—a vision of an America where everyone has equal access to good jobs; where young people and adults can obtain the education, training and supports necessary to contribute to society and the economy; where employers are able to find workers with the skills necessary to fill the jobs of tomorrow; where jobs provide decent wages and benefits, and work conditions support

workers' responsibilities at home; and where strong safety nets and work supports are widely available to those who need them.

President-Elect Obama and the new Congress will face the urgent need to respond to the immediate economic crisis. However, short-term challenges should not divert them from making progress toward the vision of a stronger and more equitable U.S. economy. CLASP recommends that the nation's leaders take the following actions in 2009, guided by three principles, to revitalize workforce policy and make a down payment on the longer term agenda:

1. **Help workers and families *recover* from economic distress**
2. ***Renew* the nation's commitment to prosperity and upward mobility for all**
3. ***Rebuild* middle class jobs**

Recover

- ❖ **Invest in America's workforce to promote economic recovery.** Extend and modernize unemployment insurance, assist youth and adults facing barriers to employment enter the labor market and increase support for education and training during the downturn.

Renew

- ❖ **Reinvest in and revitalize workforce development and adult education programs.** Revamp workforce development and adult education services to ensure that lower-skilled people get the education, training, and supports they need to gain the skills and credentials required to access good jobs with family-sustaining wages.
- ❖ **Connect youth in distressed communities to economic opportunity.** Activate the Federal Youth Development Council to provide federal leadership, enhance the capacity of the youth service delivery system, and expand opportunities for youth engagement.
- ❖ **Create Career Pathways to Good Jobs.** Support innovation in states by aligning federal workforce education and training policies, redesigning performance accountability systems across programs, and providing incentive funding to encourage partnerships and fill gaps in services for low-income and low-skilled individuals.
- ❖ **Expand Transitional Jobs.** Provide dedicated funding and eliminate legislative and regulatory barriers to implementation of such programs to help individuals with barriers to employment enter and succeed in the labor market.
- ❖ **Increase access to postsecondary education and support student success.** Fully-fund Pell Grants, make higher education tax credits more responsive to the needs of low-income youth and adults and fund Student Success grants.

Rebuild

- ❖ **Grow good jobs through government leadership.** Make good jobs a national priority and provide federal policy leadership and assistance to improve job quality.
- ❖ **Ensure that jobs created through federal investments in energy and infrastructure offer opportunity for all.** Fully fund the Green Jobs Act, include targeted hiring and training requirements in reauthorized transportation legislation and devote a portion of revenue generated from legislation to curb global warming to training for jobs in the Green Economy.

Help Workers and Families *Recover* from Economic Distress

Invest in America's Workforce to Promote Economic Recovery

Workforce policies to help individuals who are struggling in the labor market are a critical component of a recovery package to get America working again. Individuals with the least amount of education and work experience are more likely than other workers to experience job loss. They also are likely to experience long-term unemployment. To respond to the recession, the new Congress and administration should adopt a comprehensive economic recovery package that includes the following workforce investments to assist low-income and other workers hardest hit by economic recession:

Extend and Modernize Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment Insurance (UI) is the first-line response to a declining economy. It is a crucial source of temporary financial assistance for jobless workers and their families. The need for temporary assistance is growing with 2.8 million more American workers unemployed in October than at this time last year.⁶

Recommendation: Congress should approve an extension of federally-funded extended benefits to workers who exhaust their UI benefits. The extension would include seven additional weeks of emergency unemployment compensation for workers in all states and another 13 weeks for workers in high-unemployment states. This extension is necessary because 800,000 workers have already exhausted their benefits under the first extension.⁷ However, an extension of benefits for current recipients is just the first step. Only about one-third of unemployed individuals receive UI benefits. If an extension is approved, it will still leave out large numbers of low-wage, part-time, and other workers in some states. Low-wage workers are twice as likely to be unemployed as high-wage workers; yet, they are half as likely to receive UI benefits.⁸

Recommendation: To ensure that low-wage, part-time, and other vulnerable workers have access to UI, Congress should immediately pass the Unemployment Insurance Modernization Act (UIMA). This legislation provides incentive funding to states that count the most recent earnings of workers and extends benefits to part-time workers and others who leave jobs for compelling family reasons. Enacting the UIMA now will allow state legislatures to take action to draw down the funds when they reconvene.⁹

Ensure Access for Low-Income People to Good Jobs Created Through Infrastructure Investments

Congress is considering investing significant funds in our nation's infrastructure, in order to stimulate the economy and create badly needed new jobs in the face of growing

unemployment. Congress should structure this investment to help create job opportunities for traditionally underserved populations and to build the workforce by dedicating funds to increase access to job training and education.

Recommendation: Congress should require that at least 15 percent of work hours on infrastructure projects receiving federal funding be performed by veterans, low-income individuals, out-of-school youth, homeless individuals, or ex-offenders. To ensure that low-income individuals and those with barriers to employment can gain the skills necessary to access the new jobs created, states should be required to dedicate at least one percent of available funds for skills development directly tied to these jobs. States should have flexibility to identify and fund creative and effective workforce development programs and partnerships, including those run by nonprofit organizations, labor unions, employers, local workforce investment boards, community colleges, and other state and local entities.

Expand Transitional Jobs for Individuals with Barriers to Employment

During tough economic times, individuals with barriers to employment will be particularly hard hit. Transitional Jobs are time-limited, subsidized wage-paying jobs that combine real work, skill development, and supportive services, to help individuals overcome employment obstacles and successfully transition into the labor market.

Recommendation: Congress should provide \$400 million dollars for the development and expansion of Transitional Jobs programs. A portion of these funds should be reserved for technical assistance for both new and existing programs.

Fund Summer Jobs in Areas with High Youth-Unemployment

This summer, even before the latest economic decline, only one in three teens were employed, the lowest rate in more than sixty years.¹⁰ There are 3.8 million 18 to 24 year olds out of school and out of work. Dollars spent on summer jobs flow immediately into the local economy. Just as important, these jobs will be the first exposure to the work environment for many youth, and will help them develop appropriate work skills and behaviors, and provide important community service.

Recommendation: Summer jobs for youth should be funded at \$1 billion for the summer of 2009, with the provision that 30 percent of funds can be spent beyond summer months for transitional jobs for out-of-school youth.¹¹ Providing the money now will allow for better planned and managed summer jobs programs.

Increase Support for Education and Training during the Downturn

When low-skilled workers are working – often with irregular hours, in split shifts or in more than one job to make ends meet – they don’t have the time to go to school to gain the skills they need to get better, more stable jobs. During a recession, unemployed workers and suddenly underemployed workers, who are working reduced hours, are more likely to be able to participate in skill development activities. An investment in workforce skills would benefit individual workers as well as prepare our workforce for the jobs of the future and contribute to rebuilding our economy.

Recommendation: Congress should provide an additional \$1.25 billion in funding for programs authorized under the Workforce Investment Act (\$500 million for disadvantaged youth, \$500 million for dislocated workers and \$250 million for services to low-income adults) to enhance the nation’s training and employment services capacity to help unemployed and underemployed people gain the skills and connections need to get good jobs that can sustain a family. Congress should also provide an additional \$250 million for re-employment services targeted at those most likely to exhaust their unemployment benefits.

Recommendation: An additional \$500 million should be provided for adult education. Funding should be directed at programs that integrate basic skills, English language, and occupational training and focus on transition to postsecondary education and job training in order to ensure that lower-skilled people are not left behind in this labor market.

Recommendation: Congress also should provide \$250 million to expand the Federal Work-Study program to help financially disadvantaged college students earn the funds they need to pay for college and obtain a postsecondary credential with value in the labor market. This program provides funding for jobs on campus, in the community, and in the private sector thereby providing a financial stimulus and helping students develop strong work habits and gain exposure to potential employment opportunities.

For more information on CLASP’s full recommendations for economic recovery, see *Beyond Stimulus: Shoring Up the Safety Net, Securing the American Dream*

<http://www.clasp.org/publications/claspbeyondstimulus.pdf> and *Towards Shared Recovery: Congress Must Do More to Reverse the Recession*
<http://www.chn.org/pdf/2008/stimulus9908.pdf>

Renew the Nation’s Promise of Prosperity and Upward Mobility for All

Education and training are major contributors to economic prosperity. They are drivers of economic mobility and opportunity. Yet, nearly half the U.S. workforce has only a high school

education or less and some 25 million workers aged 18 to 64 lack a high school diploma or GED.¹² Strengthening education and training programs is critical to ensure that low-income individuals, low-wage workers, and those with low basic skills can enter and advance in the labor market, and that American businesses have access to workers with the skills they need in order to compete.

Improving workforce programs that provide services such as career counseling, job placement, exposure to the world of work, connections to work supports, and access to child care and transportation is also essential for helping individuals get better jobs, succeed in education and training, and advance along a career pathway.

CLASP recommends that the Obama Administration and new Congress take the following actions to bolster education and workforce programs and restore confidence in America's promise of prosperity and upward mobility for all:

Reinvest in and Revitalize Workforce Development and Adult Education Programs

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) authorizes the nation's federally funded workforce development system, which provides critical training and employment services, such as career counseling, job placement, supportive services and labor market information. The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act is the main source of federal funding for adult education. These programs are both essential for helping low-income and low-skilled individuals get on a pathway to better jobs. However, the federal government has disinvested in them for too long. *Since 1979—the peak year of federal investment in employment and training programs, funding has declined in real terms by nearly 70 percent.*¹³ Between 2000 and 2007 alone, funding for Workforce Investment Act programs for adults, dislocated workers, and youth declined by about 12 percent, according to the Congressional Research Service.¹⁴ Federal funding for adult education and literacy services is grossly inadequate considering the need, amounting to less than \$500 million annually since 2006 even with waiting lists for adult education and skyrocketing demand for English language classes.¹⁵

A long term commitment to reinvesting in these programs is sorely needed; however, an infusion of resources alone will not be enough. These programs need to be transformed in order to better meet the needs of low-income and low-skilled workers and job seekers, and to ensure that America has a globally competitive workforce.

Analysis of the most recent data for individuals exiting from the WIA Adult program shows that since the law was enacted there has been a steady decline in the share of low-income individuals who have received training and employment services such as case management and

career counseling. In Program Year 2006, the share of low-income individuals receiving such services fell to just over half, down from 84 percent in 2000.¹⁶

Furthermore, workforce and adult education services are inadequately connected to help low-skilled youth and adults get the skills and credentials they need. Most adult education students do not stay in classes long enough to earn a GED or transition into postsecondary education or job training that will lead to credentials with value in the labor market and to better jobs.

Recommendations: When Congress and the Obama Administration take up reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act and the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, top priorities should be to:

- ❖ Revamp Title I of the Workforce Investment Act to make it a pathway out of poverty for low-income and low-skilled individuals, by:
 - Refocusing it on the provision of education and training to build skills so that people can access jobs that pay family-supporting wages and have advancement potential, instead of immediate job placement;
 - Targeting employment and training services to low-skilled, low-income individuals;
 - Strengthening coordination between the workforce development and adult education systems to promote better integration of occupational training, basic skills, and English language services;
 - Providing flexibility to develop programs customized to the needs of individuals with barriers to employment so that they can succeed in the labor market;
 - Making the workforce system an access point for supportive services and work supports; and
 - Connecting workforce and economic development with the goal of linking low-income individuals and distressed communities with the engines of regional economic growth.
- ❖ Revise the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II of WIA) to help many more adults and older youth increase their basic skills and English language proficiency and successfully transition to postsecondary education and training and work by:

- Focusing on student persistence in adult education; and
- Allowing and encouraging blended programs that combine basic skills, English language, and occupational education and training to ensure lower-skilled individuals can earn credentials that help them compete for better jobs.

Connect Youth in Distressed Communities to Economic Opportunity

One in three youth – and more than 50 percent of minority youth – who start high school will not graduate four years later. Each year nearly a half million youth drop out and join the approximately 3.8 million young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are out of school and without a high school diploma.¹⁷ This problem disproportionately impacts low-income minority communities where youth unemployment is extremely high, where gang participation and youth violence is on the rise, and where approximately one-third of all young black men are involved with the criminal justice system. In past decades, there was substantial investment in the youth delivery system that provided opportunities for educational credentialing, training, work experience, and support for these youth to help them get back on track. Federal youth programs and supports have been all but dismantled over the past 10 years through the reduction of federal funding and support.

Recommendations: Congress and the Obama Administration should reverse these trends and make reconnecting our youth a national priority. Action is needed to:

- ❖ Activate the Federal Youth Development Council which was created by federal statute but never funded. Have this council report to a White House Office of Youth Policy, and charge it with the responsibility of prioritizing strategies for re-engaging and developing the skills and potential of the millions of disconnected youth in the context of their value in an emerging global economy.
- ❖ Provide federal funding to help build the youth service delivery capacity in communities of high youth distress. Similar to the Youth Opportunity Grant Program established under the Workforce Investment Act, this effort should help communities align their education and youth serving systems to put in place prevention and dropout recovery programs, at scale, that connect youth to alternative education, training, work experience, postsecondary opportunities, and jobs.
- ❖ Provide federal resources to dramatically expand opportunities for work experience, internships, and civic engagement for youth living in communities of high poverty

and high unemployment and for youth who are disabled or have barriers because of their contact with the justice system or child welfare system.

For more information, see the Campaign for Youth's agenda *Our Youth, Our Economy, Our Future, A National Investment Strategy for Disconnected Youth*

http://www.campaignforyouth.org/default/documents/cfy_full.pdf

Create Career Pathways to Good Jobs

Career pathways initiatives are emerging as a promising approach to enable low-income and low-skilled youth and adults to gain the skills and acquire the credentials needed for family-supporting jobs. These initiatives seek to make both the labor market and relevant educational programs more transparent to workers and businesses by mapping them and filling gaps in training, if needed.

Career pathways connect education and training programs to help all students, including adults, out-of-school youth and high school students, advance in steps from one level of education and training to another. Pathways involve employer partnerships to align program content with industry requirements. Ideally, pathways should begin at the lowest literacy and English language levels and extend all the way through two-year and four-year college degrees, and include comprehensive services to support student success.

Recommendations: Congress and the Obama Administration should increase support for career pathways initiatives being implemented by states and local institutions. Key action steps include:

- ❖ Provide incentive funding to engage business, union, and community partnerships in structuring multiple pathways to stable, high wage opportunities in regional economies and filling gaps in services for out-of-school youth and low-skilled, low-income adults.
- ❖ Conduct a review of the legislative and administrative changes needed to align federal policies and program requirements across adult education, career and technical education, training, and postsecondary education systems to make it easier for states and local institutions to develop and fund career pathways.
- ❖ Fund the National Academy of Science to study current performance measures across workforce development, adult education, and career and technical education programs, and develop recommendations for a new performance accountability system that will facilitate better integration among programs, and provide incentives to serve disadvantaged individuals.

- ❖ Extend federal waiver authority to allow states and communities to bring together existing funding streams to support career pathways.
- ❖ Fund *Business Workforce Partnerships for Job Skill Training in High Growth Occupations or Industries*. This grant program, authorized by the Higher Education Opportunity Act, would fund partnerships of colleges, employers, and, where applicable, labor union representatives, to expand or create credit-bearing college programs, including career pathways, responsive to business workforce needs.
- ❖ Fund *Bridges from Jobs to Careers* grants to colleges to increase access to and completion of occupational certificates and degree programs for lower-skilled individuals. These grants, authorized by the Higher Education Opportunity Act, will help colleges create “bridge” programs that customize remedial education and English language curricula to specific occupational programs.

Expand Transitional Jobs

Transitional Jobs are a successful program model aimed at assisting individuals with barriers to employment enter and succeed in the workforce. These programs are designed to help participants overcome employment obstacles and provide a bridge to unsubsidized employment by combining time-limited, wage-paying jobs that combine real work, skill development, and supportive services to help participants build work-related skills and transition into the labor market. Over 30 states and localities across the country have implemented transitional jobs programs for populations with barriers to employment, including TANF recipients, homeless individuals, at-risk youth, ex-offenders, refugees and immigrants, and individuals with disabilities.

Recommendations: The new Administration and Congress should support the development of Transitional Jobs programs for individuals with barriers to employment and expand existing ones with the following actions:

- ❖ Eliminate legislative and regulatory barriers to supporting Transitional Jobs programs across various federal policies and programs.
- ❖ Make a commitment to dedicate an additional \$1 billion over five years to the development and expansion of Transitional Jobs programs. This funding should be focused on particularly vulnerable populations, such as ex-offenders, disconnected youth, and homeless veterans.

For more information, see the National Transitional Jobs Network's *Priorities for the New Presidential Administration to Reduce Poverty through Transitional Jobs Programs*, <http://transitionaljobs.net/Policy/NTJNFederalMemo.pdf>

Increase Access to Postsecondary Education and Support Student Success

Postsecondary education is increasingly the gateway to family-sustaining employment. One study found that students who completed at least one year of occupational courses in college and earned a credential experienced substantial earnings gains.¹⁸ Yet, 52 million adults have no postsecondary education¹⁹ and the escalating cost of attendance, including tuition, fees, and living expenses, serve as barriers to access for low-income individuals. Just 11 percent of those who grew up in low-income families have a college degree, compared to more than half of those who grew up in families in the top income quintile.²⁰ Even the most academically prepared low-income high school graduates are only as likely to attend college as the upper-income graduates with the lowest test scores.²¹

While access is an issue, so is student persistence and success. Too many students who enter college fail to complete programs and attain credentials—for example, six years after enrolling at public two-year colleges, nearly half (44 percent) of Pell Grant recipients do not have a credential and are no longer enrolled.²² Further, while some students may have left after achieving short-term goals, research shows that most students, even nontraditional ones such as working adults, do enter college with the goal of earning a certificate or degree.

Recommendations: Congress and the Obama Administration should expand access to postsecondary education and support student success with the following actions:

- ❖ Fully fund Pell Grants. The maximum Pell Grant award is \$4,731, and although Congress has authorized the maximum be \$5,800, it has not appropriated sufficient dollars to increase the award to that level. The value of the Pell Grant has significantly eroded over time as tuition costs have outpaced small increases in the grant level. The maximum Pell Grant only covers 33 percent of the tuition, fees, and living expenses related to attending a four-year, public institution, leaving low-income students with high levels of unmet need.²³
- ❖ Ensure low-income and nontraditional students benefit from the higher education tax credits. Currently, 30 percent of the benefits of the Hope and Lifetime Learning credits go to families with incomes higher than \$75,000 while only 9 percent of the benefits go to families with incomes less than \$25,000.²⁴ Yet, financial need remains a barrier for millions of low-income students. These higher education credits should be reformed to make them work better for lower-income and nontraditional students. For example, making the credits refundable would allow them to reach students who do not have Federal income tax liability. Allowing the credits to be claimed for living expenses in addition to tuition and fees, would make them more useful for students attending lower cost institutions such as community colleges.

- ❖ Fund the *Student Success Grant* pilot program in the recently passed Higher Education Opportunity Act and gradually expand Student Success Grants to all first-year Pell Grant recipients. In this program, first-year Pell Grant recipients at a pilot institution would also receive a \$1,500 Student Success Grant that would offset the costs to the college of providing the kinds of program innovation and student services that research suggests will help those students stay in and complete college. Such services include intensive advising and counseling, college and career success courses, work study jobs with private employers in the students' field of study, learning communities, curricular redesign to support blended or accelerated remediation, tutoring, and child care and transportation assistance. The pilot is targeted at first-year students needing remedial or developmental coursework in reading, writing, or math at postsecondary institutions with at least 50 percent of such students. In the long-term, we recommend fully implementing Student Success Grants so that all first-year students receiving Pell Grants are eligible for the services which show the most promise in promoting persistence and completion.

Rebuild Middle Class Jobs

America needs to be in the business of creating good jobs and promoting employment practices that improve job quality – increase wages, benefits, advancement opportunities, flexibility, and workplace health and safety – for all workers, not just those at the top. Even before the current recession, millions of workers were working at wages too low and jobs too unstable to allow them to achieve even nominal economic self-sufficiency.

CLASP recommends the following actions to rebuild middle class jobs, a cornerstone of the American dream, and lay the groundwork for a stronger and more equitable U.S. economy:

Grow Good Jobs through Government Leadership

During the last eight years, our government has failed to enforce labor standards adequately, undermined workers' right to organize, and generally allowed companies to cut their costs without regard to the effects on workers, their families, and communities. Government should not be neutral between "high road" employers that pay a living wage, provide benefits, see workers as a long-term investment, and treat them with dignity and respect, and "low road" employers that do none of the above.

In addition to setting and enforcing higher standards for wages, benefits, and working conditions, the government has an important role to play in providing technical assistance to employers on best practices in the workplace that can benefit both workers and the bottom line. Yet, the US currently has no coordinated effort to improve job quality to help both

workers and businesses. Other nations have adopted such an approach, and it is time for us to follow suit.

Recommendations: As a sign of a strong commitment to this agenda, President Obama should appoint a “Good Jobs Czar” at the Department of Labor to lead a national effort to improve jobs for American workers. The Good Jobs Czar would engage in a broad range of activities, including:

- ❖ Making good jobs a national priority and developing measures to assess progress in improving job quality for American workers. Currently, we do not have enough information about job quality in the United States, or even a shared definition of what a good job is. The European Union has developed a framework for assessing job quality and has used this framework to promote policies to improve job quality.
- ❖ Providing administration leadership in enacting legislative proposals to improve wages, working conditions and worker rights, including passage of the Employee Free Choice Act and enactment of national laws for paid sick days and improvements and expansions of family and medical leave, as outlined in the agenda of the National Coalition on Valuing Families at Work.
http://www.9to5.org/familyvaluesatwork/ValuingFamilies_Agenda09Beyond.pdf
- ❖ Developing a Center for Workplace Innovation to highlight best practices in the workplace, provide technical assistance to employers on good job design, model best practices in the federal government, coordinate efforts already underway to improve job quality across the government, and provide support and recognition to employers that adopt high road practices. Specific activities could include White House awards, a job quality index, and an annual conference for state agencies working to improve job quality.

Ensure that Jobs Created Through Federal Investments in Energy and Infrastructure Offer Opportunity for All

The development of new clean energy sources and the 21st century modernization of our bridges, tunnels, roads, and school will require significant federal investments. As the federal government makes investments in improving our nation’s infrastructure and developing clean technologies and a sustainable greener economy, it should ensure that low income youth and adults have access to the jobs created and the opportunity to gain the skills needed to meet the demands of the new economy. The workforce system should be a critical partner in developing training and job readiness programs for low-income individuals to these new jobs.

Recommendation: In order to build an economy of the future and ensure that new federal investments provide opportunity for all, the Obama Administration and Congress should take the following actions:

- ❖ Provide full funding for the Green Jobs Act of 2007, which authorizes worker training programs for jobs in the green economy, including the Pathways Out of Poverty Demonstration program, which would support training programs targeted at low-income youth and adults. Although Congress authorized the Green Jobs Act, it has yet to appropriate any funding for the various programs included in the Act.²⁵
- ❖ Reauthorize the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) with requirements that a portion of work hours on projects supported by these funds be done by low-income and other underserved populations, and require that a minimum percentage of funds authorized under the Act be used for training and support services to help low-income individuals gain the skills needed to perform these jobs.
- ❖ Devote a portion of the revenue generated by any “cap and trade” system implemented to limit greenhouse gas emissions to job training and workforce development services for low-income individuals and displaced workers so that they can access good jobs

Conclusion

During his campaign, President-Elect Obama signaled strong support for many of the proposals discussed above to rebuild the American economy, fight poverty and create a bridge to the middle class. We call upon the new administration and Congress to act now to begin the process of creating a stronger and fairer economy that truly provides opportunity for all to achieve the American dream.

For more information, please contact Evelyn Ganzglass, Director Workforce Development Policy at (202) 906-8015 or eganzglass@clasp.org

CLASP: Policy Solutions That Work for Low-Income People

CLASP develops and advocates for policies at the federal, state and local levels that improve the lives of low income people. We focus on policies that strengthen families and create pathways to education and work. Through careful research and analysis and effective advocacy, we develop and promote new ideas, mobilize others, and directly assist governments and advocates to put in place successful strategies that deliver results that matter to people across America.

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Endnotes

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