



A New Look at the GAO Report on Workforce Funding

Spending on seven largest workforce programs cited in the report has fallen by more than 1/3 since 2009

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In January 2011, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) published a report entitled *Multiple Employment and Training Programs: Providing Information on Colocating Services and Consolidating Administrative Structures Could Promote Efficiencies*.ⁱ In this report, GAO identified 47 federal programs that provided support for employment and training activities in fiscal year 2009, with a total funding level of \$17.6 billion. This statement has taken on a life of its own, and is often cited as evidence of extensive duplication and overlap between federally funded workforce development programs.

As the workforce stakeholder community pointed out at the time, the report actually found relatively little evidence of duplication.ⁱⁱ While a number of programs provide similar activities, many of these are targeted to specific populations, such as individuals with disabilities, youth, migrant farmworkers, Native Americans, or veterans. Some of these populations require highly-specialized services that cannot easily be provided through more general programs, while other programs were created to ensure that certain populations would be prioritized for services, given the large gap between the level of job training funding and the need for services.

Moreover, it is a mistake to continue to cite the GAO figure for the total spending level, as appropriations in FY 2009 were substantially boosted by the one-time infusion of funds under the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Even excluding the additional ARRA funding, workforce funding for a wide range of programs has declined by more than 10% since 2009, with the March 2013 sequester just the latest addition to a series of cuts. For the seven largest programs, which GAO found accounted for about three-quarters of total workforce development spending, FY 2013 spending on employment and training was more than 35% below FY 2009 levels.

Employment and Training Programs	Spending on Employment and Training	
	FY 2009 ⁱⁱⁱ	FY 2013 ^v
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION GRANTS TO STATES	2,956,743,700	2,505,308,886 ^v
WIA DISLOCATED WORKERS	2,421,340,000	955,591,379
WIA YOUTH ACTIVITIES	2,112,069,000	781,375,289
TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)	1,777,958,939	1,618,684,531 ^{vi}
JOB CORPS	1,775,000,000	1,487,005,642
WIA ADULT PROGRAMS	1,356,540,000	730,624,342
WAGNER-PEYSER EMPLOYMENT SERVICES	1,203,677,000	664,183,664
TOTAL	\$13,603,328,639	\$8,742,773,733

ⁱ *Multiple Employment and Training Programs: Providing Information on Colocating Services and Consolidating Administrative Structures Could Promote Efficiencies*, United States Government Accountability Office, January 2011, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d1192.pdf>.

ⁱⁱ "Are Federal Workforce Programs Duplicative?" Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce, March 2011, http://www.americasworkforce.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/CAIW_DuplicationFS_2011-03.pdf.

ⁱⁱⁱ All of the FY 2009 spending data was retrieved from the *Multiple Employment and Training Programs: Providing Information on Colocating Services and Consolidating Administrative Structures Could Promote Efficiencies*, United States Government Accountability Office, January 2011, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d1192.pdf>.

^{iv} Data represents post-sequester amounts, "FY 2013 Operating Plan," United States Department of Labor, 2014, <http://www.dol.gov/dol/budget/2014/PDF/2013OperatingPlanTable.pdf>. See footnotes v and vi for explanations of Vocational Rehabilitation and TANF amounts.

^v The calculation was made by applying the GAO estimate of 85 percent of grant spending for Employment and Training activities to the FY 2013 vocational rehabilitation state grant allocation of \$2,947,422,219; "Awards to RSA Grantees," Rehabilitation Services Administration, November 06, 2013, <http://rsa.ed.gov/grants.cfm>.

^{vi} As FY 2013 spending data has not been released, this figure is estimated by applying FY 2012 share of federal TANF spending reported as used for employment and training (8.2 percent) to total available federal TANF funds for FY 2013 of \$19,602,650,304; "TANF Financial Data - FY 2012," United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Office of Family Assistance, August 09, 2013, <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/resource/tanf-financial-data-fy-2012>.