

February 11, 2020

Good morning and thank you to Senator Gounardes for the invitation to appear today. My name is Lisa Futterman and I'm the New York City Regional Director for the Workforce Development Institute. WDI is a statewide non-profit and partner to organized labor that works to grow and keep good jobs in New York State. We use a range of tools to facilitate projects that build workforce skills and strengthen employers' ability to hire, promote, and retain workers.

Senator Gounardes has expressed an interest in developing a pipeline of skilled workers to feed New York's public service jobs.

I'd like to provide a few workforce trends from the field that have been identified by WDI and are relevant to this discussion:

1. It's a tight labor market. Many employers are projecting significant retirements within the next 5 years with both the public and private sectors *competing* for the same workforce.
2. Despite this tight labor market, there remains a significant population that is *either underemployed (including college grads) or has struggled to find quality jobs.*
3. The public is largely unaware of many career opportunities and the education or experience that they require.

In response to these trends, WDI has spent a significant amount of time in the **Manufacturing, Construction, IT and Health Care** sectors on two types of initiatives to develop pipelines of workers. **Both initiatives have paid off.**

- 1.) **The first initiative is expansion of Career Awareness and Exposure Events aimed at boosting the profile of good jobs going unfilled.**

We have partnered with Unions and Employers to connect Educators and Students to information about career paths, including the education required to pursue them. Employers must be very involved in this effort to ensure its success.

**We believe that a similar Career Awareness effort aimed at both Local Communities and all College Career Centers would yield similar results for Civil Service.** We also recommend that outreach efforts include *current civil service workers* who can talk about what they do, their career trajectories, and how public service jobs have led to financial self-sufficiency.

## **2.) The second initiative is "Pre-Employment" Training**

In our work developing skilled worker pipelines we have encountered situations where employers have required "pre-employment" training of candidates. In these cases, the best practice is to develop customized training in response to industry demand. This is done with a wide range of partners, including employers, unions, and training providers.

In developing a pipeline of workers for Civil Service, similar pre-employment training efforts could be helpful, including test preparation and/or targeted training when a specific certification or knowledge is required. We recommend that these efforts be closely aligned *with* Civil Service.

In closing, we believe Civil Service jobs hold great promise in terms of career growth and financial security. We agree with Senator Gounardes that development of a large and talented pool of potential public employees is an effort that is both timely and necessary. We will do whatever we can to help this effort.