

Appendix V

Survey of Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs By Trade Deficit Review Commission-Interstate Conference of Employment Security Agencies

Overall Views

- I. A. **Are your TAA and NAFTA-TAA programs working adequately or do you believe they should be improved?**
- Adequate: 23 (15 still said room for improvement)
 - Inadequate: 19
- B. **If you believe the existing programs should be changed to make them more effective or efficient, what specific suggestions do you have for improvements in these programs.**
- See pp. A33-34
- C. **Do you believe income assistance should be provided for two years if workers need remedial education as well as training?**
- Yes: 39
 - No: 6
- D. **Should TAA and NAFTA-TAA be mandatory "partners" in the one-stop system?**
- Yes: 37
 - No: 7

Funding Levels

- II. A. **Is federal funding sufficient to support the programmatic needs of the current TAA and NAFTA-TAA programs?**
- Yes: 23
 - No: 23

What are your estimates of additional funding necessary to support the program(s) and any improvements suggested above?

- Eighteen states, or political entities, answered "yes" with no further suggestions for improvement:

Remarks from states that answered "yes."

- Funding is sufficient based on low enrollment in Trade/NAFTA programs.
- Child care benefits should be considered.

Remarks from states that answered "no."

- States suggesting general increases in funds
 - Specific amounts suggested for funding increases:
 - \$10 million more annually.
 - \$115,000.
 - \$3.5 million.
 - \$120 million for TAA, \$60 million for NAFTA-TAA.
 - 10 percent increase.
 - 25 percent increase.
 - 100 percent increase.
 - 20 percent increase.
 - 5 percent increase.
- One state noted although NAFTA-TAA funds are sufficient, trade funds are depleted.
- Two states suggested funds should be proportional to petitions or affected workers.

Improvements suggested for training:

- Increase funds to cover greater training costs.
- Double funds for training costs.
- A 30 percent increase for training.
- A 20-25 percent increase in training funds.

Specific suggestions for training improvements:

- Provide incentives and encouragement.
- Provide ongoing training for local staff.
- Provide Internet training.
- Increase funds for fact-finding on breaks in training and introduce a thirty-day waiver review of training participation requirement.

Other suggestions:

- Automation of program to eliminate paperwork.
- Allow TRA to run to end of 104 weeks
- Consider management costs as programmatic, not administrative.
- Provide more funding for administrative/ care management services.

II. B. Is federal funding sufficient to support administration of the TAA and the NAFTA-TAA programs?

- Yes: 10
- No: 34

What are your estimates of additional funding necessary to support the administration of the program(s)?

- Two states that did not answer
- Ten states, or political entities that answered "yes" with no further suggestions for improvement.

Remarks from states that answered "yes."

- When administration shifts from state to local (July 1, 2000), additional funds will be necessary.

Remarks from states that answered "no."

- Twenty-two states suggested more money for administration.
- Additional specific funding amounts suggested:
 - \$25 million nationally;
 - \$7 million nationally;
 - \$1.5 million;
 - \$60,000;
 - An extra \$1,000 per trainer;
 - 3 percent increase (to 18 percent) (two states);
 - 5 percent increase (to 20 percent) (eight states);
 - 10-15 percent increase (to 25-30 percent) (two states);
 - 15-30 percent increase (to 30-45 percent) (two states).
- State that answered "no" without further suggestions for improvement.
- Specific allocations suggested:
 - Additional funds for training;
 - Additional funds for staff: (two states);
 - Suggestion that funding should be proportional to workers affected.

State Recommendations for Improvements in TAA program

- I. B. If you believe the exiting programs should be changed to make them more effective or efficient, what specific suggestions do you have for improvements in these programs?
- Offer local control and flexibility in enrollment timetables basing them on an assessment of workers' needs and local school schedules and openings. (Time clock for getting into training begins on the affected worker's last day of work or a certain number of weeks after the certification date, whichever comes first. The NAFTA-TAA requirement that workers be in training within sixteen weeks after layoff or six weeks after certification severely limits workers' options for retraining. For example, community and technical college quarters or semesters do not correspond to layoff's schedules. **Thirteen states**
 - Permit payment of TRA for the full period of eligibility for training (104 weeks), if the affected worker's assessment indicated that he/she needed remedial education as well as vocational training to find a new job. (Payment of the TRA lasts up to fifty-two weeks added to a maximum twenty-six weeks of unemployment insurance benefits, but training may extend for 104 weeks. Many affected workers need two full years of training, or more, to improve literacy as well as vocational skills and do not have the resources to support themselves and their families through completion of training programs. **Nineteen states**
 - Give individual states flexibility to continue to pay additional TRA to cover the remaining weeks of training. **One state**
 - NAFTA-TAA should be changed to allow more time to enroll NAFTA-TAA eligible participants in training after certification so that they would be entitled to the TRA (cash) benefits. **One state**
 - Extend the period of eligibility by the number of scheduled, approved breaks in worker training, allowing affected workers to take full advantage of the 104 weeks of eligibility for actual training. Scheduled breaks in classes count as weeks of eligibility. Breaks longer than fourteen days render the worker ineligible to receive allowances for any portion of the scheduled break. **Fifteen states**
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- Increase the number of days allowed for scheduled breaks in training. (It is very difficult for workers when there are no TRA benefits being paid during breaks that exceed fourteen days, and it may be difficult to find employment for such a short period of time. **Thirteen states**)
- Coordination with one-stop delivery system. Automatic co-enrollment of TAA and NAFTA-TAA eligible-workers in the Workforce Investment Act, permitting more cross-training and better use of staff in a one-stop center. In addition, workers would be eligible to receive training and services from either source. (Funds to administer trade programs do not support enough trade staff in states with a great deal of trade activity, to adequately conduct assessments, approve training programs, and manage support service for trade-affected workers. Delivering services through one-stop centers is a partial solution, as long as funding streams and accounting remain on a program-by-program basis. TAA remains a state program, while the one-stop centers are under local control. **Four states**)
- Broadened applicability of programs. Permit the Secretary of Labor to certify petitions due to shifts in production to a foreign country of articles similar to or directly competitive with articles produced by firms engaged in layoffs of workers. **Two states**
- Shorten the Department of Labor certification process. **One state**
- Overhaul administrative requirement. Establish a state-federal work group to examine and overhaul the administration requirements. The working group should be composed of stakeholders such as the Department of Labor, state agencies, local workforce development, and workers. (Administrative requirements for TAA and NAFTA-TAA are complex and hinder the smooth operation of the program and training of new staff.) **Three states**
- Combine the two programs. **Fourteen states**
- Rules and regulations of TAA and NAFTA-TAA should be consistent. **Five states**
- NAFTA rules should be the same as TAA. **Three states**
- TAA and NAFTA-TAA should be more closely aligned with the unemployment insurance program at the administrative level. **One state**

- Both TAA and NAFTA-TAA should have the same rules and regulations for secondary workers. Current differences make it difficult to administer and operate the programs. **One state**
- Both TAA and NAFTA-TAA should have the same rules and regulations regarding waivers. **One state**
- Regulations for operating the programs should be more detailed and defined so that all states administer the trade program alike. **One state**
- Allocation of funds – We request funds after a dislocation. This slows down our ability to service them quickly. **One state**
- Simplify the regulations that are complicated for the claimants to understand. **Two states**
- Have one dislocated worker program regardless of cause of dislocation. **One state**
- Requirements are too strict. **One state**
- Change the strict time limits. **Two states**
- Create a new and concise manual. **One state**
- Automatic enrollment of TAA and NAFTA-TAA eligible workers in the Workforce Investment Act, permitting more cross-training and better use of staff in a one-stop center. **One state**
- To ensure and expedite identification of potentially affected workers, mandate via federal trade act law that the employer must file with the state agency, within a specified time frame, a listing of those workers when the request for investigation for a TAA or NAFTA-TAA petition is made. This can be provided as a second page petition request and mailed to employer when the petition request is received. **One state**
- Waivers from training should be eliminated. **Three states**
- Make training mandatory for receipt of TRA under both programs (remove waiver provision). **Three states**

- Impose a time limit for applying for training under a certification. As it now stands, once they have a covered separation, workers may return years later to make a claim for training, even though they have been successfully reemployed by other companies in the interim. **Three states**
 - Allow use of Individual Training Account system under the Workforce Investment Act for trade. **One state**
 - The time frame for completing job search when approved for job search allowances should be extended. [Job search allowances (like a waiver from training) to ensure the circumstances that led to the job search approval still existed for the maximum of \$800.] **One state**
 - Deadline should be sixteen weeks from qualifying separation and/or certification date. **One state**
 - More funds to fund administrative requirements, local TAA coordinator, and staff positions. **Six states**
 - Provide funds for supportive services. **Five states**
 - Eliminate the 6/16 enrollment in training criteria for NAFTA-TAA. **Three states**
 - Roll all programmatic service (training, job search, relocation) under the Workforce Investment Act to be provided subject to Department of Labor trade certification. **One state**
 - Amend the NAFTA enrollment in training requirements to make them more comparable to the trade program. **One state**
 - At least make programmatic service provisions consistent with Workforce Investment Act requirements. **One state**
 - TAA and Workforce Investment Act regulations need to be aligned to create effective partnerships and diminish confusion for the partners and affected workers. **One state**
 - Provide administrative and case management funding. **One state**
 - More funding needed for services for NAFTA-TAA clients, employment, and training support. **Two states**
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- More staff positions are needed. **One state**
- Provide funding for developing and implementing local employment and training networks that would also serve as a clearinghouse for all programs. To often the short programs are overlooked, because the front-line employment and training specialists are not aware of their existence. **One state**
- Mandate ceilings on training costs for more uniformity across the nation. **One state**
- Encourage other programs to cooperate more fully with TAA and NAFTA-TAA to support costs for income assistance, remedial training, and pre- and post- testing. **One state**
- Need increase in cost reimbursement for out-of-area job searches and relocations. There has been no readjustment for several years, so present allowances are unrealistic. **One state**
- Future dislocated workers will need more specialized training to compete in the new job market, and the program costs are rising rapidly. The ceiling on TAA and NAFTA-TAA program funds has been level for many years and should be lifted if necessary to accommodate meaningful future job training programs. **One state**
- Increased use of computer systems. **Two states**
- Provide distance learning. **Six states**
- Need for English as a second language. **One state**
- There is a continued need for training programs that provide workers with skills to fit local labor markets. Incentives and encouragement should be given to promote closer working relationships between local economic development entities and training providers. This would ensure that workers were being trained in fields supported by the local job market. **One state**
- Modify regulation for an easier method for computing reimbursement for expenses on job search and relocation allowances. Currently, when a customer requests reimbursement for expenses for a job search or relocation, the request must go through several computations (actual cost, 90 percent of federal per diem, the lesser of, etc.) **One state**