

CONVERGENCE

2009
ADVOCACY
AND ACTION

02.18.2009

Convergence I:
The Nation

Presented By:



REP. MATSUI SPEAKS TO EDUCATION, BUSINESS, CIVIC LEADERS ON THE LOCAL IMPACTS OF THE FEDERAL ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE

Over 200 employers, education leaders, civic leaders, elected officials, economic developers, and entrepreneurs in emerging industries were among the first to learn about the potential impacts of the federal stimulus package on the Sacramento region from Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA-05) at the February 18th CONVERGENCE, a quarterly breakfast series presented by LEED – Linking Education and Economic Development— and the Los Rios Community College District's Business and Economic Development Center.

CONVERGENCE showcases the issues that exist at the intersection of education, workforce development, and economic prosperity. The 2009 series theme is "Advocacy and Action" and focuses on public policy and advocacy issues that relate to education and workforce development.

Rep. Matsui urges audience to work together on stimulus package funding

Matsui, who serves on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, discussed the nexus of the Federal economic stimulus bill (known as "The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act" signed February 17 by President Obama) and related impacts on workforce and education development in the Sacramento region.

"Our current and future workforce is nurtured by our nation's teachers, professors and technicians," said Matsui.



L-R: LEED CEO David Butler, Cordova High School senior Kyle Cordova, Rep. Doris Matsui and Cordova High School senior Bryce Botsford. Cordova and Botsford presented information on Cordova High School's Project Lead The Way pre-engineering program to Convergence attendees.

"Students need modern classrooms, access to new technology, and the tools that enable them to learn new skills. The stimulus package is another step in renewing our national commitment to workforce development."

Matsui shared that the stimulus bill includes a College Tuition Tax Credit of \$2500 per student to help defray the costs of higher education, as well as \$4 billion for a variety of job training programs. To encourage high growth in emerging industry sectors, \$750 million is allocated to Title 1-D (Improving the Achievement of the Disadvantaged) grants. Matsui also underscored that the "America Competes Act" was recently passed, which places an emphasis on and funding for science, technology, and math education (STEM) fields. The Act includes grant programs which encourage public-private partnerships between the business community and institutions of higher education to meet workforce demand.

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GREEN FORCE CONVERGENCE

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Matsui recently assisted the Los Rios Community College District in securing a \$2 million community-based job training grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. The Los Rios Community College District will use this grant to develop its GreenForce Program, which will train more than 1,000 people over a three-year period.

Matsui challenged the Sacramento region to work together in order to successfully position itself for stimulus funding. "These grants will be competitive and it will be important for you to collaborate across organizational boundaries to submit quality proposals," she explained. Matsui provided examples of successful collaborations, such as that of the Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation and Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency on adding a spillway to the existing Folsom Dam, and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments Blueprint on the region's land use.

STEM, CTE, and preparing Americans for high skills jobs supported by the Obama Administration

Domenic Giandomenico, Director of Education and Workforce Programs, Institute for a Competitive Workforce, discussed education and workforce priorities of U.S. employers. The Institute for a Competitive Workforce (ICW) is an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and promotes rigorous educational standards and effective job training systems. "We need to make sure that every American has a job to support his or her family through high skills jobs," said Giandomenico.

Giandomenico highlighted statistics pertaining to the upcoming wave of retirements of the "Baby Boomer" generation, and underscored the need to prepare the American workforce for the jobs that will be vacated by those retirements. "More than one-third of the current workforce will be 50 or older when President Obama completes his first term," explained Giandomenico.

In describing the Obama Administration's approach to education, Giandomenico described recent efforts--through S 3047--to establish a national STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) office in order to align current activities and reduce redundancies of programs across various federal agencies. He described how this office will strive to establish best practices for STEM education.

Lastly, Giandomenico stressed that Career Technical Education (CTE) is important to workforce development, and that the Obama Administration supports CTE. A link to Giandomenico's presentation can be found in the Convergence powerpoint, which can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

PANEL DISCUSSES STATEWIDE, LOCAL IMPACTS OF FEDERAL STIMULUS BILL

A panel comprised of Sherry Skelly Griffith (Association of California School Administrators), Anne McKinney (Assistant Vice Chancellor, Federal Government Relations, California Community Colleges) and Jennifer Mitchell (Policy Director, California Workforce Association) provided an analysis of potential opportunities available for regional education and workforce initiatives within in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The panel, moderated by Leroy Tripette, Manager, External Relations, Intel, was opened to questions:

Q. How will the general stimulus money be coordinated through the Governor's Office?

A. Anne McKinney: The Legislature is currently seeking clarification on how this will be coordinated. The plan must be approved by the U.S. Secretary of Education.

Q. Given the urgency, what are the challenges to workforce development?

A. Jennifer Mitchell: The money from the stimulus package is temporary, and we need to use it wisely. We need to have workers prepared for these jobs, but there are no concrete numbers yet. The Workforce Investment Boards are working on calculating these numbers as we need to develop people for jobs that exist.

Anne McKinney: It is important to match money with the need.

Sherry Skelly Griffith: We have seen a reduction in K-14 teachers and classified staff over the past two years. The Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) is looking at the reinforcement and stabilization of the K-14 workforce. The proposed state budget will result in \$23 billion in mid year cuts and deferrals for K-12. The stimulus funding will bolster some programs, like categorical programs, that are on the chopping block for the state. The stimulus package, though, is a lifeline, and not a long-term commitment. ACSA will remind the legislature that the stimulus package does not replace a long-term commitment for improving education funding.

Jennifer Mitchell: The stimulus package will enable streamlining and flexibility for training providers.

Anne McKinney: Part-time faculty who teach the skills-based courses and are usually the first to be laid off. This will enable community colleges to shore up the number of part-time faculty.

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Q. Will the stimulus package shore up STEM education for low income students?

A. Anne McKinney: The stimulus package will increase the PELL Grant and will increase the college tax credit (replaces the Hope Scholarship) for students, to \$2,500.

Jennifer Mitchell: CWA will sponsor a bill for a youth employment program.

Sherry Skelly Griffith: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Title I (Improving the Achievement of the Disadvantaged) have been increased, which frees up district general funds.

Q. How much money for workforce development will go locally to the Sacramento region?

A. Jennifer Mitchell: This is unknown, but typically, California receives about 10% of the federal funds for workforce development, based on unemployment and population rates. If current formulas are used, California may yield more than its usual 10%.

Q. What will be the share for one-stop career centers?

A. Jennifer Mitchell: Money will go out by formula to WIBs.

Anne McKinney: There may be a focus on the training element of career centers.

Jennifer Mitchell: The Department of Labor will be allocating funds to community-based job training grants.

Q. Can some of the stimulus money be used this summer?

A. Kathy Kossick (Sacramento Works, Inc.): An urgency bill has been requested in the legislature. A summer youth program already has released an Request for Proposal.

Q. How do we reconcile the stimulus package with the state budget?

A. Sherry Skelly Griffith: School districts have to "stop the bleeding" and see how the stimulus funds will impact that. Districts are looking for as much flexibility as possible in the allocation. The stimulus package should strengthen the federal mandate to open more funds for other programs, such as the homeless programs, which have seen an increase in demand. There should also be a plan for creating a stabilization of funds.

CONVERGENCE ROUNDTABLE SESSION

During the subsequent roundtable discussion, attendees reacted to Rep. Matsui's call to action by encouraging LEED and Los Rios to pull together a group devoted to identifying funding opportunities with the federal stimulus bill to support regional workforce and educational initiatives that enhance education and advance critical economic objectives.

Subsequently, leaders of both organizations worked together with regional organizations such as Sacramento Area Commerce and Trade Organization, Sacramento Works and Partnership for Prosperity (PfP) to determine that the PfP Education and Workforce Workgroup would be the most appropriate group of regional representatives to determine which high value funding opportunities within the stimulus bill would best support the region's workforce and education efforts, and to coordinate targeted, collaborative grant requests. The working group will meet in late March and will report to stakeholders on a regular basis, including at the next Convergence event, Friday, May 15.

For more details, please contact LEED Workforce Development Manager Penny Cobarrubia at 231-5333 x14 or pcobarrubia@leed.org.

Mark Your Calendar!

Upcoming CONVERGENCE Dates

May 15, 2009
Convergence II - The State

September 25, 2009
Convergence III - The Region

December 4, 2009
Convergence IV - Education and Workforce Summit

The Convergence Series is held quarterly at the Radisson Hotel, Sacramento.

Main Program 7:30-9:30 a.m.,
Focused Discussion 9:45-11:00 a.m.

For registration or sponsorship information, please go to www.leed.org/events_convergence.htm, and click on the "Register here" link.

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