



April 16, 2015

The Honorable David Gantt, Chairman  
Buncombe County Board of Commissioners  
200 College Avenue, Suite 326  
Asheville, North Carolina 28801

Dear Chairman Gantt:

Attached you will find a copy of the proposed Consortium Agreement among the four counties in the Land-of-Sky Region to receive and administer funds provided under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014. The WIOA replaces the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. Each of the County Commissions appoints members of the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board which provides policy guidance, planning, oversight and accountability for workforce development programs in the region. The regional Chief Elected Official position, that shares the authority with the Workforce Board, will be assigned on a rotating basis (every two program years) among the Chairs of the County Commissions (Article III; Item 4). The Land-of-Sky Regional Council will serve as the grant sub-recipient and administrative entity to be accountable for the receipt and disbursement of funds (Article XIII).

As you may know, the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board has provided policy guidance, planning, oversight and accountability for workforce development programs in the four county region since 1998 (and since 1992 under previous legislation). During the past two years the former JobLink Career Centers and the Employment Security Commission's labor market exchange services have been merged into the NCWorks Career Center system. In addition to funding for career center operations in each county the WIA/WIOA funds provide several forms of career development and job search assistance to local residents including:

- assistance with tuition and books for up to two years of training for in-demand occupations;
- on-the-job training assistance for candidates who lack the necessary job specific skills to secure employment without more intensive training efforts;
- youth career guidance and planning, dropout prevention and paid work experience; and
- numerous business services to help in strengthening the talent pool of current and future employees.

The North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Solutions has requested that the local Workforce Development Consortia applications be submitted to the Governor for approval before the end of May 2015. If all of the County Commissions approve this Consortium Agreement then the Workforce Board and the Chief Elected Official can move forward with the application for designation as the Mountain Area Workforce Development Consortium. This would permit the annual formula allocation of funds to be awarded to the four county region in a timely manner.

I will be glad to answer any questions that you may have by phone (828) 251-7473, by email - [phil@landofsky.org](mailto:phil@landofsky.org) or in person. I will be glad to attend the Commission Meetings, as appropriate, and provide any details that the Commissioners may request.

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I respectfully thank you for your consideration of this request. The four county consortium for workforce development programs has served the region well for more than 20 years and we will work diligently to continue providing excellent services.

With Sincere Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Phillip M. Monk". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "P".

Phillip M. Monk, Director

PMM:zr  
Attachment