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CONTACT: Megan Bush
(202) 225-3201

Congressman Gary Miller Calls on the U.S. Department of Labor to Stop Enrollment Freeze at Inland Empire Job Corps Center

Rancho Cucamonga, CA – Today, Congressman Gary Miller (R-CA) joined a bipartisan group of seventy-one lawmakers in calling on Acting Secretary of Labor Seth Harris to institute a 30-day moratorium on the U.S. Department of Labor’s recent order to freeze new student enrollment at the nation’s 125 Job Corps Centers beginning January 28th.

The Inland Empire Job Corps Center, located in San Bernardino, is a residential program for low-income, at-risk students ages 16 to 24. The Center provides academic support and hands-on career training in a wide variety of fields, from construction and manufacturing to health care, retail services, and hospitality. For 2012, the Center ranked third overall among all the nation’s Job Corps Centers, and was second in the nation for the number of students who graduated from the Center with a high school diploma or GED.

Congressman Miller expressed his support for the Center and opposition to the Department’s enrollment freeze, saying, “The Inland Empire Job Corps Center does a tremendous job helping at-risk youth acquire the education and job training skills needed to compete in today’s workforce. Unfortunately, because of the Labor Department’s overextension of its budget and apparent unwillingness to find alternative cost savings, beginning Monday, hundreds of young adults in the Inland Empire who want to be successful and contribute to our economy will be denied the opportunity to enroll at the Center.”

On January 18, 2013, the Department of Labor, citing a \$61.5 million shortfall, announced an enrollment freeze for all Job Corps Centers through June 2013. This marks the third time in eight months the Department has ordered a suspension of enrollment to cover budget shortfalls. Today, Congressman Miller and his colleagues sent a letter to the Acting Secretary requesting that the Department issue a 30 day moratorium on the enrollment freeze and work with Job Corps Center directors and operators to develop an alternative cost savings plan.

“As we continue to work to get our local economy back on track and reduce unemployment,” continued Congressman Miller, “I hope the Labor Department will institute this moratorium and work with the centers and other stakeholders to find a solution that will ensure that young adults in San Bernardino County and across the country can access the help they need to succeed.”

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