

February 16, 2011

Dear Representative:

On behalf of Goodwill Industries International (GII) and its network of 158 community-based Goodwill agencies, I urge you to oppose the deep cuts to job training programs as proposed in the recently introduced FY 2011 continuing resolution (H.R. 1). Under the bill, combined funding for the Department of Labor's job training programs – programs intended to support people's efforts to quickly learn skills that employers are looking for – would be cut by more than \$3.8 billion, a nearly 90 percent cut.

Now more than ever, with nearly one in 10 people in communities still unemployed, local Goodwill agencies in the United States and North America are on the front lines helping people with employment challenges to find jobs and advance in careers. In 2009, local Goodwill invested nearly 83 percent (nearly \$3 billion) of the privately-raised revenues raised through its retail, online sales commercial services and other social enterprises to give people the skills they need to reenter the workforce – providing job training, employment services, and supportive services to nearly 2 million people, placing more than 155,000 people in jobs and employing 91,000.

While Goodwill agrees that deficit reduction will require sacrifices from all, at a time when nearly one in 10 people in communities across the country are unemployed, cutting funding for employment services and job training would be a tragic step in the wrong direction that would significantly negatively impact Goodwill's ability to do all it can to help people find jobs despite the tight job market. While belt-tightening measures are needed to reduce the deficit, it's critically important that our nation's deficit reduction strategy also includes investments that will make America's workforce the most competitive in the world and our economy stronger.

Continued investment in the workforce system, rather than draconian cuts, is what is needed to help put people back to work, to reduce reliance on public supports, and allow people to advance in careers and contribute to our nation's economic growth. Therefore, I urge you to oppose the drastic cuts to job training programs included in the FY 2011 continuing resolution.

Goodwill thanks you for considering its concerns, and looks forward to working with you to help government meet the serious challenges our nation faces. Please feel free to contact me at (240) 333-5202 or Seth Turner, Senior Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy, at seth.turner@goodwill.org or (240) 333-5508.

Sincerely,



Jim Gibbons
President and CEO