

## **Workforce and Economic Development– A TWC Strategy**

### **Background**

As businesses continue to hire in Texas, our state continues to break records for job creation month over month, and the labor force has reached historic highs, recently exceeding 15 million individuals for the first time. While TWC's Eliminating the Middle Skills Gap initiative, and others, provide opportunities for job seekers to prepare for the high demand jobs in their area, employers may also need additional supports to make hiring decisions and continue job creation. TWC should be a primary resource for local cities, counties, and Economic Development organizations across Texas to address specific employer issues in their area.

TWC's monthly labor market data provides valuable insights for economic developers and elected officials, but additional data and other resources are needed.

### **Issue**

Each region of the state, and each community within those regions, has a diverse set of needs with regard to economic and workforce development. TWC has the opportunity to help local communities identify their workforce needs, marshal their available resources, and connect them with tools TWC will develop and maintain to enhance the ability of a community to maximize employer job creation in that area. TWC can fulfill our statutory obligations relative to economic development in this manner.

### **Recommendations**

To best support economic development growth within the state, the Commission should adopt the following initial strategies to creatively support our growing markets:

1. TWC should determine the most common and cost-effective economic and workforce development technology solutions and deploy those in a way all boards can access them. The focus should include the types of workforce data employers typically require when making job creation decisions.
2. TWC should ensure Workforce Solutions partners are positioned as the leading expert about labor market insights with enhanced awareness building and employment projections.
3. Implement a targeted service delivery model to focus on employers within in-demand industries and career seekers on paths to those jobs.
4. TWC staff should develop an outreach plan which includes strategies to ensure employers, educational institutions and workforce boards maximize existing resources.