



February 23, 2022

Governor Kathy Hochul
NYS Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Re: Workforce Solutions in Executive Budget

Dear Governor Hochul:

Thank you for including in your Executive Budget numerous proposals to address our state's workforce crisis. Finding and retaining qualified talent is our membership's top concern, and bold state action is needed to address it. The Buffalo Niagara Partnership, on behalf of its members who employ over a quarter million people in the region, supports many of your proposals and also offers suggestions for improvement.

In particular, the BNP supports:

- **Interstate compacts.** New York's joining the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact and the Nurse Licensure Compact would benefit health industry workforce by allowing New York to better recruit out-of-state talent. Additionally, this move would represent an important first step in reducing occupational licensing barriers among states.
- **Creating an Office of Workforce and Economic Development to work with REDCs.** An effective state workforce plan will take into account the differences between regional labor markets. Working closely with Regional Economic Development Councils will do just that while helping reorganize the state's overall workforce efforts.
- **TAP Expansion.** The Tuition Assistance Program is essential in economic mobility for disadvantaged students. Expanding TAP benefits to part-time students, workforce credential program students, and incarcerated individuals will create economic opportunities for New Yorkers who do not fit the traditional college student mold.
- **Increasing funding for registered apprenticeship programs.** Apprenticeships help students earn while training for well-paying and needed careers. The state should invest in registered apprenticeship programs, and also acknowledge the success of unregistered apprenticeship programs.

- **Removing barriers to reentry.** Connecting formerly incarcerated individuals with employment opportunities are less likely to reoffend, meaning these efforts will yield meaningful benefits to our economy and society. Providing vocational training, job readiness programs, work- and education-release programs, and TAP to incarcerated individuals will prepare them for a successful reintegration to society.
- **Expanding access to affordable, high-quality childcare.** Dependable childcare helps parents participate in the workforce, and the state should pursue strategies to make it more accessible.

The BNP thanks you for this ambitious response to our state's workforce crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dottie Gallagher', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dottie Gallagher
President and CEO
Buffalo Niagara Partnership

CC: WNY Delegation