Giving Workers, Businesses & the PA Economy a Jumpstart!

1. Fix and upgrade roads, bridges & mass transit

Pennsylvania has a nation-leading 5,200 bridges deemed structurally deficient; more than 7,000 miles of state roads are in poor condition.

Pennsylvania needs a long-term, comprehensive transportation infrastructure solution, which would support tens of thousands of jobs for Pennsylvania workers.

2. Get back to basics: Restore funding to public schools

There is no better long-term job-creation and economic development program than Pennsylvania's public schools.

Only by making the necessary investments in our public schools will Pennsylvania be able to develop a high-skill, high-knowledge and globally competitive workforce.

Reverse Governor Corbett's $1 billion cut to public schools and restore funding to 2010-11 levels, restoring 14,000 Pennsylvania jobs lost due to the Corbett budget.

3. Invest in PA workers by giving their children a jumpstart

Child care and early childhood education can be cost-prohibitive for many working families, hindering low-income parents from re-entering the workforce.

Increase Early Childhood Education subsidies to help reduce the burden on working families and allow low-income parents to re-enter the workforce.

By providing increased assistance, these skilled and experienced workers will be able to expand their job search to include positions that would otherwise be financially unviable.

4. Protect displaced workers from discrimination

Amend Pennsylvania employment law to prohibit any employer from refusing to hire an applicant solely on the grounds that the applicant seeking employment is presently unemployed.

Enact a law prohibiting the use of credit scores in employment decisions.

5. Encourage PA employers to create family-sustaining jobs

Establish a HirePA program to encourage business expansion and job creation:

- Pennsylvania employers could retain 75 percent of payroll withholding tax for newly created, full-time jobs that pay at, or above, the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) average wage.
- Eligible employers would be required to create five new jobs in designated rural areas or 10 new jobs in designated urban areas.
- Eligible employers would be required to offer affordable, comprehensive health insurance benefits to employees hired through the HirePA program.

6. Give workers a jumpstart

Establish three new Job Creation Tax Credit programs and Job Training Tax Credit program:

- Veteran Job Creation Tax Credit – a $4,000-per-job tax credit for small-business employers who hire unemployed veterans, capped at $50 million per fiscal year. It could create an estimated 12,500 new jobs for Pennsylvania veterans.
- Worker Re-Entry Tax Credit – a $4,000-per-job tax credit for small-business employers who hire long-term unemployed workers, capped at $100 million per fiscal year. It could create an estimated 25,000 new jobs.
- Recent Graduate Job Creation Tax Credit – a $4,000-per-job tax credit for small-business employers hire recent high school, trade/tech school and college graduates, capped at $50 million per fiscal year. It could create an estimated12,500 new jobs.
- Job Training Tax Credit – a $1,000-per-worker tax credit for small-business employers who train new or incumbent workers for skills needed for jobs in the industry.

7. Ease the financial burden on PA families and businesses

Establish a Back-to-Work Incentive Program for unemployed workers who accept a new position that pays less than three-quarters of their former wage.

- Applies to individuals who earned $60,000 or less at their last job prior to being displaced.
- Eligible individuals would receive up to 25 percent of the Unemployment Compensation (U.C.) benefit they otherwise would have received on U.C. – for the duration of their U.C. eligibility.
- Eligible individuals would be capped at earning no more in combined new salary plus Back-to-Work Incentive payment than their total former salary prior to being displaced.
- Reduces the burden on the U.C. system – paying just 25 percent of benefits, rather than 100 percent – while also reducing the burden on employers who pay into the U.C. system.

- Back-to-Work Incentive gives workers a financial incentive to return to the workforce, rather than remain on full U.C. benefits.

8. Ensure Pennsylvania businesses keep it "Made in PA"

Enact incentives for inventors and entrepreneurs to keep their products “Made in PA.”

Add a new eligibility preference for economic development programs requiring participating entrepreneurs and innovators remain in Pennsylvania from the product concept phase through the product manufacturing phase.

9. Ensure Pennsylvania's workforce is job-ready & globally competitive

We must help ensure Pennsylvania workers enter the workforce with the skills and training required by employers in today’s high-tech economy.

Make new investments in our community colleges and technical schools, with a renewed focus on building and strengthening their connections with the business community to ensure a job-ready workforce.

Restore full funding to successful education programs that help give Pennsylvania students a head start at post-secondary education and/or technical training for an in-demand job – including Dual Enrollment and Early Certification.

10. Partner with the community to jumpstart urban employment

The unemployment rate in many Pennsylvania cities and urban areas has climbed far above the state and national average.

We must make targeted, strategic investments to get Pennsylvania's urban workforce back to work.

Create PAconnect, a new statewide non-profit organization, which would act as a job-training and job-placement network for businesses and workers in Pennsylvania’s urban centers.

PAconnect would offer tax credits to individuals and businesses who make a financial contribution to a pre-approved community-based non-profit organization that offers job-training, career counseling, or job placement services within the donor's community.

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