

ANOKA COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

**Thursday, October 1, 2020
7:30 A.M.**

WebEx Meeting

*** * * A G E N D A * * ***

- I. ROLL CALL**

- II. APPROVE ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

- III. APPROVE September 10, 2020 MEETING MINUTES (Attached)**

- IV. 2020 ELECTIONS and WORKFORCE – David Schultz, Professor and Political Expert - Hamline University**

- V. IMMIGRANTS and COVID-19 – WORKFORCE and HEALTH CHALLENGES – Anisa Hajimumin, Assistant Commissioner for Immigrant and Refugee Affairs – Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)**

- VI. TIM TALK – WHAT’S NEW IN THE LABOR MARKET – Tim O’Neill, Labor Market Analyst - Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)**

- VII. OTHER BUSINESS**
 - Cares Act Project Updates – Nicole
 - Discuss Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards 2021 platform (2020 attached)

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- LAUS Update

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
ANOKA COUNTY**

Important Meeting Notice

Due to Governor's Emergency Executive Order 20-30, and a determination by the county board chair that public attendance was not feasible due to the health pandemic, members of the public were not allowed to attend this meeting in person. Public members were able to monitor this meeting through Webex (information posted on website). Public monitoring in this manner is done pursuant to Minn. Stat. 13D.021.th. The board sets priorities and policies that focus on local workforce needs and ensure that programs and agencies work together to meet those needs. The goal is to create a responsive workforce development system for both employers and job seekers.

Meeting Minutes of Thursday, September 10, 2020

The Anoka County Workforce Development Board Meeting was called to order by Chair Barnes at 7:30 a.m.

I. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tonya Barber, Shirley Barnes, Elaina Bleifield, Shym Cook, Jacquell Hajder, Terry Hart, Lori Higgins, Curt Jasper, Becky Johnson, KC Kye, Jessica Lipa, Patrick McFarland, Jim Nimlos, Michael Thews, Theresa Zingery

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner Scott Schulte, Commissioner Mandy Meisner, Commissioner Mike Gamache, Tim O'Neill, Brad Thiel, Cindy Cesare, Jeanna Fortney, Nicole Swanson, Krista Peterson

II. APPROVE ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOTION by Theresa Zingery to adopt the agenda as presented. Seconded by Elaina Bleifield.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, CHAIR BARNES DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

III. APPROVE June 4, 2020 BOARD MEETING MINUTES and June 22, 2020 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

MOTION by Elaina Bleifield to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Theresa Zingery.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, CHAIR BARNES DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

IV. ELECTIONS OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR. CONFIRM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

MOTION by Patrick McFarland to elect Shirley Barnes as Chair and Terry Hart as Vice Chair. Seconded by Elaina Bleifield.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, CHAIR BARNES DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOTION by Patrick McFarland to nominate Shirley Barnes, Terry Hart, Theresa Zingery, Michael Thews and Curt Jasper for the Executive Committee. Seconded by Jim Nimlos.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, CHAIR BARNES DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

V. RATIFY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE APPROVAL - WORKFORCE INNOVATIONS AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2023 (Attached summary) - Nicole Swanson, Director

MOTION by Patrick McFarland to ratify the executive committee approval of the Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act Memorandum of Understanding for July 1, 2020. Seconded by Elaina Bleifield.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, CHAIR BARNES DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

VI. APPROVE FFY 2021 SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING LOCAL ANNUAL PROGRAM PLAN (Attached summary) – Nicole Swanson, Director

SNAP Employment and Training Program is a federally funded program serving income eligible able-bodied adults ages 18-50 years of age without dependent children in Anoka County. A small Federal allocation supports this program and we appreciate the additional funds from ACCAP to assist with support services for individuals on SNAP. The pandemic affected the SNAP program and Governor Walz put many waivers in place as most areas for outreach for SNAP are closed to the public. Staff will continue to focus on outreach to support equitable access to employment and training services and will continue to be innovative in the months to come. We are requesting \$125,000 along with \$6,000 support services to serve 200 customers. Typically, DHS awards us about half of our funding.

Commissioner Meisner asked if the full request would be awarded.

Nicole responded no, SNAP is an underfunded program at both state and federal levels. There is a 50/50 match that can be generated through using non-federal dollars as match funding. Staff always look for opportunities to co-enroll people and get match dollars back to reinvest those funds.

MOTION by Elaina Bleifield to approve the FFY 2021 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Local Annual Program Fund. Seconded by Jim Nimlos.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, CHAIR BARNES DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

VII. UNEMPLOYMENT UPDATES – Jim Hegman, Director, DEED

UI staff have been busy these past six months, 300 staff working about 60 hours a week providing services to those we serve. Unemployment provides workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own a temporary wage replacement to assist the unemployed worker. Funding comes through benefit payment trust fund by taxes paid for by Minnesota employers. Administration is funded by federal payroll tax and only paid by tax paying employers.

Right now, it's the pandemic unemployment assistance compensation the additional \$600 and now the additional \$300. Minnesota is a mid to large state for unemployment insurance and the most seasonal state in the county with newer technology and phone wait times around 30 seconds.

Minnesota has a self-service model complimented by staff to meet the needs of the public. One challenge is integrity, the vast majority of people are honest and deserve to be treated that way, but monitoring is required. Fraud schemes is always a problem. We try to keep in balance, and most are honest, and we deal with those causing issues. Another challenge is technology as it's hard to keep up.

When the pandemic hit, we started with a good well-performing system, executed a disaster plan, eliminated complexity where possible, and focused on core activities. Executive orders and legislative action natural disaster provisions were in place, non-payable week was waived, repurposed functionality in our system and needed to move applicants from 82% to 95% online.

91% of applicants received payment within a week of their first eligible week which is same as prior to the pandemic. We went from 50,000 to 500,000 receiving unemployment with very few processing delays and we outperformed other states. In one week, we had 115,000 new applications with over \$10M in weekly requests. \$8B has been paid out since March 15 with 744,000 applicants receiving at least one payment. 27M logins have occurred since we started and almost 4.8M issues logged with 97% resolved.

Lost Wages Assistance for Minnesota was approved which is similar to the \$600 program but different, it is \$300 per week. To receive payment applicants must have an underlying weekly benefit amount at least \$100 and applicants have to be collecting unemployment because of the pandemic. There is a limited amount of money and the \$300 benefit will end when the feds run out of money.

Jim N. asked if there was a concern or worry about next spring.

Jim H. Depends on job market and what happens with additional stimulus. We are trying to keep things simple and consistent, but the uncertainty of the economy creates anxiety.

Jim N. asked if there was a projection on how many applications will run out after the 26 weeks are up.

Jim H. Right now, there are two extensions and one additional program in place that should have most unemployed protected until the end of December for those eligible. Generally speaking, benefits are available for eligible participants until the last week of December.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Chair's Remarks - MN Association of Workforce Boards Summer Conference

- **Best Practice Award - Incumbent Worker Training**

Bridgett Backman, Darcy Hokkanen, Becca Johnson, Troy Scheffel and Aimee DeMond were recognized for receiving the Best Practices Award from the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards award at the MAWB 2020 Conference.

- **Cares Act Projects – Workforce Development**

Jacquel said that the county received cares act allocation and no guidance was set for how much businesses could apply for. There is a lot of need in our businesses and nonprofits so \$1M was set aside for nonprofits and \$500,000 for businesses. These funds are to assist those with the highest need and the criteria was expanded and the second application opportunity opened up allowing organizations to get more than one grant if they have enough eligible expenses. Organizations must be in business at least 12 months, to make sure there is adequate time to compare revenue loss, but some newer businesses couldn't apply so the criteria was shifted to a six month requirement. We are on track to use all of our allocated funds, the program runs through the 18th.

- **CareerForce Services and Planning**

Received \$100,000 to expand our Transportation Solutions program to those affected by COVID. This funding allows us to assist a large group of the community with car repairs or insurance up to \$2,000. Feel free to share with staff and the community; funds are available through December 1.

Approved to purchase a one-year subscription to Easy Virtual Fair. By late October early November we will have a local platform to use for online hiring events and program activities with participants like a youth specific hiring event. We were approved to hire a temporary Program Coordinator to assist with these programs.

Earlier this summer DEED contracted with an online training program called Coursera which is free training and certification offered through March 31 of 2021. Information is on our JTC website.

ADJOURN

CHAIR BARNES DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:51 A.M.

George Floyd, Covid-19, and the 2020 Elections and Beyond

Professor David Schultz,
Political Science, Hamline University,
University of Minnesota School of Law

Introduction

- ▶ Why 2020 is Important?
 - Presidential election
 - US Senate and House
 - State Legislative Races
 - Census and redistricting in 2020
 - Elections have policy consequences



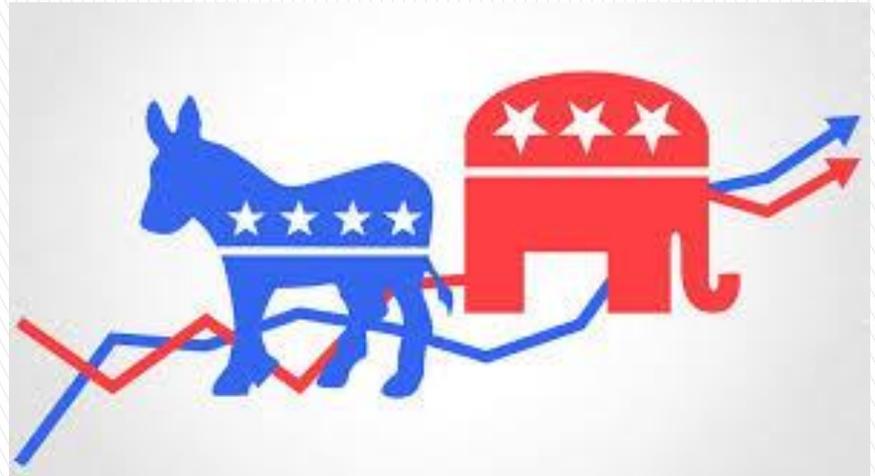
What Makes 2020 So Important?

- ▶ First Post-Baby-Boom election
- ▶ Reapportionment
- ▶ Intense policy and partisan disagreement
- ▶ A critical realignment
- ▶ Pandemic
- ▶ Legal issues
- ▶ Supreme and Federal Courts



The Polls

- ▶ Polls largely correct in 2016
- ▶ But ignore all the national polls
 - We do not elect the president with the national popular
 - Polls are not predictors vote but with the electoral college
 - Fifty states plus DC
 - The Race to 270



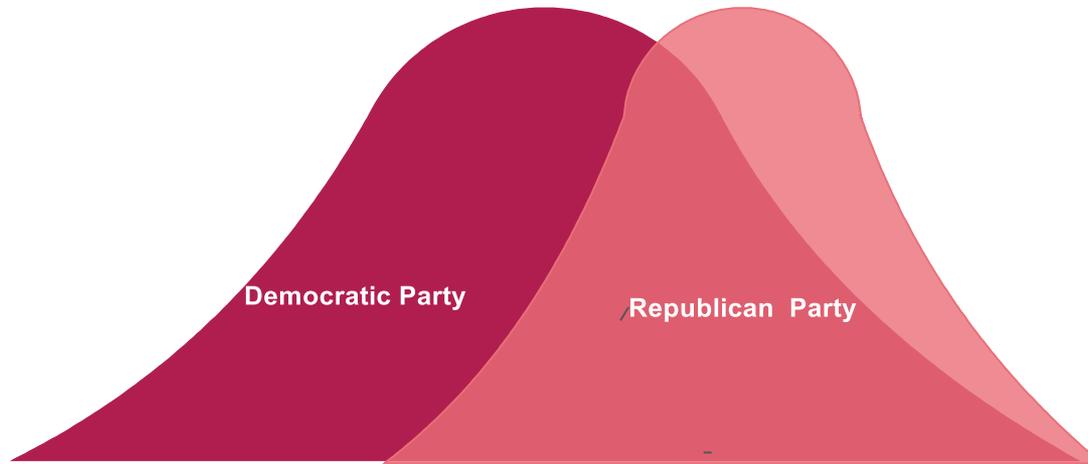
How Polarized are We Today?



Democrats

Republican

American Public Opinion 1980



America in 1980

- ▶ Near bell-shaped curve
- ▶ Political parties converged to center (median voter)
- ▶ Coalitional parties
- ▶ One-Third or approximately 120 swing House seats
- ▶ 10-15% swing voter
 - Split ticket or party switching voting
- ▶ Parties nominate centrist candidates
- ▶ Centers of two major parties near one another
- ▶ Most votes in Congress bipartisan
- ▶ High number of bills passed and signed into law
- ▶ Minimal “gridlock”

Characteristics

Results

America in 1980

- ▶ Near bell-shaped curve
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Characteristics

Results

American Public Opinion 2020



Democratic Party

Republican Party

America in 2020

- ▶ Bimodal or double-hump curve
- ▶ Political parties little overlap
- ▶ Ideological parties
- ▶ One-sixth or approximately 60 swing House seats
- ▶ 0-10% swing voter
 - Swing in or out to vote
- ▶ Parties nominate candidates to their center
- ▶ Centers of two major parties far from one another
- ▶ Most votes in Congress partisan
- ▶ Low number of bills passed and signed into law
- ▶ Significant “gridlock”

Characteristics

Results

The Disappearing and Changing Swings

- ▶ **Swing Seats**
 - Drivers of political compromise and negotiation
- ▶ **Swing voters**
 - From split ticket to swinging in or out to vote
- ▶ **Important swing voters**
 - Suburban women
 - People under 30
 - People of color

Congressional Swing Seats

Swing Voters

How Covid-19 Changed Everything and Nothing

▶ Issues

- Six months ago
 - Donald Trump is the issue
 - Failed Impeachment trial
- Now
 - Donald Trump still the issue
 - Handling of the Pandemic
 - The economy

▶ Process

- How we vote
- Lessons of April 7, Wisconsin primary
- Vote by Mail
- A heavily litigated election?

Polarized over face masks

How fundamental is the right to vote in a pandemic?

How George Floyd Changed Everything and Nothing

- ▶ US Racism an issue again
- ▶ 1968 redux?
 - 1967 Riots and Kerner Commission (“Two nations separate and unequal”)
 - Trump as the new Nixon law and order candidate
- ▶ Kamala Harris
- ▶ Has the George Floyd moment already passed?



Will 2020 be 2016 or 2018?

▶ 2016

- Two unpopular candidates
- Secretary Clinton was the issue (likeability)
- Democrats stayed home (especially suburban women)
- Republican base shifted and voted about the same numbers as 2012
- States as the geographic political unit

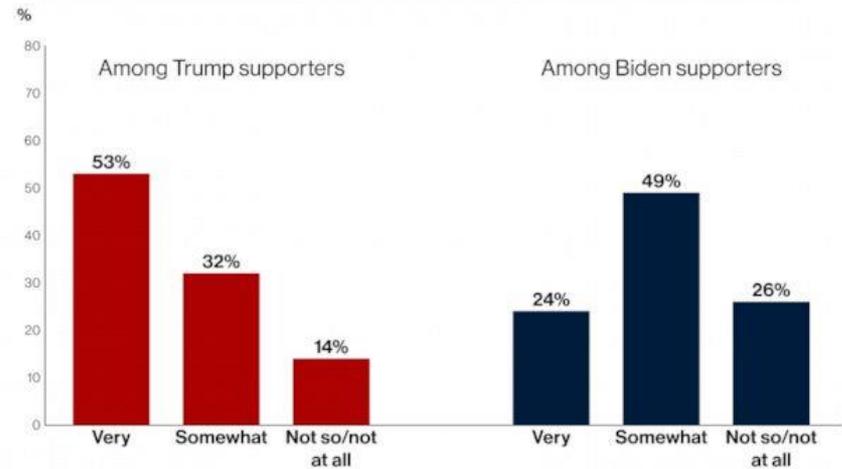
▶ 2018

- Referendum on Trump
- Democrats showed up (especially suburban women)
- Congressional districts as the geographic political units

The Enthusiasm Gap?

- ▶ Republicans are more solidly behind Trump than Democrats are behind Biden
- ▶ A repeat of 2016?

Levels of Enthusiasm



SOURCE: ABC NEWS/WASHINGTON POST POLL

abc NEWS

It's All About the Electoral College

- ▶ The election is not about the popular vote
- ▶ Fifty states plus DC
- ▶ 538 electoral votes
- ▶ Need 270 to win



If the Election were Held Today...

▶ Joe Biden

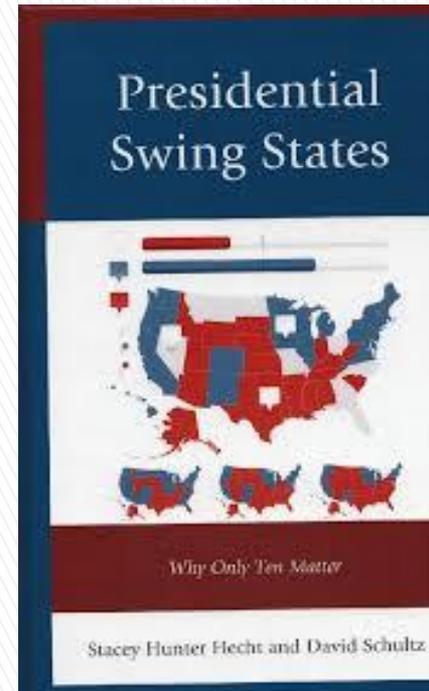
- 19 States plus part of Maine and DC
- 222 Electoral Votes

▶ Donald Trump

- 24 States and part of Maine
- 205 Electoral Votes

Seven Swing States Decide the Election

- ▶ Arizona
- ▶ Florida
- ▶ Michigan
- ▶ Minnesota
- ▶ North Carolina
- ▶ Pennsylvania
- ▶ Wisconsin



111 electoral votes

Really it is the 11 swing counties in seven swing states

- ▶ In each swing state some counties are decisive
- ▶ Arizona and Maricopa County
- ▶ North Carolina and Wake County
- ▶ Wisconsin and Brown (Green Bay) County



Swing Voters in Swing Counties in Swing States Really Decide the Election

- ▶ Seven swing states
- ▶ Eleven swing counties in the swing states
- ▶ Ten percent of the voters in the swing counties in the swing states
- ▶ 10/11/7/270
- ▶ It may come down to Brown County in Wisconsin or Lackawanna County (Scranton) in Pennsylvania that decides the election
- ▶ This shows how polarized and close the election may be

Is it all about Wisconsin?

- ▶ Many think it is the state of Wisconsin that decides the election
- ▶ The importance of Brown County or Milwaukee Counties?



Does it come
down to one state?

Will Packers fans decide
the next president?

Minnesota as a Swing State

- ▶ Minnesota is in play
- ▶ Last time it voted for a Republican for president was in 1972 with Richard Nixon



Litigating the Election

- ▶ Vote by mail and early voting
- ▶ Will the post office be ready?
- ▶ Voter disenfranchisement
- ▶ Challenging absentee ballots
- ▶ Late ballots
- ▶ Recounts

Pre-election

Post-election

Beyond 2020: Elections have Consequences

- ▶ Major issues
 - Pandemic
 - Health care
 - Supreme and federal courts
 - Race relations
 - Immigration
 - Trade Policy
 - International affairs



Questions?

Thank you!



It is the mission of the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards to provide Minnesota with a skilled and competitive workforce through engaged and proactive local elected officials, workforce boards, and staff.

Who We Are

Minnesota's workforce development system continues to be a national model for excellence and innovation in employment and training programs. The sixteen local, employer-led Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), in conjunction with local elected officials, are responsible for:

- Setting policy and priorities in their communities;
- Engaging employers to determine strategies and organizing the efforts of the broader workforce system to address employer needs; and
- Being the accountability agents for local employment and training programs.

The Minnesota WDBs have a long-standing and demonstrated track record of developing cutting-edge new programs and strategies- while continuously improving services offered through Minnesota's CareerForce locations and achieving outstanding performance results.

State of the Workforce

Minnesota's economy is strong; and while we are experiencing a severe skilled worker shortage, critical gaps exist in our labor force. The reasons for these gaps are complex; employment and training programs are as critical as ever to ensure employers have the workers they need to support their economic vitality. Funding needs to be better targeted and aligned to achieve the best return on those investments. A strong workforce system is imperative regardless of the status of the economy in order to be prepared for the future.

For over a decade, a worker shortage has been predicted, and employers are currently experiencing the effects. There are now more jobs available than people looking for work (.6 jobseekers in the metro area and .8 jobseekers in Greater Minnesota for every job vacancy¹). With low statewide unemployment rates and some regional unemployment rates even lower, we need to engage the *entire* workforce. An inadequate supply of qualified labor could cause the economy to stall, forcing businesses to export their work or leave Minnesota as well delay or eliminate expansion.

In many cases, those who are not yet working, despite the low unemployment rate, face barriers to employment such as low skills, low literacy or homelessness, disability status, ex-offenders, older workers and veterans. And, youth continue to experience unemployment at higher rates than adults.

Furthermore, significant income disparities exist among those who are working – groups that face the highest inequities are

racial minorities, individuals with disabilities, and women. As a state, we must intentionally come together to address these disparities. Services provided through public investments *can* and *must* promote skills training for those who are un- or under-employed so that they can access the jobs that employers struggle to fill. We must also fund supportive services, such as transportation and child care, necessary to ensure that jobseekers are successful in attaining and retaining employment.

Minnesota's CareerForce system has an exemplary record of leveraging public investments to connect employers and jobseekers to the resources they need to be successful. Career pathways programs, which help individuals with barriers and/or limited skills access education and training that lead to family sustaining employment in high-demand occupations and industries, have demonstrated success and are critical to address gaps between employers and potential workers. Other targeted investments support youth career counseling and work experience, dislocated worker retraining, and incumbent worker training. Programmatic flexibility and partnered alignment are crucial to continued success.

Now, more than ever, Minnesota must rely on strong WDBs as we provide the *coordinated* and *responsive* public workforce development system many other states envy. This system deserves reinvigorated interest and investment from our elected leaders.

¹ DEED Job Vacancy Survey

Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards

2020 State Legislative Platform

MAWB Priorities: POLICY

MAWB advocates that any and all funds directed to other entities for workforce development or training efforts be coordinated and aligned with Workforce Development Board plans, to swiftly and strategically meet the unique needs of business in each of the local labor sheds. **MAWB encourages allowing maximum flexibility in the use of state funds to encourage innovation and allow local boards to design programs that best meet the needs of employers and jobseekers in their local areas.**

MAWB encourages the Legislature to align investments and eliminate silos across the workforce development system, regardless of funding committee or state agency structures. The workforce system, recently unified under the brand CareerForce, must be fully aligned to meet the needs of career seekers and employers who benefit from a coordinated approach to service delivery.

MAWB recognizes the need to reduce disparities is paramount and supports initiatives that directly and successfully address this issue and increases equity in employment.

MAWB Priorities: FUNDING

Minnesota businesses are demanding a pipeline of higher-skilled employees. Local Workforce Development Boards are responsible for ensuring those who can work do work; for assisting individuals with career navigation; for addressing barriers to employment; and for partnering with employers to increase the skills of those already employed. As a state, we must provide those who are unemployed, under-employed, or under-represented in the workforce opportunities to succeed, reduce disparities, and to promote a diverse and inclusive workforce. The simple reality is that current investments are not targeted or sustained in a way that will make a real impact for Minnesota's employers.

- MAWB encourages legislative leadership to provide the Jobs and Economic Development finance divisions with funding targets that allow for substantial general fund investments in employment and training programs.
- MAWB advocates for formula funding to advance career pathways, sector strategies, and incumbent worker training.
- MAWB recognizes the unemployment rate for youth is consistently higher than that of other age groups and our high school student to counselor ratio remains unacceptably high. MAWB, therefore, advocates for a substantial increase in formula funding for the statewide Minnesota Youth Program which provides career counseling and on the job training opportunities for youth in all 87 counties. MAWB encourages efforts to increase employer engagement in youth counseling, mentoring and training opportunities.
- MAWB encourages legislators to be mindful that the original intent of the Workforce Development Fund was to provide resources for dislocated worker training and ensure that a balance that can fully address those needs be maintained.
- MAWB supports state investments in safety-net programs that maximize federal match opportunities.

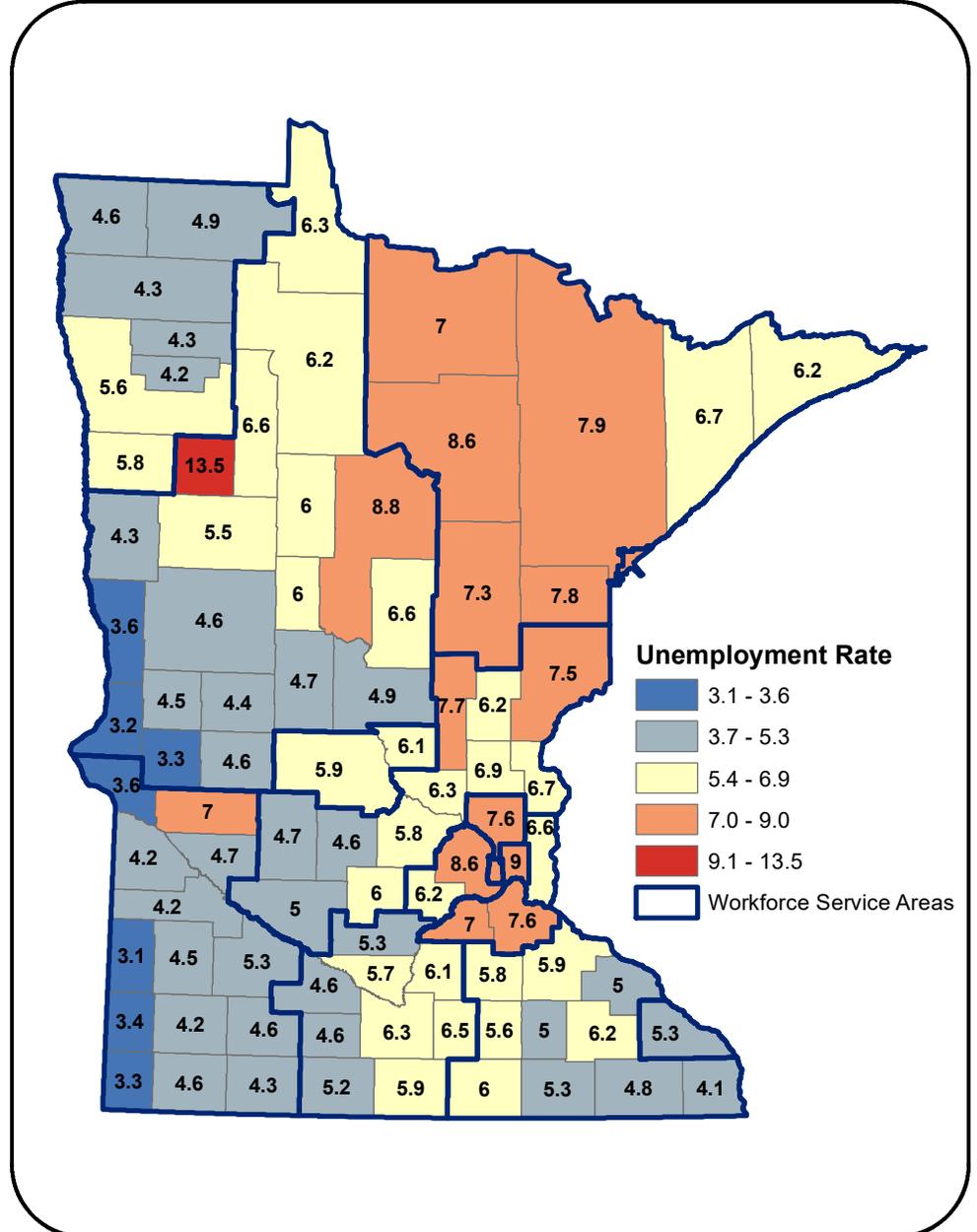
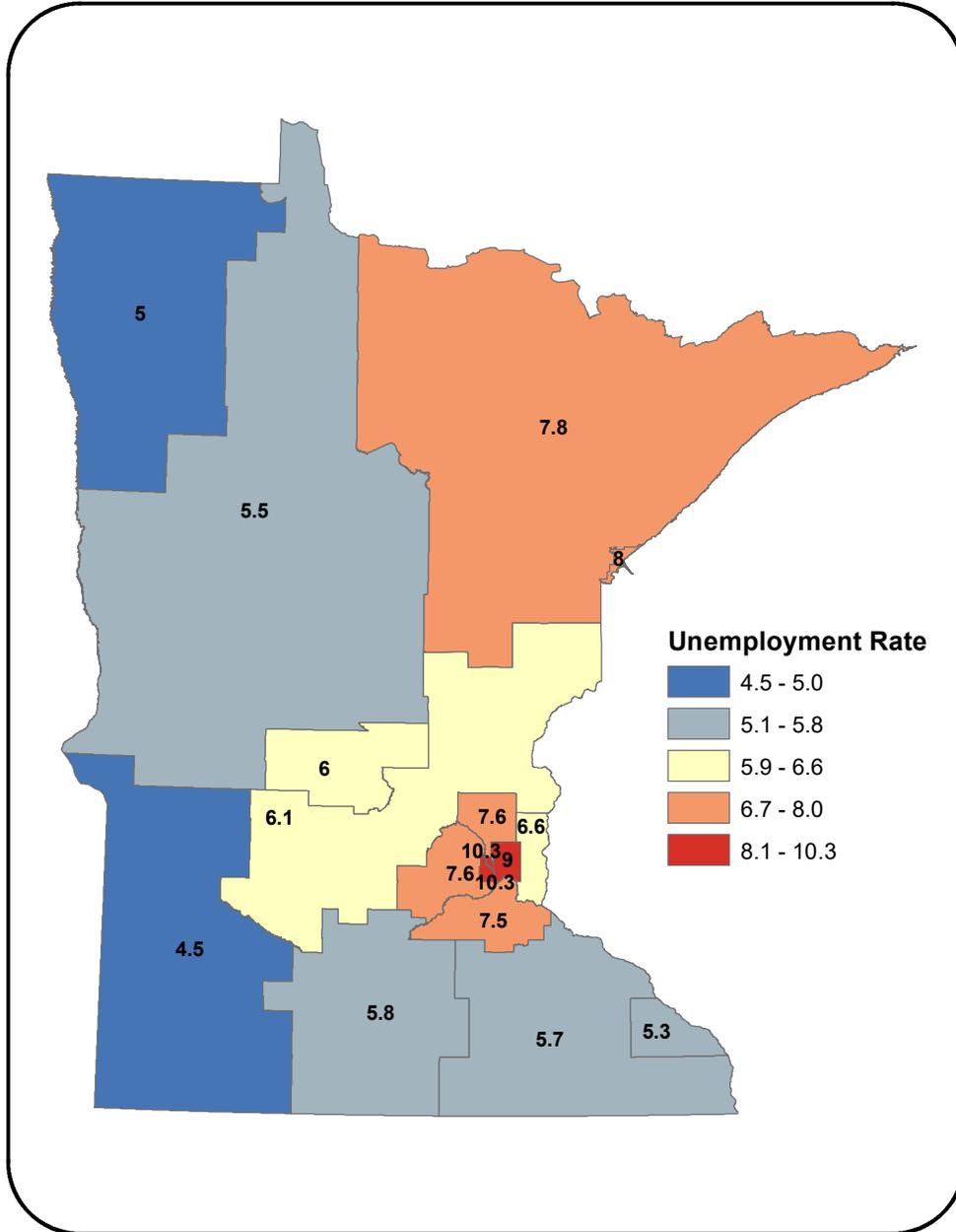
Other Issues of Association Interest

- MAWB is supportive of initiatives which ensure working low- and moderate- income people have access to stable and affordable housing, particularly near areas of employment growth.
- MAWB supports the availability of a wide range of secondary and post-secondary options, including investments in Career and Technical Education programs, with a priority on assistance for those pursuing high skilled occupations in demand.
- MAWB supports further development of apprenticeship opportunities and encourages the use of WDBs as the intermediary for apprenticeship programs across the state.
- MAWB is supportive of full funding for childcare programs that assist families in remaining productively employed.
- MAWB supports efforts to fully invest in Minnesota's critical pre-K, K-12 and Post-Secondary education programs to prepare youth for competitive employment and life-long learning. MAWB also supports increased funding for career counseling in the K-12 system as well as utilizing CareerForceMN.com as a career counseling tool
- MAWB is supportive of any investments to improve our infrastructure including in transportation, clean energy, and broadband. To remain competitive, Minnesota must be forward thinking in these areas.

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www.mawb-mn.org

Unemployment Rates in Workforce Service Areas and Counties, August 2020

State of Minnesota = 7.1% (not seasonally adjusted)



Source: MN DEED, LAUS
Prepared by DEED (ABR)
Sep 21, 2020