Dear Workforce Development Board members,

On behalf of the Los Angeles City Commission on the Status of Women (LACSW), I am writing to express support for the draft Annual Plan for 2018/2019 that aims to address gender inequality in the labor market.

Gender inequality in the labor market is an issue of great concern to the LACSW that we discuss frequently. In light of the Board’s review of the Economic & Workforce Development Department (EWDD) draft Annual Plan, I would like to share seven recommendations on how the Board could accelerate the implementation of Executive Directive No. 11 on Gender Equity in City Operations (see attached) through the Annual Plan.

The LACSW is eager to assist the Board and the EWDD in its work and I believe the list of recommendations will fulfill the shared vision of the LACSW, WBD, EWDD, and its partners.

I encourage the Board and the EWDD to continue to foster gender equality and gender equity in Los Angeles. Given the existing inequalities in the labor market, it is our collective responsibility as a community to recognize and address disparities in our system so that women and girls, and people of various gender identities, regardless of racial backgrounds, are provided equal opportunities and are empowered to shape their own lives.

Sincerely,

Jackie Filla
President of the Los Angeles City Commission on the Status of Women
Recommendations

1. Vision
I encourage the WDB to adopt an Annual Plan that envisions a workforce development and training system that provides women and men, girls and boys, and people of various gender identities, and of all racial backgrounds equal opportunities to access job trainings and quality jobs in the Los Angeles region.

2. Strategic Goals

Ensure Gender Equity
I am pleased to read that gender equity is included as a strategic goal in the draft Annual Plan for 2018/2019. However, I recommend that the WBD define the goal as “Ensuring Gender Equality & Gender Equity in the Workforce Development System.”

Gender equity refers to fairness and justice regarding benefits and needs for women and men, girls and boys, and people of various genders. Thus, equal distribution of resources based on the needs of different groups of people. Gender equality is a broader concept that refers to equal rights, life prospects, opportunities, and the power of women and men, girls and boys, and people of various genders to shape their own lives. It is a right’s based concept with transformative connotations that embraces an intersectional view on inequalities between genders, and points towards change of gender-based power relations in all sectors of society. The revised strategic goal clarifies that addressing gender inequality and gender inequity in the Workforce Development System is a way to achieve gender equality in the labor market.

Similarly to other strategic goals, I also recommend the WBD to specify how this goal will be achieved and to allocate the necessary resources for these activities.

Address Homelessness with more employment opportunities
I am encouraged to read that homelessness is a strategic goal in the draft Annual Plan. As part of the Department’s plans to expand the LA RISE grant, I recommend the Board work with EWDD to provide further information on how it serves the female homeless population, including information on how the goals have been identified, how many women have benefitted, and how the funding has been distributed. Unsheltered women have unique needs and I encourage the Department to continue to work with experts, such as HCID, LAHSA and the Domestic Violence & Homelessness Coalition, to ensure those needs are considered in the design, implementation, and evaluation of job-skill trainings.

Strengthening Industry Sector Strategies & Vulnerable Populations – Gender Equality as a Working Method
While the WDB’s work is guided by a sector-driven approach, I strongly suggest that the different needs of women and men, girls and boys, and people of various gender identities be included as important factors in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the EWDD’s policies, programs, and resource allocation. Adding a gender lens allows the implications for the groups to be assessed before any decisions are made. In this way, the Board can make sure that gender inequality is not perpetuated.
As part of this work, I recommend the Board work with EWDD to conduct a gender analysis\(^1\) to assess obstacles currently preventing women from participating in its workforce programs and advance in their careers. The analysis should include an examination of:

- Customer’s knowledge of and access to childcare support services, and the role of the WorkSource Centers and the YouthSource Centers in addressing childcare needs for job seekers. Research reveals that poverty rates disproportionately affect female-headed households, with the poverty rate for single-mother families with children under the age of five amounting to 49% in the City of Los Angeles.
- How the WorkSource Centers and the YouthSource Centers encourage and prepare women for middle-skills jobs, and elevates them to better paid middle-skills job, in line with recommendation 2 and 10 in the presentation “Closing the 20-cent Gap.”

Furthermore, I kindly ask the EWDD to provide information on how WorkSource Center applicants answered the requirements relating to gender equality as defined in the RFP and to explain how the answers were evaluated, as well as planned next steps.

**4. Data, Reporting, & Evaluation**

I strongly encourage the Board have EWDD collect and present data disaggregated by sex in the demographic portraits and performance reports, including but not limited to the WorkSource Centers and the YouthSource Centers, the WIN-LA training and hiring program, the Targeted Local Hire program, and the programs that the EWDD will implement together with the Los Angeles World Airports, the Port of Los Angeles, and the Department of Water and Power. The latter programs provide a great opportunity for the WBD to reduce the gender wage gap by preparing and encouraging women to apply for positions known as “non-traditional female jobs.”

Furthermore, I support recommendations 1, 3, 5, 6 and 11 in the presentation “Closing the 20-cent Gap,” and hope that the WBD will adopt the proposals as part of the adoption of the Annual Plan.

On evaluation, I would like to draw the WBD and EWDD’s attention to the fact that the Human Development Index (HDI), used in the draft Annual Plan, is not gender-sensitive. On the other hand, the Gender Development Index (GDI), measures gender gaps in human development achievements by accounting for disparities between women and men in three basic dimension of human development – health, knowledge and living standards using the same component indicators as in the HDI. The GDI is the ratio of the HDIs calculated separately for females and males using the same methodology as in the HDI. It is useful for understanding the real gender gap in human development achievements and is informative to design policies and programs to close the gap.\(^2\)

Lastly, I recommend that the Board request EWDD post the metrics and indicators used to the Gender Equity Dash Board, in line with Executive Directive No. 11.

**5. System-wide Activities:**

- **Innovation Fund:** I strongly support recommendation 7 in the presentation “Closing the 20-cent Gap” and the WDB’s intention to fund a pilot program for Domestic Violence Survivors through its Innovation Fund.

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\(^1\) A gender analysis highlights the differences between and among women, men, girls, and boys, in terms on their relative distribution of resources, opportunities, constraints and power in a given context.  
• **Customer Satisfaction Surveys:** I recommend that the EWDD consider adding a gender lens to its Customer Satisfaction Surveys and gathers data disaggregated by sex through the surveys.

• **CrossRoads Policy Symposium:** I suggest that the WDB and the EWDD take the opportunity to discuss gender inequality in the labor market with relevant stakeholders at the next CrossRoads Policy Symposium.

• **Promotion & Outreach:** I strongly support recommendation 9 in the presentation “Closing the 20- cent Gap” and urge the EWDD to ensure that its contracting partners do not contribute to further gender stereotyping through its marketing efforts. Thus, I recommend the EWDD to develop marketing guidelines so that job trainings are marketed in a way that encourages women and men to consider career paths different from what is perceived as “traditional male and female jobs.”

### 6. Partnerships & Consultants

I encourage the WDB to let its commitment to achieving gender equality guide and influence its partnerships and suggest that the policies, data, and working methods developed by WDB and EWDD be shared with relevant stakeholders.

In line with the City of Los Angeles efforts to prevent and address harassment and discrimination in the workplace, I further recommend that the EWDD asks its partners to comply with the City’s policies and pursue similar efforts, including Mayor Eric Garcetti’s recently released Executive Directive No. 23, to create inclusive work environments (see attached directive).

In line with the Executive Directive No. 11, I encourage EWDD to track contracts and promote ways to ensure equal contracting opportunities for women-owned enterprises. Additionally, to ensure that contracted consultants have demonstrated knowledge of gender equality, including knowledge of how to apply a gender lens to the work.

### 7. Training

I strongly support recommendation 8 in the presentation “Closing the 20- cent Gap,” that a curriculum be developed to train City workforce development system staff on to apply a gender lens to their work and provide workforce development services (including career exploration and counselling, training referrals, case management, job research and job placement, and retention) to women and girls in a non-biased way. To ensure that EWDD personnel and contracting partners receive such training, I recommend the WBD to include a separate budget line on the matter in the Annual Plan for 2018/2019.

### Attachments:

1. Executive Directive No. 11 on Gender Equity in City Operations
2. Closing the 20-Cent Gap Presentation
3. Executive Directive No. 23 on Harassment and Discrimination