

## Call to Action for Indiana Employers to Join the *You Can. Go Back.* Initiative

February 11, 2016

**WHEREAS**, many Indiana employers face significant education and skills gaps in filling positions;

**WHEREAS**, Indiana has adopted a Big Goal of increasing postsecondary attainment to 60 percent by 2025 that aims to bridge this gap;

**WHEREAS**, 750,000 Hoosiers have earned college credit but not completed a degree or credential;

**WHEREAS**, at least 200,000 Hoosier adults must go back and earn a degree, certificate or industry credential by 2020 to meet the state's Big Goal;

**WHEREAS**, adults often face budget constraints and must balance work and family obligations that make it difficult to further their education;

**WHEREAS**, the State of Indiana has dedicated \$7.5 million in state grants for adult students and Indiana colleges are offering special programs and incentives to eliminate barriers for returning adults;

**WHEREAS**, employers are essential partners in removing obstacles that prevent their employees from completing postsecondary education and advancing in their careers; and

**WHEREAS**, better-educated Hoosiers contribute to a stronger Indiana workforce and help Indiana attract and retain a strong employer base, contributing to its economic success;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Commission calls upon Indiana employers to:

- I. **Encourage** their employees to go back and complete a degree or credential by:
  - a. Discussing the benefits of increased education in the context of professional development and periodic performance reviews;
  - b. Displaying college *Return on Investment Reports* prominently in workspace, break rooms and digital systems and distribute in appropriate internal communications materials; and/or
  - c. Increasing employees' awareness of federal, state and employer-specific funding available to help with tuition and related costs.
- II. **Support** their employees who choose to go back and complete a degree or credential by:
  - a. Assisting employees with the costs of continuing their education through upfront tuition support or tuition reimbursement;
  - b. Negotiating with nearby colleges to secure tuition discounts, defer tuition until reimbursement is received or other accommodation for their employees; and/or
  - c. Allowing employees to use company space and equipment during non-work hours to complete their degrees.
- III. Help employees **balance** work, school and family by:
  - a. Permitting employees to modify work schedules to accommodate class schedules.
  - b. Partnering with nearby colleges to offer courses or whole programs at their places of business; and/or
  - c. Adopting flexible policies that allow Paid Time Off to be used for school-related activities.