



SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

90% Black Teen Year Round Joblessness in Chicago
79% Hispanic Teen Year Round Joblessness in Chicago

50% of Black Men and 15% of Hispanic Men (20-24)
are Jobless and Out-Of-School in Chicago

Youth Employment Hearing

January 25, 2016
9:30am – 12 noon
Chicago Urban League
4510 S. Michigan Ave.

We propose the following steps to support and properly invest in the lives of the youth in our country.

- 1. We proposed that there be a national commitment to employ 2 million jobless youth, both in the summer and year round.** The funding would be at least \$4.5 billion to accomplish this. Summer youth employment would be 25 hours per week for 8 weeks combined with programming to enhance the participants' academic skills. Year round employment would be full time (35 hours) for youth not in school and older than 19 years old with programming to provide participants the opportunity to earn a high school diploma or GED, as well as to combine programming linked to specific skills training that would provide the participants with specific work related credentials. Linkage with community colleges and other skill training programs will be critical. Part time employment (5 to 10 hours) would be provided for youth, 16 to 24, who are enrolled in school. These programs would provide creative and engaging employment as well as comprehensive support services to keep participants engaged through a myriad of problems and challenges they face.

It is critical that there be follow-through programs for participants to assist them when they are ready to enter the private sector so that they will receive the type of services that will help them remain employed and earn the educational and skill training credentials they will need to continue to be competitive in the job market.

- 2. We proposed that there be a state commitment to employ 35,000 jobless, disconnected youth in the type of summer and year round programs described above.**
- 3. We proposed that there be a Cook County commitment to employ 10,000 jobless, disconnected youth and a Chicago commitment to employ 10,000 jobless, disconnected youth.**
- 4. Initiatives like the 100,000 Opportunities developed by a coalition of leading US based companies are a good beginning to open up the doorway for disconnected youth (16-24).** More initiatives like this would be developed with the leadership of the President and state and local corporate and political leadership.

- 5. We proposed that there be a Youth Employment Crisis Action Task Force to address the State of Illinois and Cook County and Chicago crisis situation of disconnected youth.**
- 6. The investments outlined above will produce 3 significant results:**
 - a. Prepare and support youth with the skills they will need to become productive and successful adults.
 - b. Prepare and develop the workforce that Chicago, Cook County, Illinois and the country will need to remain competitive in a global economy.
 - c. Help lessen and prevent the tragic violence that continues to plague our country in too many communities.
- 7. The cost of not doing this investment has already proven to be staggering in terms of crime, prison costs, healthcare, welfare and other costs.**

The cost of doing nothing must not be an option.

Background

Youth employment (16-24 years old) has had a dramatic decline across the country from 46% in 1998-2000 to 27% in 2011-13.

Over 3.6 million Latino youth and young adults, as of July, 2015, were jobless and over 2.5 million Black youth and young adults were jobless.

Over 2 million of these youth and young adults are not in school and are jobless. They are disconnected from society.

Clear and consistent research shows that the more a youth works then the more they will work as an adult.

Until 2000, there was a national summer youth employment program that provided over 650,000 low-income youth with jobs.

Since then, there have been only sporadic programs that provide youth jobs in the summer and hardly any programs to provide youth jobs throughout the year.

Presidential candidate, Bernie Sanders, has proposed to provide \$1.5 billion for youth job training and \$4 billion for youth jobs which would serve over 2 million jobless youth with the skills they would need to become productive adults.

Presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton, has proposed a \$1,500 tax credit to businesses to hire youth.

We are losing a generation of youth who have no opportunity to work in their neighborhoods.

A national focus and program must be developed, along with state and local based programs, to give the youth of our country the opportunity and skills they will need to become successful adults in an economy growing more competitive each year.

The problem disconnected youth face is a lack of work experience because of the economic depression of their communities.

The aim of these employment and training programs is to provide the disconnected youth of our country the employment experiences that middle class and upper class children have in order to build their work habits and other critical skills that will prepare them to enter the private sector economy.