



# PROGRAM EVALUATION DIVISION

## NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

March 2012

Report No. 2012-04

# State and Local Improvements Needed for Workforce Development System Integration and Accountability

## Summary

The Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee directed the Program Evaluation Division to evaluate the workforce development system and recommend administrative and organizational improvements. The system was funded with \$1.4 billion in Fiscal Year 2010–11, over half of which came from the General Fund.

**North Carolina's workforce development system is a complicated array of 22 programs administered by seven entities that provide services at more than 500 local sites.** State-level leadership and the structure of 23 local workforce development areas compromise the system's effectiveness.

**State and local program coordination have failed to create an integrated, effective workforce development system.** One-stop JobLink Career Centers were created in 1998 to enhance local workforce development service delivery. However, the services offered and the level of integration vary across the 99 JobLink locations because centers rely on local program participation, and centers do not take full advantage of technology that could improve access to off-site programs and businesses. State-level leadership by the Commission on Workforce Development and agencies that provide services has been insufficient to ensure an integrated workforce development system. The recent transfer of the Employment Security Commission to the Department of Commerce is a step toward system integration and streamlining.

**Despite investments in a data system to track participants, there are no statewide performance measures for the workforce development system.** Although the potential of the common follow-up information management system has not been fulfilled, the existing infrastructure provides an opportunity to implement strong system-wide performance measures.

### **Based on these findings, the General Assembly should:**

- streamline the workforce development system by transferring the Apprenticeship program, encouraging realignment of local workforce development areas, and reducing membership of the Commission on Workforce Development;
- require statewide performance measures;
- strengthen the JobLink Career Center system by revising the charter and updating agency participation agreements;
- direct that technology be used to integrate programs and increase access to workforce development services; and
- create a Joint Legislative Workforce Development Reform Oversight Committee to oversee recommended changes.