

**GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**  
**Universal Design Resolution**  
**September 2009**

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**Background:** In April of 2008, The National Technical Assistance and Research Leadership Center to Promote Employment and Economic Independence for Adults with Disabilities (NTAR Leadership Center) selected Maryland, Connecticut, and Minnesota to participate in its first State Leaders Innovation Institute. The State Leaders Innovation Institute is part of a national effort to improve employment for adults with disabilities. Implementation of Universal Design across Maryland's workforce system, particularly in the One-Stop Career Centers, was identified as a priority in Maryland's NTAR Plan. Universal Design is a way to provide inclusive access and services that benefit job seekers with a wide range of learning styles, languages, educational levels, intelligences, and abilities.

The health of Maryland's economy depends upon its ability to meet the workforce needs of businesses. A critical component of GWIB's strategy to meet these needs is by opening doors to employment for the historically underutilized and untapped populations including: people with disabilities, at-risk youth, individuals who have been incarcerated, welfare recipients, those with unstable housing, adults without a high school diploma, English language learners, and increasingly, dislocated workers.

**Resolution:** In order to assure that there truly are *no spare Marylanders*, all of Maryland's potential workers should be provided with universal access, services and processes according to the principles known as Universal Design. These principles result in workforce services that are designed to benefit job seekers who possess a wide range of learning styles, languages, educational levels, intelligences, and abilities. The goal is to assist workforce development system partners, one stop centers and other stakeholders to institute policies and practices that reflect the best principles of Universal Design in the delivery of workforce development services.

**Whereas,** Maryland's workforce development system, including the Local Workforce Investment Boards and One-Stop Career Centers are called upon to serve a diverse range of customers, including individuals with disabilities; and,

**Whereas,** the goal of the Local Workforce Investment Boards and One-Stop Career Centers is to produce successful employment outcomes for all Marylanders seeking employment, while ensuring cost effectiveness in serving a diverse pool of job seekers; and,

**Whereas,** according to the Institute for Community Inclusion, the principles of universal design include:

- Principle One: Equitable Use
- Principle Two: Flexibility in Use
- Principle Three: Simple and Intuitive
- Principle Four: Perceptible Information
- Principle Five: Tolerance for Error
- Principle Six: Low Physical Effort
- Principle Seven: Size and Space for Approach and Use

**Be it therefore, resolved** that the Governor's Workforce Investment Board strongly supports the adoption of the principles of Universal Design to be implemented in Maryland's One Stop Centers as articulated by the Institute for Community Inclusion (attached herein).