

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON DC 20510

APR 1 198

March 6, 2007

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Labor  
Frances Perkins Building  
200 Constitution Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20210

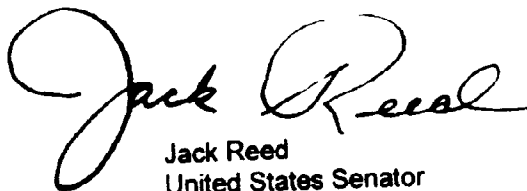
Dear Secretary Chao:

As the Department of Labor prepares its spending plan for the fiscal year 2007 Continuing Resolution, I urge you to provide \$200,000 for the Groden Center Arts and Business Training Center in Providence, Rhode Island. The project was included in the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

The Groden Center would use the funding for an Arts and Business Training Center to enhance its Vocational Services Program. The Training Center will provide skills instruction and job sampling in the arts and training for business positions. The Vocational Services Program has a significant record of success serving individuals with autism. Using innovative techniques, the program has trained and placed a number of people into successful employment by offering assessment and training activities. The Center currently serves 200 people, but as the number of individuals with autism rises, the ability to increase job training and employment is critical to providing them more opportunities.

I greatly appreciate your support of this important Rhode Island priority. If you or your staff has any questions, please feel free to call me or Kris Sarri of my staff at (202)224-4642.

Sincerely,



Jack Reed  
United States Senator

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U.S. Department of Labor

Assistant Secretary for  
Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs  
Washington, D.C. 20210



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The Honorable Jack Reed  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Reed:

Thank you for your letter to Secretary Chao urging Department of Labor funding for a specific project.

While we appreciate your advocacy for the Rhode Island project cited in your letter, the Department is bound by the statutory provisions of H.J. Res. 20, the full-year appropriation for Fiscal Year 2007. In view of Section 12, the Department may accord earmark status only to those statutorily designated. The Department is governed by a competitive, merit-based procurement process for selecting its grantees, consistent with the guidance set forth in the Office of Management and Budget's memorandum of February 15, 2007.

However, we do encourage all potential grantees to apply competitively for resources that may be available from the Department, as well as other federal agencies. The application process has been greatly streamlined. Potential grantees may logon to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) and review the opportunities available there. The site is a central storehouse for information on over 1,000 grant programs and affords access to approximately \$400 billion in annual awards. By registering once on this site, potential grantees can apply for grants from 26 different federal agencies.

Thank you for your interest in the Department of Labor's programs. If you have any questions, please contact me at (202) 693-4601.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kristine Iverson".

Kristine A. Iverson