



April 22, 2013

Cuts to Youth Empowerment Programs in the HWM Budget

Youth empowerment is a category of supports and services for children and young adults designed to foster their engagement in the community, to provide training or employment, or to prevent violence or other antisocial behavior. Despite the evidence that disaffected youth are finding it increasingly difficult to find jobs, the House Ways and Means budget for FY 2014 proposes to cut funding for these programs by more than half.

For a young adult just out of school, finding that first job has never been easy. Unfortunately, over the past ten years finding that first job has gotten harder. A workforce in which more jobs require advanced training, coupled with the lingering effects of the recent deep recession have produced employment obstacles for the young.¹ In 2011, 13.8 percent of young adults (ages 16-24) in Massachusetts were unemployed.² This is a dramatic increase – more than doubling – of the youth unemployment rate in 2000, which was 6.7 percent.

Youth empowerment programs are increasingly important as the number of young adults who are neither in school nor working (so-called "disconnected youth") is growing. This population presents a particular challenge to the state's economy, as those young adults are at greater risk for longer-term unemployment and social dislocation.³

While the Governor's proposal called for \$38.3 million in spending, or roughly what Massachusetts was spending on the programs prior to the great recession, the HWM plan only allocates \$9.2 million. These programs would receive less money than they have at any other time since FY 2004. The chart below compares support for these programs in FY 2013 to both the Governor's and HWM FY 2014 proposals.

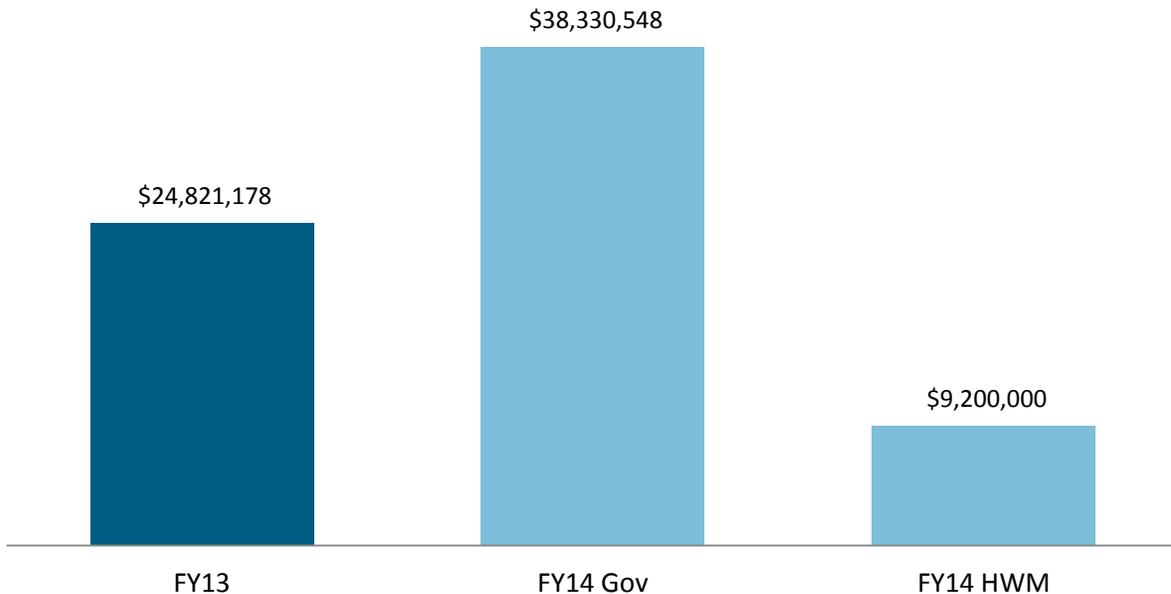
¹ For a discussion on national employment trends for young adults, see Annie E. Casey Foundation, "Youth and Work: Restoring Teen and Young Adult Connections to Opportunity", December 3, 2012.

² All employment statistics (unless otherwise noted) are from an Economic Policy Institute analysis of U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey data.

³ For more information on Youth Unemployment please see "Youth and Work in Massachusetts" by the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center: http://massbudget.org/report_window.php?loc=massbudget_youth_employment.html

Contrasting Youth Empowerment Proposals for FY 2014

Total funding for state Youth Empowerment programs



While the Governor's FY 2014 budget proposes an increase of \$13.5 million to youth empowerment programs, the HWM plan, by contrast, would cut these programs by \$15.6 million. These programs, and the HWM proposed spending levels, are detailed below. For a more in depth explanation of these programs, see MassBudget's *Children's Budget*, a fully interactive breakdown of all state programs affecting young people. <http://children.massbudget.org/>

Youth Empowerment Line Items

Line Item	Name	FY 2013 Current	FY 2014 Governor	FY 2014 HWM	HWM - Gov
4000-0005	Safe and Successful Youth Initiative	4,000,000	10,000,000	0	-10,000,000
7002-0012	Summer Jobs Program for At-Risk Youth (YouthWorks)	3,000,000	10,000,000	2,000,000	-8,000,000
8100-0111	Gang Prevention Grant Program (Shannon Grants)	6,250,000	6,250,000	2,000,000	-4,250,000
7027-0019	School to Career Connecting Activities	2,870,000	2,871,370	1,000,000	-1,871,370
4800-0016	Transitional Employment Program (Roca)	2,000,000	2,000,000	400,000	-1,600,000
7009-6402	Gateway Cities Career Academies	500,000	1,008,000	0	-1,008,000
7061-9626	Youth-Build Grants	2,000,000	2,000,000	1,000,000	-1,000,000
4590-1507	Youth-At-Risk Matching Grants	2,700,000	2,700,000	1,800,000	-900,000
4590-1506	Youth Violence Prevention Grants	1,501,178	1,501,178	1,000,000	-501,178

Youth empowerment programs that receive a significant decrease under the HWM budget include:

- **Youth Works (Summer Jobs Program for At-Risk Youth)**, which funds the salaries of youth in nonprofit and government jobs. Funded at \$3.0 million in FY 2013, the HWM proposal reduces the funding to \$2.0 million in FY 2014. The Governor's proposal would have allocated the program \$10.0 million dollars in FY 2014. Tracking funding changes for this program can be challenging because this program runs over the summer, across Massachusetts' fiscal years. The Legislature often allows funding for this program allocated in one fiscal year to actually be spent in the next.⁴

Children's Budget Link: <http://children.massbudget.org/summer-jobs-program-risk-youth>

- **School to Career Connecting Activities**, a program that places high school students with low MCAS scores in career training and placement. The HWM plan proposes funding this program at \$1.0 million in FY 2014, a \$1.9 million dollar cut from FY 2013 and from what the Governor has proposed. This is down significantly from the \$8.2 million allocated in FY 2007 (adjusted for inflation).

Children's Budget Link: <http://children.massbudget.org/connecting-activities?source=commonthread>

- **Youth-Build Grants**, which combines job training with academic programs for students working on their high school diplomas or GEDs. The HWM plan proposes \$1.0 million for this program in FY 2014, a 50 percent cut from FY 2013 as well as \$1.0 million less than the governor's proposal.

Children's Budget Link: <http://children.massbudget.org/youth-build-grants?source=commonthread>

- **Gang Prevention Grant Program (Shannon Grants)**, which funds anti-gang and youth violence prevention activities undertaken by law enforcement, community-based organizations, and government agencies. Specific activities include community policing, home-visits for at-risk-youth, youth mentoring and job placement. The HWM proposal reduces funding from \$6.3 million in FY 2013 and the Governor's proposal to \$2 million.

Children's Budget Link: <http://children.massbudget.org/gang-prevention-grant-program-shannon-grants?source=commonthread>

The **Safe and Successful Youth Initiative**, an initiative to deter youth from participating in dangerous activity would be completely eliminated in the HWM plan. The Governor's proposal would fund this program at \$10.0 million, an increase of \$6.0 million from FY 2013. *Children's Budget Link:*

<http://children.massbudget.org/safe-and-successful-youth-initiative?source=commonthread>

⁴ Line item language for YouthWorks states that funding shall be made available through September 1st of the following fiscal year.