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**Tony Evers**, Governor  
**Caleb Frostman**, Secretary

June 17, 2019

Debra Carr, Acting National Director  
U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Job Corps  
200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N-4459  
Washington, D.C., 20210

Dear Acting National Director Carr:

As Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), I am writing to share support for the continued operation and funding of the Blackwell Job Corps Center located near Laona, WI, on behalf of DWD, Governor Tony Evers, and the people of Wisconsin.

Job Corps is a voluntary, no-cost education and career technical training program that is often a last resort for some of our most vulnerable and troubled young people. Facilities like Blackwell often provide release from toxic situations, allowing these talented individuals to enter a structured environment away from negative outside influences, establish their interests and skills, and pursue a high school diploma, additional job training, or put themselves on a path to academic success.

With employers in Wisconsin and across this country emphatically stating that the lack of skilled workers is a top barrier to continued growth, reducing opportunity for and investment in challenged populations endeavoring to stabilize their life and start a career, is short-sighted and contrary to the missions of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) and DWD. Both agencies are charged with supporting the most economically vulnerable, their path to economic independence, and their achievement of the American Dream. These are goals shared by all administrations, political parties, and citizens.

Blackwell's impact is undeniable. Since the announcement by USDOL and President Trump concerning the closure of Blackwell, the outpouring of support and number of success stories have been overwhelming. In fact, four days after officials at Blackwell and the people it serves were notified of its pending closure, it was recognized as a "top performer." It seems the federal government joins Governor Evers, the people of Wisconsin and me in acknowledging the tremendous impact the facility has had on countless lives throughout Wisconsin.

USDOL's previously published criteria for evaluating whether to close a Job Corps Center considered "chronic low performance" and the "effort required to provide a high-quality education and training program at the center." Given Blackwell's top performance and record of providing high-quality education and training, I ask you to please reconsider your decision.

The closure will also severely impact Blackwell's 54 full-time workers, their families, and the surrounding community. Forest County, where Blackwell is located, has a population of approximately 8,970, and had an unemployment rate in April 2019 of 5.6 percent, twice Wisconsin's statewide rate of 2.8 percent. Like many Northern Wisconsin counties, Forest County struggles with a shrinking and aging population, which continues to challenge its economy. Blackwell brings young workers to Northern Wisconsin from across the country, some of whom stay in the area and pursue careers, investing deeply in the community. The

proposed closure will severely impact Forest County's economy by removing 54 jobs, their salaries, and benefits, while also taking away an important talent attraction and development tool for an economically challenged area of Northern Wisconsin.

I strongly urge the United States Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration to reconsider the closing of this impactful, top-performing, community cornerstone Job Corps facility. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caleb Frostman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Caleb Frostman  
Secretary