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TO: The Honorable Detroit City Council

FROM: David Whitaker, Director
Legislative Policy Division Staff 

DATE: June 5, 2025

RE: **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FUNDING FOR JOB CORPS**

City Council President Mary Sheffield has requested the Legislative Policy Division (LPD) to produce a resolution urging the federal administration to restore funding to the Job Corp program.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FUNDING FOR JOB CORPS

- WHEREAS** On May 29, 2025, the U.S. Department of Labor announced that it was implementing a “phased pause,” effectively halting the operations of all contractor-operated Job Corps centers nationwide by June 30, 2025;¹ and
- WHEREAS** Job Corps has been operating for over 50 years and is the nation’s largest vocationally focused education and training program for disadvantaged youths, serving young people between the ages of 16 and 24; and
- WHEREAS** Participants in the Job Corps program receive intensive vocational training, academic education, and a wide range of services, including counseling, social skills training, and health education, all with the goal of obtaining a General Educational Development (GED) certificate and having the resources to seek additional training or find jobs; and
- WHEREAS** Job Corps differs from other education and training programs because of the comprehensive services that it provides including providing a residence to participants, which is an essential component because Job Corps was designed to help disadvantaged youths, many of whom have been in foster care, come from an unstable home, or been homeless prior to entering the program; and
- WHEREAS** Job Corps has provided training to more than 2 million individuals since its founding, and studies have shown that people enrolled in Job Corps have a 21% increased likelihood of obtaining a GED certificate, and a 31 percent increase in obtaining vocational certificates;² and
- WHEREAS** According to federal data, more than 700 students were enrolled at three Michigan centers in the 2023 program year;³ and
- WHEREAS** The sudden move by the federal administration to halt Job Corps operations was done with no prior warning, creating unnecessary chaos and leaving our most vulnerable youths scrambling for resources as their path to education, training, and self-improvement is disrupted; and
- WHEREAS** To justify its actions, the press release from the Department of Labor cites the cost of the program along with data regarding graduation rates and incident reports without any further context, and while it states that “the department is collaborating with state and local workforce partners to assist current students in advancing their training and connecting them with education and employment opportunities,” there is no definitive plan in place to do so; and
- WHEREAS** Instead of addressing potential areas of improvement with the Job Corps program and engaging in a thoughtful and comprehensive effort to improve outcomes for participants, the federal government has apparently decided to scrap the program altogether, depriving states,

¹ <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/osec/osec20250529>

² Schochet, Peter Z., John Burghardt, and Sheena McConnell. 2008. "Does Job Corps Work? Impact Findings from the National Job Corps Study." *American Economic Review* 98 (5): 1864–86.

³ <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/osec/osec20250529>

local governments, and vulnerable youths of valuable resources that have been proven to improve life outcomes; and

WHEREAS As with many recent actions taken by the federal administration to cut funding to programs that provide social safety nets and support to vulnerable people, there has apparently been no consideration as to whether the program yields net benefits despite the upfront cost by decreasing future reliance on government programs, which suggests that the motivation for these cuts is an ideological disdain for people who need government assistance rather than a sincere effort to increase efficiency in government spending; and

WHEREAS The Detroit Job Corps Center has played a crucial role in the City's efforts to provide education, job training, and wraparound support services for low-income youth and its continued operation is vital to the City's workforce development and economic mobility efforts; and

WHEREAS As of June 4, 2025, a federal court issued a temporary restraining order halting the termination of Job Corps contracts and the closure of Job Corps Centers until a further ruling on the case, as it is yet another attempt by the federal administration to override the authority of the U.S. Congress by eliminating a program established under federal statutes; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT,**

RESOLVED That the Detroit City Council strongly urges the federal administration to reconsider its effort to eliminate the Job Corps program and to resume the program immediately in accordance with Article I of the United States Constitution; **NOW BE IT FINALLY**

RESOLVED That the Detroit City Clerk provide a copy of this resolution to U.S. Secretary of Labor Lori Chavez-DeRemer, the Mayor, the Detroit delegations of both the Michigan State House and Senate, U.S. Representatives Rashida Tlaib and Shri Thanedar, and Governor Gretchen Whitmer.