



R-17

Date: February 13, 2007

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Patrick O'Donnell, Fourth District 

Subject: **One-Stop Labor Resource Center**

Vocational education can play an important role in the lives and futures of Long Beach's youth. While not every student will go to a four-year university, there are a wide variety of well-respected, sought after programs that offer students the chance to learn trades and earn sustainable wages and benefits. According to the US Department of Education, students who took occupational courses earned 2 percent more pay per each course completed in the years following graduation. Governor Schwarzenegger's proposed 2007-08 budget includes \$52 million to build and improve California's Career Technical Education programs.

Vocational education currently plays a major role in cities such as San Diego, where students and labor apprentices work alongside Public Works employees repairing potholes and streets—giving them firsthand training. Many other industries, including biotechnology, computer manufacturing and healthcare have realized a shortage of qualified applicants and trainees.

Many high schools have college centers—where students can collect information on universities and scholarships. We must provide that same opportunity for students to learn about vocational programs. The City currently has a "Youth Opportunity Center" which provides career advisement and training. The potential partnering this center with additional agencies and labor unions who recruit for vocational programs could be of tremendous benefit to our city—and assist with the future development of a Long Beach Construction Technology school, as proposed by Mayor Foster in his State of the City address. A potential One-Stop Labor Resource Center could provide information on available apprenticeships, trade careers, and classes.

Recommendation:

Request the City Manager to work with appropriate staff and agencies to develop a proposal for a One-Stop Labor Resource Center and report back to the City Council within 60 days on a plan to implement this initiative using existing City Facilities.