

FINAL: 2020

Dear Leader _____ and Chairman _____:

I respectfully request your support for the New Choices/New Options line item in the Pennsylvania Labor and Industry Budget at the \$750,000 level for the 2020/2021 Fiscal Year.

This worthy program has maintained a 3-to-1 return on state investment for 26 years and has helped over 66,000 Pennsylvanians find lasting employment. Through the New Choices/New Options program, Pennsylvania Women Work helps women who need intensive services resolve their obstacles to employment and find lasting jobs that pay a family-sustaining wage. In this life-changing program, participants gain self-esteem by learning professional communication and conflict resolution, tools they use in all aspects of their lives. PA Women Work sets women on a path to achieving their professional goals, resulting in an 82% placement rate into jobs or continued education.

For more than two decades, New Choices/New Options has turned recipients of state benefits into Pennsylvania taxpayers, and has improved the economic health and quality of life in our Commonwealth. Clients find living-wage jobs that give them the power to break the cycle of generational poverty and find stability for themselves and their families. At intake, clients have an average annual household income of \$14,600, but after New Choices, participants earn an average annual income of \$30,000.

In 2018/2019, this program delivered many successful outcomes and savings for the state. Graduates' average starting wage in their new employment was \$15.02/hr. Considering added tax revenue, Medicaid savings and more, New Choices provides the state approximately \$1.5 million in savings.

I urge you to support a final budget that includes the \$750,000 investment into New Choices/New Options.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional details. I appreciate your consideration or continued support of this critical program funding.

Sincerely,