**Executive Summary**

* DC Metro’s Public Workforce System is comprised of over 35 entities whose policies are guided by 3 states, 22 jurisdictions, and various oversight bodies.
* There currently is no single entity convening the DC Metro region’s public workforce system.
* Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) can serve as the region’s convener and coordinate with the workforce development agencies to generate industry-recognized credential earners for DC Metro’s in-demand middle-skills occupations.

**An Arlington County Success Story: “IT Jobs for Veterans” Program**

* In December 2012, the Commonwealth of Virginia launched a grant competition to connect Veterans who have recently finished their military service with careers in high-growth, high-demand occupations. Only consortiums comprised of local public workforce system agencies were eligible to participate in this competition.
* 8 out of the top 10 in-demand occupations in Alexandria/Arlington are Information Technology (IT) related.
* Alexandria/Arlington Workforce Investment Board (WIB) convened Arlington County’s and Alexandria City’s American Job Centers, Virginia Employment Commission, Northern Virginia Community College, and Acentia to develop a strategy to generate industry-recognized credential earners for locally in-demand IT occupations. Acentia, a private employer, represented the local IT industry and also assisted in the coordination of the hiring of this program’s graduates.
* In early 2013, the WIB secured a $275,000 grant for the local public workforce system consortium to generate industry-recognized credential earners for Alexandria/Arlington’s in-demand IT occupations.
* This partnership served 40 Veterans over an 18 month period. All of the program’s education, certification, and job training activities were fully covered by this grant.
* 90% of the graduates of this program secured employment. Average first year salary was $70,000.

**Recommendation: COG Can Be the DC Metro Workforce Development Convener**

* There are many entities that make up DC Metro’s public workforce system. There are 6 community colleges, 7 Workforce Investment Boards/Councils, 22 American Job Centers, and many other federal, state, and local agencies who skill-up citizens for DC Metro’s in-demand occupations.
* There is no one single convener of the DC Metro’s public workforce system.
* There are 142,972 job openings in the DC Metro today. 36% of these jobs require at least a high school diploma/GED and less than a Bachelor’s degree. Many of these jobs also require an industry-recognized certification. These types of jobs are considered “middle-skills” jobs.
* DC, Maryland, and Virginia have convened their public workforce systems and directed each to generate industry-recognized credential earners to meet the middle-skills needs of their in-demand occupations.
* COG can be the convener for the DC Metro’s public workforce system and develop a region-wide middle-skills credentialing campaign.
* COG can enter into grant competitions on behalf of the DC Metro’s public workforce system to support this credentialing campaign effort. COG can award funding to local entities who participate in the campaign and direct their resources towards generating industry-recognized credential earners and placing them into DC Metro’s in-demand occupations.