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OUR VIEW Creating jobs and providing the necessary training to fill those jobs is the best way to stimulate our economy.

Work force training improves our employees

Job creation, and the effect of the federal stimulus program on creating new jobs, has received much attention of late. The president convened a jobs summit Thursday in an effort to refocus attention on the most important issue facing the nation — unemployment.

It's unclear how effective Thursday's summit was, but in Eastern Connecticut we do have one good example of what can be done to enhance the job market with the use of stimulus dollars.

The Eastern Connecticut

Workforce Investment Board has received stimulus funds and is putting the money to work by enabling employers to put people to work. The funds will be used to offset wages for employees in training — as much as 50 percent, and up to 90 percent of the cost.

Critical issues

This is an excellent program that addresses several critical issues facing Eastern Connecticut. No doubt there are many employers who would like to increase their work force with skilled workers,

but are unable to do so because of the business climate.

But having the ability to hire and train new workers without the added expense would certainly be a benefit for an employer. And having the opportunity to learn new skills that can result in full-time employment is clearly a benefit for anyone unemployed and unable to find work.

This is what the stimulus package was intended to do. Putting people to work is the best way to build a strong and vibrant economy.

The Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board has long served this region and its workers well with the many programs and partnerships developed over the years. This latest endeavor is just another example of the important role it plays in contributing to our region's economy.

We strongly urge employers to take advantage of this program. There are many Eastern Connecticut residents who are eager to return to the work force and who are willing to learn new skills.