

Workforce Information Advisory Council

Summary of Virtual Meeting

December 1, 2021

12:00 PM – 4:00 PM ET

The Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC) was convened for a virtual meeting at 12:00 PM on Wednesday, December 1, 2021. The Council was convened pursuant to Section 308 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) (Pub. L. 113-128), which amends section 15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 (29 U.S.C. § 491-2) and in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended (5 U.S.C. App.) and its implementing regulation at 41 CFR 102-3.

Mr. Steven Rietzke, Chief, Division of National Programs, Tools, and Technical Assistance (DNPTTA), Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Council, convened the meeting. The entirety of the meeting day was open to the public and concluded at 4:00 PM on Wednesday, December 1, 2021.

In Attendance:

Members of the Workforce Information Advisory Council

Bruce Madson, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (Chair)

Thomas Anderson, Wellons Land Company and Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Alicia Crouch, Kentucky Community and Technical College System

Lesley Hirsch, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Dean Jones, Greenville County Workforce Development Board

Chelsea Mason – Placek, Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO

Andrew Reamer, George Washington Institute of Public Policy, George Washington University

Jennifer Zeller, Georgia Power

Members of the Council Not in Attendance

Daryl Bassett, Arkansas Department of Workforce Services

Deborah Carlson, Texas Workforce Commission

Adrienne Johnston, Florida Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research

Invited Speakers

Jason Tyszko, Vice President, Center for Education and Workforce, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

Staff

Steve Rietzke, Chief, DNPTTA, ETA (DFO)

Ken Robertson, BLS

Don Haughton, ETA

Michael Wolf, BLS

Pam Frugoli, ETA

Cynthia Forland, Forland Consulting

Danielle Kittrell, ETA

Annette Summers, The GA Team

Julie Hatch, BLS

Betsy Roberts, The GA Team

Members of the Public Offering Comments or Called Upon to Address the Council

Yvette Chocolaad, National Association of State Workforce Agencies

Allison Forbes, LMI Institute

George Putnam, Illinois Department of Employment Security

Marty Romitti, LMI Institute

Ben Zweig, Revelio Labs

Others Attending for All or a Portion of the Meeting

Jessica Hale, DOL

Douglas Holmes, UWC – Strategic Services on Unemployment & Workers Compensation

Tamika Ledbetter, State of Alaska DOL

Neil Ridley, ETA

David Schmidt, NV Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation

Liam Sullivan, National Association of State Workforce Agencies

Fran Valentine, Indiana Department of Workforce Development

Subcommittees Reporting During this Meeting

Subcommittee One: Skills

Jennifer Zeller (Co-Chair)

Daryl Bassett (Co-Chair)

Alicia Crouch

Proceedings: December 1, 2021 12:00 PM ET

Welcome and Review of Agenda

MR. RIETZKE convened the meeting of the Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC). He provided opening remarks on the agenda for the day in addition to the objectives for the series of December meetings. **MR. RIETZKE** thanked the Council members and the Steering Committee for their work throughout the subcommittee meetings.

The Council members who were present at the meeting introduced themselves.

MR. RIETZKE shared that the Council-approved expedited recommendations are undergoing the departmental review process.

MR. RIETZKE turned over the platform to **Jennifer Zeller**.

Opening Statements and Skills Subcommittee Presentation

Jennifer Zeller, Georgia Power, provided opening statements and introduced the members of the Skills Subcommittee.

MS. ZELLER shared a presentation and reported on the subcommittee's progress on examining skills as it relates to building a skilled workforce that spurs business competitiveness and economic growth.

MS. ZELLER described the reasoning for an increased focus on skills. She highlighted the need to understand the labor force in a unique way due to the current state of the pandemic-economy. There are numerous challenges with labor market participation and skills are the basis for understanding how employable people might be while providing workers with a level of social mobility. The availability of a skilled labor force is crucial for the support of economic development investment decisions in the United States. **MS. ZELLER** provided a contextual review of the WIAC history and how the concept of skills has remained at the forefront of the WIAC's recommendations since 2018. She also shared a list of experts the subcommittee has met with to inform their dialogue on skills.

MS. ZELLER provided an overview of the current state of the skills landscape, which she classified into three categories of participation: federal, private, and nonprofit. She explained that each category has its own initiatives and views skills from a different perspective, utilizing skills data in different ways. **MS. ZELLER** emphasized the need for federal, private, and nonprofit collaboration in order to better understand the opportunities surrounding skills. She identified possible paths forward to pursue a public-private effort, such as a Department of Labor (DOL) working group or a conference to bring together public-private collaborators to discuss common goals and approaches.

MS. ZELLER concluded by posing a list of discussion questions to the meeting attendees:

- What would it look like to have a public-private partnership around skills?
- Data synchronization (i.e., skills data synchronization). How do you have these various efforts that are translatable with each other? How do we envision this happening?
- What could or should be shared or linked, how could this help? To join or link a network – what would be the framework for this?
- How could state WLMI shops partner with vendors legally to examine the opportunities for linkages?
- How can DOL make it easier to be a partner?

In the conversation that followed **Cynthia Forland**, Forland Consulting, encouraged the Council members to consider what a public-private partnership around skills would look like and what role DOL would play in the public side of that partnership.

Council Chair, **Bruce Madson** reiterated **MS. ZELLER**'s sentiments that the majority of cutting-edge work regarding skills is done in the private sector. He stated that the role of the government should be to synthesize a structure around the private sector efforts in order to tie them together.

MS. FORLAND asked the Council members how DOL could make it easier for nonprofit and for-profit entities to be partners in these efforts.

MS. HIRSCH suggested that DOL could use its leadership role in the Workforce and Labor Market Information (WLMI) community by raising the level of visibility around private sector skills initiatives. She provided the example of WorkforceGPS and how the topic of skills requires content organization and advanced posting forums. **MS. HIRSCH** stated that additional focus on informing American Jobs Centers and the public-at-large on in-demand skills is another opportunity for DOL to play a role.

MS. MASON-PLACEK shared that the key role in a public-private partnership around skills will be to clarify and change the public mindset regarding what skills or educational requirements are required for certain jobs.

Featured Speaker Presentation: Skills and the Talent Marketplace

MS. ZELLER introduced Jason Tyszko, Vice President, Center for Education and Workforce, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

MR. TYSZKO thanked **MS. ZELLER** for the invitation to join the meeting. He shared a presentation which outlined some of the work the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation is pursuing that is relevant to the conversation around skills and the talent marketplace. Several of the initiatives touched on the challenges and potential solutions discussed during **MS. ZELLER**'s presentation.

MR. TYSZKO explained that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation launches programs that are designed to close systemic gaps surrounding skills and data. The key to a successful skills-based, employer-led, talent marketplace is agility across three domains. Those domains are partnerships, data, and investment. For the purpose of the meeting, he focused on initiatives in the partnership domain and data domain.

MR. TYSZKO reviewed the context and challenges facing the partnership domain and the data domain in the workforce system. He explained that the challenges are both a human problem and a technology problem and discussed programmatic and technological initiatives to tackle the challenges.

The initiatives are as follows:

- Talent Pipeline Management (TPM)
 - A supply chain approach for sourcing and developing talent. Providing authentic, employer-led solutions that are skills-based and create a shared value, including ROI.
- JobSIDE
 - Spin-off of TPM.
 - Produces data on employer-validated skills profiles for in-demand jobs.
- Jobs and Employment Data Exchange (JEDx)

- A public – private approach for organizing, collecting, and using standards-based data on jobs and employment.
- T3 Innovation Network
 - Supporting a growing public-private, decentralized and distributed data and technology infrastructure for a more equitable talent marketplace.

In conclusion, **MR. TYSZKO** outlined possible implications for government:

- What are the leading use cases (administrative and statistical) for how government can access and use structured, employer validated data on jobs and skills?
- How can government accelerate and participate in the modernization of workforce data and the next generation or talent analytics?
- How can government help scale employer-led practices and solutions and the data and technology infrastructure that supports them?
- What is the government's role in empowering learners and workers with data about their skills and employer outcomes?

Following **MR. TYSZKO**'s presentation, **MS. ZELLER** asked **MR. TYSZKO** to share his perspective on what the role or involvement of the DOL should be, in order to compliment or further the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation initiatives.

MR. TYSZKO stated that the role of the DOL would be to participate in and enable innovative initiatives such as the ones described in his presentation. He indicated that an enabling-policy-environment would further advance the initiatives and allow progress to occur much quicker.

MR. RIETZKE commented that the initiatives **MR. TYSZKO** shared could contribute to potential recommendations on skills. He stated that the examples of relevant use cases and end states are compelling.

MR. RIETZKE thanked **MR. TYSZKO** for his comments.

Large Group Discussion

MS. FORLAND facilitated the large group discussion on the reactions to the Skills Subcommittee presentation. She referenced **MS. ZELLER**'s presentation and asked the Council members for their thoughts on the direction they think the WIAC should move forward in regarding the topic of skills, a potential public-private effort, and the role of DOL.

In the discussion that followed, the Council members brainstormed ways to optimize DOL's role in a potential public-private effort and the WIAC's path forward.

The discussion resulted in a list of ideas for further exploration:

- A convening or conference to discuss initiatives and where DOL leadership will be most valued.
- An ongoing forum where ideas can be organized and shared like WorkforceGPS.
- A skills community of practice.
- A DOL working group.
- Sector strategy and evidence of success.
- An evidence-based learning agenda.

- A technology-focused pilot.

Public Comment

MR. RIETZKE opened the platform for the public attendees to ask questions and provide comments and feedback.

MR. RIETZKE announced that he had received five requests to address the Council.

MR. RIETZKE welcomed public attendee, **Ben Zweig**, Revelio Labs.

MR. ZWEIG thanked the WIAC for the opportunity to participate in the meeting. Revelio Labs is a workforce intelligence company that gathers employment information from the public web to identify workforce dynamics between companies and to compare companies using Revelio Labs' universal HR database. Revelio Labs primarily serves private equity firms and hedge funds that are analyzing the workforce health of companies. **MR. ZWEIG** shared the framework of jobs and skills as they relate to the activities of work. He provided an overview of the Revelio Labs Dashboard and showed the hierarchical taxonomy of jobs, skills, and activities. **MR. ZWEIG** summarized that this can be a powerful approach for some applications and is adaptable to an evolving economy with a focus on structuring jobs and skills.

MR. RIETZKE welcomed public attendee, Yvette Chocolaad, National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA).

MS. CHOCOLAAD thanked the Council members and staff for the opportunity to address the WIAC. She provided background information on NASWA. She also provided contextual evidence on the desires state agencies have to use their data to better understand and address labor market issues at the local level, monitor progress toward reducing disparities and labor market outcomes, and increase the effectiveness of their investments. If the Build Back Better Act (BBB) becomes law, NASWA strongly recommends the majority of the funding for state workforce and labor market information be allocated to state LMI shops as part of the non-competitive Workforce Information Grants to States (WIGS). States need additional funding to support the core activities under these grants. **MS. CHOCOLAAD** also recommended a new allowable activity under the grants: participation in multi-state data collaboratives that facilitate advanced data analytics training, research, and shared data product development for state agencies using cross-state and longitudinal administrative data. Lastly, NASWA recommends the remaining funding go to support the improvement of short- and long-term state and local occupational employment projections that are critical for the identification of local, in-demand occupations and training opportunities.

MR. RIETZKE welcomed public attendee, George Putnam, Illinois Department of Employment Security.

MR. PUTNAM thanked the WIAC for inviting him to join the meeting. He spoke about WIGS and their complementarity to the Build Back Better Act. Moving the proposed BBB funding through the WIGS pipeline provides three levels of complementarity:

- BBB complements the WIGS vision for state-driven collaboration on LMI product sustainability.
 - Expand WIGS focus beyond Workforce Information Database and Employment Projections to include state-driven data collaboratives on the incubation of new product development.
- BBB complements the WIGS vision for stakeholder engagement.
 - Expand WIGS focus beyond stakeholder engagement in the dissemination of products to include stakeholder engagement in product development.
- BBB complements the WIGS vision for LMI training.

- Expand WIGS focus beyond training on the uses of LMI products to include data analytics training for product development.

In conclusion, **MR. PUTNAM** provided an example of state-driven data collaboratives and stakeholder engagement, through the Mid-West Collaborative.

MR. RIETZKE welcomed public attendees, Marty Romitti and Allison Forbes, LMI Institute.

MR. ROMITTI directed his remarks to the potential Build Back Better Labor Market Information funding. **MR. ROMITTI** explained how funding provided by the DOL through the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) to state LMI Offices has been declining in real and nominal terms for 20 years. Over the same timeframe states' costs for providing workforce information products and services has increased substantially. **MR. ROMITTI** stated that the LMI Institute sees the potential Build Back Better funds as an opportunity to reverse this trend and their comments echo closely with **MS. CHOCOLAAD**'s recommendations. The LMI Institute would like the funds directed to states to supplement their core WIGS activities, the allowing of a new core activity related to the multistate data collaborative, and also to state and local level projections.

MS. FORBES reinforced the previous comments on the important services that state labor market agencies can provide by noting that the data user communities are looking for information that comes from the state labor market agencies and can be produced in partnership with local actors within the private sector and civic sector.

MR. RIETZKE thanked **MR. ZWEIG**, **MS. CHOCOLAAD**, **MR. PUTNAM**, **MR. ROMITTI** and **MS. FORBES** for their comments.

Discussion on Potential Build Back Better Funding

MS. FORLAND led the Council through the exercise of discussing the Build Back Better bill and examining potential ways the WIAC might recommend using the proposed additional \$100 million in WLMI funding, should the bill move forward. Prior to this meeting, a document was sent to the Council members that outlined language from the House-passed legislation; pending Senate action, as well as questions for consideration on how the \$100 million could be spent. **MS. FORLAND** also encouraged the Council members to consider elements of previous WIAC recommendations.

In the conversation that followed, the Council members discussed and debated potential criteria for the BBB funding.

The detailed list of potential criteria for potential BBB funding is as follows:

- Allocate funding as soon as possible.
- Look for the greatest potential ROI, with both funding to states and at federal level.
- Focus on increasing state Workforce Information Grants.
- With additional WIG funding, emphasize ability to use those funds for: 1) participation in multistate data collaboratives; and 2) new product development.
- Balance of funding *not provided directly to states through WIG* to support the development of better state and local occupational employment projections.
- Investments in evidence-building strategy, learning agenda.
- Look to previous WIAC recommendations, especially the emphasis on enhanced UI wage records.
- Need to emphasize local and regional participation, not stopping at the state level.
- Align with broader economic recovery efforts.

Closing and Next Steps

MR. RIETZKE asked the Skills Subcommittee if they intend to make recommendations at the WIAC meeting in February 2022.

MS. ZELLER stated that while more work does need to be done, there is potential for a recommendation to be made at the February meeting.

MR. RIETZKE thanked the Council members for their attention and contributions throughout the meeting. He shared that the Data Sharing and Synchronization Subcommittee will be presenting during the December 8th meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.