

# Workforce Information Advisory Council

## Summary of Virtual Meeting

### February 3, 2022

### 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM ET

The Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC) was convened for a virtual meeting at 12:00 PM on Thursday, February 3, 2022. 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 Thursday, February 3, 2022.

#### **In Attendance:**

##### **Members of the Workforce Information Advisory Council**

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

Alicia Crouch, Kentucky Community and Technical College System

Lesley Hirsch, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Adrienne Johnston, Florida Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research

Dean Jones, Greenville County Workforce Development Board

Tamika Ledbetter, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

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

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

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

Fran Valentine, Indiana Department of Workforce Development

Jennifer Zeller, Georgia Power

##### **Members of the Council Not in Attendance**

Daryl Bassett, Arkansas Department of Workforce Services

Deborah Carlson, Texas Workforce Commission

**Staff**

Steve Rietzke, Chief, DNPTTA, ETA (DFO)

Don Haughton, ETA

Lauren Fairley, ETA

Pam Frugoli, ETA

Danielle Kittrell, ETA

Julie Hatch, BLS

Ken Robertson, BLS

Michael Wolf, BLS

Cynthia Forland, Forland Consulting

Annette Summers, The GA Team

Betsy Roberts, The GA Team

**Others Attending for All or a Portion of the Meeting**

Katrina Bailey, MTX Group

Catherine Imperatore, Association for Career and Technical Education

William K, Lewis Burke Associates

Wesley Martin, Walgreens

Yufanyi Nshom, DOL

Rosalinda Rivas, Moreno Valley College

Rider Rodriguez, MTX Group

Katie Smith, Walgreens

Mariana Vega, Texas Workforce Commission

Noel Woods, DOL

**Subcommittees Reporting During this Meeting**

Subcommittee One: Skills

Jennifer Zeller (Co-Chair)

Daryl Bassett (Co-Chair)

Alicia Crouch

Subcommittee Two: Data Sharing and Standardization

Lesley Hirsch (Chair)

Deborah Carlson

Dean Jones

Bruce Madson

Subcommittee Three: Worker and the Work

Andrew Reamer (Chair)

Adrienne Johnston

Chelsea Mason – Placek

**Proceedings: February 3, 2022 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 and outlined the goals for the final meeting in the winter series.

**MR. RIETZKE** shared that based on the priorities established at the meeting, the Council members will update the subcommittee structures and membership and identify goals for the WIAC's subsequent course of action.

**MR. RIETZKE** also discussed the Department of Labor's deliverables and planning timelines as they relate to the WIAC's areas of interest. He provided background information on FY23 and FY24 Department of Labor (DOL) budget requests, the Departmental Learning Agenda, and the Two-Year Plan that will be released in May of 2022.

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

## Opening Statements

**MR. RIETZKE** introduced Council Chair, **Bruce Madson**.

**MR. MADSON** greeted and thanked the Council members for their work on the various subcommittee topics. He reflected on the 2021 Expedited Recommendations as a direct result of the immediate need to answer questions that were unique and new to the pandemic situation. He emphasized the WIAC's current opportunity to refine and prioritize recommendations that provide long-lasting ways to improve the labor market information (LMI) system and significantly impact job seekers and institutions in the workforce system.

**MR. RIETZKE** turned over the platform to facilitator, **Cynthia Forland, Forland Consulting**.

## Large Group Discussion

**MS. FORLAND** led the Council through the exercise of reviewing of the 2021 Expedited Recommendations. She shared that the review would assist in mapping out the WIAC's course of action in the months to come. **MS. FORLAND** emphasized the importance of this exercise due to the addition of three new Council members.

**MS. FORLAND** provided an overview of the 2021 Expedited Recommendations as voted on by the Council during the meeting on August 31, 2021. She noted that the expedited recommendations are still undergoing the DOL review process and have not yet officially been published.

The three expedited recommendations as voted on by the WIAC on August 31, 2021 are as follows:

- **Recommendation 1:** Advocate for the Adoption of Enhanced Unemployment Insurance Wage Records by including Information on the Occupational Job Title(s), Hours Worked, and Job Site Location
- **Recommendation 2:** Improve Data and Information on the Changing Nature of Work through a Department of Labor Working Group
- **Recommendation 3:** Adequately Fund State Workforce and Labor Market Information Infrastructure to Meet 21st Century Demands for Data-Driven Decision-Making

**MR. RIETZKE** shared details on the progress of the departmental review of the expedited recommendations. Progress has been made in moving the recommendations forward in the formal process. He explained that the recommendations have also been informally socialized within the department. **MR. RIETZKE** expressed his hope for an expedited approval timeline for any future recommendations that are submitted by the WIAC.

A copy of the expedited recommendations approved by the WIAC are available at:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa/wiac/meetings>.

## Subcommittee Reports

**MS. FORLAND** facilitated the review of each subcommittee's initial recommendations from the three proceeding WIAC meetings. She called upon each subcommittee chair to summarize their subcommittee's progress to date and to outline their recommendations.

Page two of these minutes provides a listing of each subcommittee and its members.

### Skills Subcommittee Report

**Jennifer Zeller**, Georgia Power spoke for the Skills Subcommittee. She provided an overview on the subcommittee's progress in examining the skills landscape to include meeting with experts to inform their dialogue on skills. **MS. ZELLER** emphasized the need for federal, private, and nonprofit collaboration in order to better understand the opportunities surrounding skills. **MS. ZELLER** shared that the subcommittee recommends the following:

- With multiple impressive private efforts, we recommend endorsing a private-public effort. DOL wants to enable the progress and partner, not hinder skill efforts.
- Two paths forward to understand how to pursue a public-private effort include:
  1. Recommend a DOL working group to determine how to accomplish linkage of skills or partnership on open skills data-sharing. This would enable understanding of where the value lies.
  2. An immediate concrete step is to host a conference to have these efforts work together to democratize the world of skills. Convene those groups to lay out shared priorities and shared projects.

### Data Sharing and Standardization Subcommittee Report

**Lesley Hirsch**, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development spoke for the Data Sharing and Standardization Subcommittee. She provided background information on the subcommittee's progress as they worked to respond to specific needs related to data sharing, all of which require interagency, interstate, or intergovernmental data sharing. **MS. HIRSCH** explained that the subcommittee identified the major barriers of a complete data-sharing solution which led them to examine the WIAC's previous call for DOL to support the capacity of state agencies to carry out evidence-based policymaking, further referencing the evidence-based policymaking recommendations that identified the vehicle for data sharing as a National Secure Data Service (NSDS). **MS. HIRSCH** shared that the subcommittee recommends the following:

1. Support immediate action to establish a NSDS.
  - Engage with and provide comment to OMB as it promulgates regulations.
  - Assign staff to participate in drafting and/or reviewing enabling legislation.
2. Articulate and advocate for the key principles that should be adhered to in its design.
  - Public-private partnership
  - Transparency and trust
  - Accessibility
  - Independence

- Legal authority/responsibility to acquire, protect, and link data
  - Scalable functionality
  - Sustainability
  - Oversight and accountability
  - Intergovernmental
  - Partner engagement and capacity-building
3. Commit to DOL's engagement with a newly established NSDS.
- Create a learning agenda for DOL that takes advantage of interagency and intergovernmental data sharing.
  - Recommend at least three high-impact data uses for NSDS pilot project, at least one of which with near-term benefits to workforce systems across the nation.
  - Dedicate portion of WDQI funding for NSDS projects.

### Worker and the Work Subcommittee Report

**Andrew Reamer**, George Washington Institute of Public Policy spoke for the Worker and the Work Subcommittee. **DR. REAMER** shared an overview of the subcommittee's focus on the disconnect between job vacancies and unemployed workers. He explained that the subcommittee's goal is to reduce the magnitude of disconnections between workers and work. The means of which can be achieved by improving accuracy, timeliness, and detail of various WLMi sources of opportunity at state and local levels. **DR. REAMER** shared that the subcommittee identified WLMi sources of opportunity as key focus areas to be examined further. **DR. REAMER** summarized the subcommittee's recommendations:

1. ETA and BLS to prepare a report for the Secretary's consideration on:
  - Potential data sources on workers' experiences and challenges in seeking and finding new jobs; and
  - Options for utilization of these data sources by DOL agencies, including BLS, ETA, Women's Bureau (WB), Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), and Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy (OASP).
2. ETA's Office of Unemployment Insurance (OUI), the Secretary's Office of Unemployment Insurance Modernization (OUM), and the Chief Evaluation Office (overseeing the Brandeis UI Research Center) to incorporate into award specifications, to the extent possible, the strategic expansion of state capacity to provide current, reliable UI data for use as economic indicators and in evidence-based policymaking.
3. ETA and BLS to prepare a memorandum for the Secretary describing in detail the potential value of the NLx Research Hub as an input to the WLMIS and proposing steps that the Department can take to realize that value.
4. BLS to:
  - Prepare an FY2024 budget initiative for the funds necessary to include greater geographic, industry, and occupational detail in monthly Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) data releases; and
  - Include state pre-release access to JOLTS data in the BLS/state programs cooperative agreement.
5. ETA to prepare an FY2024 budget initiative for the funds necessary to enable each state to collect and analyze detailed data on current job vacancies in targeted industries and occupations as needed and as a valuable complement to JOLTS.

## Large Group Discussion

**MS. FORLAND** facilitated the large group discussion on each subcommittees' initial recommendations and the prioritization of recommendations for further development.

**MS. FORLAND** reiterated the initial subcommittee recommendations as presented by the subcommittee chairs and encouraged the Council members to consider what the best priorities would be, looking ahead to the next few months.

**MS. FORLAND** presented the Council members with a poll consisting of each of the initial subcommittee recommendations as identified during the subcommittee reports. She instructed each Council member to select their top three recommendations that they would like to continue working on in a modified subcommittee structure.

**DR. REAMER** posed a question regarding the exercise, "Is it still an option to further develop these recommendations in the coming weeks and vote on them formally during a newly scheduled WIAC meeting?"

**MS. FORLAND** asked the Council members for feedback on **DR. REAMER's** proposed approach.

In the conversations that followed, the Council members and staff discussed the possibility of finalizing the initial recommendations from the Worker and the Work Subcommittee and the Data Sharing and Standardization Subcommittee. The Council members and staff also discussed the importance of identifying additional topics for further exploration and development throughout the next 6 months.

**MS. HIRSCH** and **DR. REAMER** expressed their preferences to finalize their subcommittees' recommendations and to have the opportunity to formally vote to approve them in the short term.

**MS. ZELLER** affirmed that the Skills Subcommittee recommendations do require further exploration and would not be ready to be formally voted on in the short term. She stated that the topic of skills could benefit from additional Council members' perspectives.

The Council members unanimously agreed to proceed with the plan to develop and finalize the initial recommendations as presented by the Worker and the Work Subcommittee and the Data Sharing and Standardization Subcommittee. The work will be done over the next two months and the recommendations will be voted on at the next full WIAC meeting which will be scheduled for April.

Before concluding the discussion, **MS. FORLAND** asked the Council members to consider how they would like to approach the work of writing and editing the two recommendations. **MS. FORLAND** suggested splitting into two working groups to facilitate the editing process.

**DR. REAMER** proposed not altering the existing subcommittees, but instead setting up a peer review subcommittee comprised of the three new Council members and the members of the Skills Subcommittee.

The Council members unanimously agreed on the Peer Review Subcommittee method for facilitating the editing of the two recommendations. It was also agreed upon that **MS. HIRSCH** and **DR. REAMER** would submit their respective draft recommendations to the Peer Review Subcommittee by March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

## Public Comment

**MR. RIETZKE** opened the platform for the public attendees to ask questions and provide comments and feedback. No public attendees requested to speak.

## Large Group Discussion: Looking Ahead

**MS. FORLAND** led the Council through the final exercise, the discussion of potential topics for future inquiry and the next steps needed to accomplish goals.

**MS. FORLAND** stated that based on the previous discussion it is clear that the topic of skills will be included in the compilation of topics for future inquiry. She advised the Council members to think about other topics they may be interested in pursuing for the remainder of 2022. **MS. FORLAND** also asked the Council members to examine ways in which they might be able to facilitate effective implementation considerations for recommendations the WIAC has already submitted.

In the discussion that followed, the Council members brainstormed a list of topic ideas for future inquiry and recommendation.

The detailed list topic ideas for future inquiry and recommendation are as follows:

- UI enhanced wage records
- Future of work: technology, contingent work arrangements, and remote Work
- LMI Funding
- Skills, open skills data-sharing, DOL hosted conference
- National Secure Data Service (NSDS)
- Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS)
- Job Vacancy
- Worker Experiences (mediating supply and demand)
- UI Claims Modernization
- NLx Research Hub
- Agenda planning subcommittee: LMI and Competitiveness Cross Agency WIAC Meeting
- Ask Us Panel: multi-statistical agency survey input
- Post pandemic effects: short and long term

Based on the list of 13 topic ideas, **MS. FORLAND** invited the Council members to vote on one topic they would most like to examine for future inquiry and recommendation.

The top three vote-getting topics are as follows:

- Skills, open skills data-sharing, DOL hosted conference
- Worker Experiences (mediating supply and demand)
- Post pandemic effects: short and long term

**MS. FORLAND** explained that in order to give individuals more time to consider the list of three topics, WIAC staff would follow up with the Council members in an email asking them to select the top choice they would most like to focus on, from the narrowed list of three topics. The result will be two working subcommittee groups based on the interested numbers.

## Closing and Next Steps

**MR. RIETZKE** reiterated the next steps for the WIAC's two-step path forward. He thanked the Council members for their attention and contributions throughout the meeting series.

The meeting was adjourned.