

Workforce Information Advisory Council

Summary of Virtual Meeting

October 25, 2022

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM ET

The Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC) was convened for a virtual meeting at 1:00 PM on Tuesday, October 25, 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 3:00 PM on Tuesday, October 25, 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 Department of Economic Opportunity

Tamika Ledbetter, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Adrienne Johnston, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

Dean Jones, Greenville County Workforce Development Board

James MacKay, MacKay Construction Services

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

Jennifer Zeller, Georgia Power

Members of the Council Not in Attendance

Daryl Bassett, Arkansas Department of Labor

Deborah Carlson, Texas Workforce Commission

Invited Speakers

Joelle Gamble, Chief Economist, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor

Staff

Steve Rietzke, Chief, DNPTTA, ETA (DFO)

Kirk Mueller, BLS

Don Haughton, ETA

Ken Robertson, BLS

Lucas Arbulu, ETA

Michael Wolf, BLS

Lauren Fairley, ETA

Cynthia Forland, Forland Consulting

Pam Frugoli, ETA

Annette Summers, The GA Team

Danielle Kittrell, ETA

Betsy Roberts, The GA Team

Julie Hatch, BLS

Others Attending for All or a Portion of the Meeting

Byron Archer, Ohio Department of Labor

Steve Betzold, Post-Secondary Advisors

Yufanyi Nshom, DOL ETA

D'Arcy Philips, Penn Hill Group

Tiffany Smith, DOL ETA

Subcommittees Reporting During this Meeting

Subcommittee One: Post Pandemic Effects

Tamika Ledbetter (Chair)

Daryl Bassett

Lesley Hirsch

James MacKay

Subcommittee Three: WLMI and Federal Industrial Policy

Andrew Reamer (Chair)

Proceedings: October 25, 2022 1:00 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 October meetings. **MR. RIETZKE** thanked the Council members and the Steering Committee for their work throughout the subcommittee meetings.

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

MR. MADSON recognized and thanked the newest Council members for their active engagement, especially as it relates to important and timely Workforce and Labor Market Information (WLMI) issues.

MR. RIETZKE acknowledged and welcomed the newest Council member, Mr. James MacKay, MacKay Construction Services. **MR. MACKAY** is representing national business organizations for the WIAC.

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

Leadership Remarks from Guest Speaker

MR. RIETZKE introduced Ms. Joelle Gamble, Chief Economist, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

Joelle Gamble, Chief Economist expressed her thanks to the members of the WIAC. **MS. GAMBLE** provided an overview of her role at DOL, how she uses labor market data, and thoughts on data and decision making.

MS. GAMBLE shared that primarily, she briefs the Secretary of Labor and DOL leadership on the state of the economy. She underscored the importance of interpreting and explaining departmental data releases to stakeholders, which is best facilitated through cross-agency interaction with the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury), the Council of Economic Advisors (CEA), and the National Economic Council (NEC). **MS. GAMBLE** also supports the DOL policy and regulatory agendas, both of which require WLMI data. She was pleased to hear that the WIAC is focusing on information about the workforce and affirmed how vital it is for influencing policy discourse, the policy process, and decision making. WLMI data can also be used to better understand where policy problems exist, and it is central to our understanding of the labor market and macro economy.

MS. GAMBLE concluded by emphasizing the importance of finding out how private sector data can be complimentary to the federal government, while responsibly protecting the privacy of the individuals where the data is coming from. **MS. GAMBLE** shared that she, DOL, and the Administration are looking forward to hearing more about the WIAC's conversations on the labor market and its workers.

MR. RIETZKE thanked **MS. GAMBLE** for her time and informative remarks.

Opening Statements and Post Pandemic Effects Subcommittee Presentation

Tamika Ledbetter, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development; and **Lesley Hirsch**, New Jersey Department of Labor spoke for the Post Pandemic Effects Subcommittee.

DR. LEDBETTER provided opening statements and introduced the members of the subcommittee. She provided an overview of the subcommittee's focus on the declining trend of labor force participation rates. She stated that the subcommittee identified two areas of opportunity to reverse this trend and maximize labor force participation.

MS. HIRSCH reported on the first recommendation: *Develop WLMI Data Infrastructure to Better Understand and Address Declining Labor Force Participation*. She explained that the labor force participation rate measures the proportion of working-age people who are working or are available to work as a percentage of the total working-age population; identified several perspectives as to why it is important to reverse this trend; and shared how the Current Population Survey (CPS) is one of the few tools that can provide insight into the underlying reasons for falling labor force participation rates.

MS. HIRSCH summarized the subcommittee's corresponding actions to be taken:

1. Stakeholder discussions
 - Undertake a listening tour to identify gaps in existing labor market information that impede our understanding of labor force participation and data holdings that may address those gaps.
 - Include state and federal health and human services agencies, the Federal Reserve system, think tanks and advocacy organizations, and a cross-section of state, tribal, and local governments.
2. Qualitative research
 - Invest in in-depth qualitative research to identify why individuals leave the labor force and why they remain out of the labor force.
 - Competitive bidding process for focus groups organized by need, region, and/or population group.
3. Add questions to the CPS and increase non-participant sample size
 - Consider adding questions to the March supplement to the CPS and adjusting the sampling strategy to ensure better coverage of individuals not in the labor force.
4. Invite states to contribute to increasing sample size to meet subnational data needs
 - Work with the Department of Commerce (DOC) to have the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Census Bureau (Census) invite states to contribute financially to increasing their CPS sample sizes to leverage benefits of the survey.
5. Fund efforts to assemble a data system focused on answering questions about labor force non-participation
 - Using input from the stakeholder discussions, fund projects that assess the feasibility of combining existing and alternate data sources and assemble longitudinal data systems that better respond to the workforce system's need to understand workers' movements in and out of the labor market.

DR. LEDBETTER reported on the second recommendation: *Encourage States to Conduct Marketing and Outreach Activities to Enhance Job/Career/Training Searches*. She discussed the need for states to invite eligible workers to enter the workforce and for national, state, and local LMI centers to provide job resources and knowledge to individuals seeking work and/or training.

DR. LEDBETTER summarized the subcommittee's corresponding actions to be taken:

1. Encourage state Unemployment Insurance (UI) offices to provide UI filers (not just recipients) information on job postings, training, and the location of an American Job Center (AJC) with perhaps even a contact name.
 - Provide multiple times through email or text messages to act as a catalyst to promote employment.
2. Encourage states to develop and implement marketing strategies to reach individuals who may be unemployed but not filed for UI and provide them with information on jobs, training, and the availability of the AJC's and the services they offer.
 - Similar marketing efforts should be developed to target individuals with disabilities, with a special emphasis to connect them with AJCs.
3. Encourage apprenticeship offices within the state to work with unions and trade schools to promote apprenticeship opportunities and trade school curriculum that can lead to lucrative careers.
 - Conducting outreach activities to students in their early high school years is important so students are aware of career options other than those that require a college education.
4. Encourage AJCs to conduct marketing and outreach activities.
 - Traditional marketing avenues and social media campaigns.

5. DOL and the state labor departments should conduct marketing and outreach activities to promote how partnerships with businesses to enhance their labor resources.
 - Stigma associated with labor departments only enforcing labor laws needs to be changed. By making businesses aware of the employment and training programs and other LMI resources available, labor departments can enhance the human resource component of business.

In the conversation that followed **Cynthia Forland**, Forland Consulting, encouraged the Council members to provide initial reactions to the Post Pandemic Effects Subcommittee presentation.

Julie Hatch, BLS, informed the Council that BLS is going to release an analysis about people not in the labor force, based on the most recent American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is the March supplement to the CPS that provides a more thorough examination into the reasons that people are not participating in the labor force.

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.

On October 3, 2022, prior to the meeting, an individual anonymously submitted a public comment on the Federal Register Online. The public comment read, "This meeting should make sure that all Americans who have been thrown out of a job because they refused to get this corrupt fraudulent vaccine that is a gene therapy that has never been properly tested and because they had a religious objection to the fetal cell in the vaccine should get their jobs back. There is no reason that the demon CDC agency and their fraudulent vaccine gene therapy that was never properly tested should be in people's bodies so that they die and are injured. There have been millions of Americans dying and injured from this deadly fake vaccine. This agency needs to show some truth and honesty and put the CDC in its place instead of going along with fraud and corruption. Too much corruption in the USA agencies these days. We need to fire the CDC and help honest Americans who were right in refusing this fraudulent gene therapy pushed and propagandized by the CDC, NIH. This comment is for the public record."

Large Group Discussion

MS. FORLAND facilitated the large group discussion on the reactions to the Post Pandemic Effects Subcommittee presentation. She encouraged the Council members to contemplate the key points and ideas shared by **DR. LEDBETTER** and **MS. HIRSCH**. **MS. FORLAND** asked the Council members for their thoughts on the direction they think the WIAC should move forward in regarding the topics of labor force participation rates, data, and marketing and outreach.

In the discussion that followed, the Council members asked questions and shared feedback on the subcommittee's potential recommendations.

The resulting feedback on the data infrastructure recommendation is as follows:

- Recommendation 1: Stakeholder discussions
 - Indicate who will be undertaking the listening tour of stakeholder discussions.
 - Consider who else needs to participate in the listening tour (i.e., the participants who are most impacted by this research).
 - Should this be framed as a research exercise or a political exercise?
 - RFI

- Should state departments of labor be the convenors?
- Will the stakeholder discussions be private, or will media be invited?
- Recommendation 2: Qualitative research
 - Nonparticipation challenge. How do you talk to people who aren't engaged with the system?
 - Outreach and communication strategy.
 - Identify who, in DOL, should carry out the qualitative research.
- Recommendation 3: Add questions to the CPS
 - Consider alternative supplements to add questions to.
 - Should businesses be included?

The resulting feedback on the marketing and outreach recommendation is as follows:

- Reconsider the framing of tying labor force participation responsibility to the public system
- Consider the role of private partners to pull people back into the labor market

WLMI and Federal Industrial Policy Subcommittee Presentation

DR. REAMER provided an overview of his work focusing on the role of the federal government in policies and programs that enhance the ability of American-based firms to participate in global markets. He explained that since January 2021, the White House National Security Council and the National Economic Council have said that for purposes of national security, the nation needs an industrial strategy that effectively promotes the competitiveness of key U.S.-based industries in global markets.

DR. REAMER identified the following recommendation for the WIAC to consider: The WIAC recommends that the Secretary of Labor encourage ETA and BLS to facilitate government-wide use of their WLMI resources in policies and programs aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of key U.S.-based industries in global markets.

DR. REAMER shared his draft recommendation with the Council members prior to the meeting. He tasked them with reviewing the draft recommendation document to prepare for discussion on this recommendation at the next meeting.

Closing and Next Steps

MR. RIETZKE thanked the Council members for their attention and contributions throughout the meeting. He shared that content discussion of **DR. REAMER's** recommendation and the Worker Experience and Skills Subcommittee presentation will take place during the October 27th meeting.

MR. MADSON stated that the subcommittees are on track and the next step is to synthesize the recommendations into a unified whole.

The meeting was adjourned.