

SECRETARY OF LABOR
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20210

March 24, 2022

Dear Workforce Information Advisory Council Members:

Thank you for submitting your report entitled “Many Americans are Struggling and Need Better Information to Make a Comeback.” I also thank all past and present members for their participation and leadership in coordinating and guiding the work of the Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC).

The Department of Labor (Department) will consider the recommendations provided in the report as it helps the nation continue its economic recovery and as we develop the two-year plan to improve the workforce and labor market information (WLMI) systems. I understand the importance of these recommendations to the workforce system and to American workers seeking to re-engage with or advance in the labor market.

The Department provides the following responses to the recommendations in your report.

Recommendation 1. Advocate for the Adoption of Enhanced Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Records by including Information on the Occupational Job Title(s), Hours Worked, and Job Site Location

The Department will continue consulting with workers, businesses, states, and other non-profits to better understand the concerns about and benefits of enhanced UI wage records before making a decision about whether to pursue future action. One area the Department seeks to better understand is the extent to which enhanced wage records, when combined with other information sources, like claims records, can improve our understanding of equity in the UI system.

Recommendation 2. Improve Data and Information on the Changing Nature of Work through a DOL Working Group

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy has convened a cross-Department working group on the Future of Workers, which includes workstreams related to changing employment structures and the classification of workers; the impact of technology on workers and working conditions; and training and job quality. Part of this effort involves better understanding data collection opportunities, including those around changing working conditions.

Recommendation 3. Adequately Fund State Workforce and Labor Market Information Infrastructure to Meet 21st Century Demands for Data-Driven Decision-Making

The Department appreciates WIAC’s recommendation to adequately fund state workforce and labor market information infrastructure and agrees that substantially more investment is needed in this area. The Administration strongly supports passage of the Build Back Better Act, which

would include substantial investment in the improvement of WLMI systems across the country. Beyond this proposed investment, the Department will consider this recommendation for additional funding along with the Administration's budget policy and priorities.

The actions the Department will undertake based upon your recommendations will provide needed improvement to the WLMI systems at the local, state, and national levels. Should you have any questions, please contact Steve Rietzke, the WIAC's Designated Federal Officer and Division Chief for ETA's Division of National Programs, Tools, and Technical Assistance at (202) 693-3912 or Rietzke.Steven@dol.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martin J. Walsh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

MARTIN J. WALSH
Secretary of Labor