

Workforce Information Advisory Council

Summary of In Person Meeting

January 24, 2023

1:00 PM – 5:00 PM ET

The Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC) was convened for an in-person meeting at 1:00 PM on Tuesday, January 24, 2023. 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 5:00 PM on Tuesday, January 24, 2023.

In Attendance:

Members of the Workforce Information Advisory Council

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

Daryl Bassett, Arkansas Department of Labor

Deborah Carlson, Texas Workforce Commission

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

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 Community & Economic Development

Members of the Council Not in Attendance

Adrienne Johnston, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

Tamika Ledbetter, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Invited Speakers

William Beach, Commissioner, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

Chike Aguh, Chief Innovation Officer, Office of the Deputy Secretary (ODS), DOL

Kim Vitelli, Administrator, ETA, Office of Workforce Investment (OWI)

Staff

Steve Rietzke, Chief, DNPTTA, ETA (DFO)

Kirk Mueller, BLS

Don Haughton, ETA

Ken Robertson, BLS

Lucas Arbulu, ETA

Cynthia Forland, Forland Consulting

Lauren Fairley, ETA

Annette Summers, The GA Team

Pam Frugoli, ETA

Torrie Nickerson, The GA Team

Danielle Kittrell, ETA

Betsy Roberts, The GA Team

Julie Hatch, BLS

Others Attending for All or a Portion of the Meeting

Kengatta Callen, Coconino County, Arizona Workforce Development Board

Lauren DeNinno, Western Governors Association

Veronica Gielazauskas, Missouri Economic Research & Information Center

Yufanyi Nshom, DOL ETA

Tiffany Smith, DOL ETA

Subcommittees Reporting During this Meeting

Subcommittee One: Post Pandemic Effects

Tamika Ledbetter (Chair)

Daryl Bassett

Lesley Hirsch

James MacKay

Subcommittee Two: Worker Experiences and Skills

David Schmidt (Chair)

Alicia Crouch

Dean Jones

Bruce Madson

Chelsea Mason-Placek

Jennifer Zeller

Subcommittee Three: Federal Industrial Policy

Andrew Reamer (Chair)

Proceedings: January 24, 2023 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 January meetings. **MR. RIETZKE** thanked the Council members, subcommittees, and steering committee for their work throughout the subcommittee meetings and planning sessions. He also thanked the Council members for traveling to Washington, D.C. to participate in the in-person meeting.

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

MR. MADSON greeted the meeting attendees. He reflected on the difficulties of keeping momentum going in the virtual world and expressed his excitement for the week of in-person meetings.

The Council members, staff, and public attendees who were present at the meeting introduced themselves.

Leadership Remarks from Guest Speakers

MR. RIETZKE introduced Dr. William W. Beach, Commissioner, BLS.

William W. Beach, Commissioner expressed gratitude to the members of the WIAC for their service to the Council and to the country. **DR. BEACH** made special mention of the four Council members who served two consecutive terms: Bruce Madson, Andrew Reamer, Jennifer Zeller, and Chelsea Mason-Placek.

DR. BEACH provided a synopsis of the immense and extraordinary changes that began to take place in the labor market in March 2020 as a direct result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. He noted that for the first time in its history, BLS's monthly Employment Situation Summary was not capturing the relevant information needed to understand the changes in the labor market and the economy. In order for local, state, and federal policy makers to provide aid to states quickly and to prevent the crisis from getting worse, they needed timelier information. A monthly report was no longer sufficient. **DR. BEACH** emphasized the importance of individualized local solutions and how those solutions varied depending on the economic base of the respective county, city, or state.

DR. BEACH concluded by underscoring the need for a functionally integrated labor market information (LMI) system in the United States. He challenged the Council to explore how a statistical ecosystem can evolve and function and encouraged the Council to put this at the forefront of the WIAC's work.

MR. RIETZKE thanked **DR. BEACH** for his time and informative remarks.

MR. RIETZKE introduced Mr. Chike Aguh, Chief Innovation Officer, ODS, DOL.

Chike Aguh, Chief Innovation Officer, thanked the ETA and BLS staff and the Council Members for the critical work they do. **MR. AGUH** echoed the sentiments of **DR. BEACH** and stressed the importance of the WIAC's work in better preparing the country, economically, for a future crisis by understanding what the crisis is, where it is happening, and how to respond. **MR. AGUH** shared that he sought to work with the Commissioner on a regular basis to prioritize how to prepare for the next economic crisis and how to identify and help large parts of the U.S. population that have been suffering crisis-like economic impacts for generations prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

MR. AGUH outlined three priorities, set forth by Deputy Secretary of Labor, Julie Su, and how those priorities can inform and compliment the work of the WIAC. The priorities are as follows:

- Modernize the LMI system.
 - Inform the federal government on what is unknown.
 - State LMI partners can tell the federal government what they need.
- Enterprise Data Strategy.
 - How to make data accessible.
- U.S. Infrastructure Modernization and \$2 Trillion Investment
 - State LMI partners are critical in helping to identify the future workforce.

In conclusion, **MR. AGUH** charged the Council with making bold and precise recommendations that will challenge DOL.

MR. RIETZKE thanked **MR. AGUH** for his time and informative remarks.

MR. RIETZKE introduced Ms. Kim Vitelli, Administrator, ETA, OWI.

Kim Vitelli, Administrator, brought greetings from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Brent Parton. **MS. VITELLI** thanked the WIAC members for their service and for the work they do in their careers. She has seen firsthand, the impact the WIAC has had on day-to-day conversations within the department, and she confirmed that DOL leadership is taking the Council's input seriously and it has led to exciting and practical conversations.

MS. VITELLI provided an overview on topics at the forefront of current discussions at ETA. She shared that the agency is at an exciting pivot point in the labor market where they can help people get better jobs than they had prior to the pandemic. Due to the passing of once-in-a-generation investments like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, American Manufacturing Act, and CHIPS and Science Act, DOL can now open new career pathways for workers who have been left behind. **MS. VITELLI** named additional elements that ETA is working on and attempting to inject into the economy and the workforce system. For example, rooting workforce investment activities in sector strategies that bring together multiple businesses or industry associations, workforce and education partners in economic development, and workers to build training and experiences that result in the skills and competencies that are needed in specific industries.

MS. VITELLI concluded by sharing that the agency is available as a resource to the WIAC as they continue to work on their recommendations.

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

Review of WIAC Charter, Past Recommendations, and WLMI Updates

MR. RIETZKE led the Council through the exercise of reviewing the WIAC Charter. He shared the WIAC Charter on the screen and provided historical context on the formation of the committee. The committee was mandated by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 and reports to the Secretary of Labor through the Assistant Secretary for ETA and the Commissioner of Labor Statistics. **MR. RIETZKE** provided an overview of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) requirements; the objectives and scope of activities; description of duties; and membership designations, terms, and requirements.

MR. RIETZKE reminded the Council members that their recommendations are intended to advise the Secretary of Labor on how the workforce and labor market information system can best support workforce development, planning, and program development. It is advisable to keep the scope of the recommendations focused closely on topics that fall within the sphere of influence of the Secretary of Labor. **MR. RIETZKE** acknowledged that recommendations that only generally recommend improvements to the workforce development system are beyond the scope of the WIAC's description of duties. Rather, the recommendations should focus on how the WLMI system can specifically support workforce development, planning, and program development.

MR. RIETZKE shared that the Council members' terms end on March 9, 2023. He encouraged the members who have not served two consecutive terms to consider serving again. The Federal Register Notice is currently open and closes on February 27, 2023. **MR. RIETZKE** asked the Council members to consider their broader call to action and questions on scope over the course of the next two meeting days, leading up to the discussion on what the next iteration of the WIAC could focus on.

A copy of the signed WIAC charter is available at:

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/wioa/pdfs/WIAC%20Charter%202021%20Signed.pdf>

Cynthia Forland, Forland Consulting, provided an overview of the WIAC's recommendation reports to the Secretary of Labor from January 2018, August 2021, and May 2022.

MS. FORLAND made note of several topic ideas that appeared in past recommendations that segway into the WIAC's current work. For example, enhance unemployment insurance (UI) wage records; information on occupations, skills and credentials; increase support for the states' roles in the WLMI system; overcome barriers to data sharing; create a 21st Century WLMI system using advanced technologies; and identification of the worker experience through public and private data sources.

A copy of the WIAC's January 2018 Recommendation Report is available at:

https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/wioa/pdfs/WIAC_Recommendations_Report_2018-01-25_Final_and_Signed.pdf

A copy of the WIAC's August 2021 Recommendation Report is available at:

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/wioa/pdfs/WIAC%20Recommendations%20for%20the%20Secretary%202021.pdf>

A copy of the WIAC's May 2022 Recommendation Report is available at:

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/wioa/pdfs/WIAC%20Recommendations%20for%20the%20Secretary%20May%202022.pdf>

Andrew Reamer, George Washington University, provided the Council with an update on recent WLMI activities. He shared a document that outlined various initiatives and activities that are influencing the WLMI system.

DR. REAMER stated that as of late, the federal government is entering the business of industrial policy. The federal government is looking across industries to shape the demand for work as it focuses on national economic development.

A copy of the document outlining recent WLMI activities is available at:

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/wioa/pdfs/Recent%20WLMI%20Activities.pdf>

Discussion of Draft Recommendations

MS. FORLAND facilitated the review of each subcommittee's draft recommendations. She called upon each subcommittee chair to summarize their recommendations.

In the discussions that followed each recommendation summary, the Council members provided immediate thoughts, comments, and feedback on each recommendation draft.

Page 2 of these minutes provides a listing of each subcommittee.

Labor Force Participation Subcommittee Report

David Schmidt, Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation spoke for the Labor Force Participation Subcommittee. **MR. SCHMIDT** provided background information on the subcommittee's focus on the crisis of record-low labor force participation rates and the difficulties matching workers with employers and vice versa. **MR. SCHMIDT** drew parallels to **DR. BEACH** and **MR. AGUH's** comments. He shared that the data that is currently available is not sufficiently detailed or granular to uncover how individuals move in and out of the labor force over time. Without accurate information on individuals who are available for work, but are not currently searching, the workforce system cannot accurately or effectively conduct outreach to these individuals, nor can policy interventions or employer-driven strategies be devised that address the underlying reasons for their nonparticipation.

MR. SCHMIDT outlined the broad range of parties that are impacted by the lack of sufficient information, including: individuals, women and other demographic subgroups, society as a whole, and international competitiveness. He stated that the current sources of data on labor force participation are the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the American Community Survey (ACS), and he described the limitations of each.

MR. SCHMIDT summarized the subcommittee's recommendations:

1. The WIAC recommends that the Secretary direct the Bureau of Labor Statistics to publish additional demographic data from the existing Current Population Survey about individuals who are nonparticipants but indicate that they want to work.
2. The WIAC recommends that the Secretary direct the Bureau of Labor Statistics to investigate opportunities to expand the data that can be published about reasons for nonparticipation that are collected and categorized under "Other."
3. The WIAC recommends that the Secretary explore opportunities to expand the questions in the Current Population Statistics survey or supplemental surveys to capture additional details about labor force nonparticipation, particularly for individuals who report that they want a job.
4. The WIAC recommends that the Secretary invest in in-depth qualitative research to identify, update, and refine understanding of the reasons why individuals leave the labor force and why they remain out of the labor force. This could take the form of a competitive bidding process for focus groups organized by need, region, and/or population group. Such research should embrace principles of qualitative research that facilitate self-identification of issues and problems from among the respondents.
5. The WIAC recommends that the Secretary fund efforts to assemble a data system focused on answering questions about labor force non-participation. Such a system should consider the feasibility of combining existing and alternate data sources to assemble longitudinal data systems that reflect the workforce

system's need to understand people's journeys into and out of the labor market and the underlying reasons, barriers, and opportunities for workforce system intervention to promote success for all workers.

6. The WIAC recommends that the Secretary engage in stakeholder discussions to identify gaps in existing labor market information that impede our understanding of labor force. This may include state and federal health and human services agencies, the Federal Reserve system, think tanks and advocacy organizations focused on the dynamics of labor force participation, and a cross-section of state, tribal, and local governments.
7. The WIAC recommends that the Secretary direct the Bureau of Labor Statistics to examine the feasibility of a system where states may provide funds to increase CPS sample size so that they may leverage the benefits of the survey as it currently stands as well as the new questions to address labor force non-participation.

Post Pandemic Marketing and Outreach Subcommittee Report

MR. SCHMIDT also spoke for the Post Pandemic Marketing and Outreach Subcommittee. The subcommittee chair, **Dr. Tamika Ledbetter, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development**, was unable to attend the meeting.

MR. SCHMIDT provided background and context on the recommendation. The specific idea focuses on the fact that workers and potential workers do not always know that WLMI resources exist or where to find them. The recommendation aims to support the efforts of state and local WLMI systems by pursuing marketing and outreach to the broader community.

MR. SCHMIDT summarized the subcommittee's recommendations:

1. Provide UI filers (not just recipients) information on job postings, training, and the location of an American Job Center (with perhaps even a contact name at the AJC). This information should be provided multiple times either through email or text messages to act as a catalyst to promote employment.
2. Utilize existing LMI to implement focused marketing strategies to reach those individuals who may be unemployed but have 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 also be developed to target individuals with disabilities, with a special emphasis to connect them with AJCs so they can have access to the wide range of services an AJC can provide.
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. Contacting high schools and 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 utilize social media or other non-traditional means to conduct marketing and outreach activities to reach populations that may not be responsive to traditional outreach efforts.
5. Both the US Department of Labor and the state Labor departments should conduct marketing and outreach activities specifically targeted to promote how Labor departments can use WLMI with employers to enhance their recruitment, hiring and retention. By making employers more aware of the types of business concerns that can be addressed by Labor departments, and the AJC resources, Labor departments can provide a value-added service to enhance the human resource component of business.

Industrial Policy Subcommittee Report

DR. REAMER worked independently and spoke for the Industrial Policy Subcommittee. He provided background information on the topic area of industrial policy. The goal of industrial policy is to design and implement policies that support the competitiveness of American based industries in global markets.

Congress has passed five bills that collectively authorize the Biden Administration to take substantial steps forward in the design and implementation of industrial policies. The bills are as follows: FY2022 Omnibus Appropriations Act, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act, the CHIPS and Science Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the FY2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act. As with the supply chain assessments, the industrial policies, strategies, and programs called for in each of these laws include efforts to see that employers gain adequate access to workers with the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to be competitive.

DR. REAMER shared that to access to these workers and well-functioning labor markets and education and training markets are needed. **DR. REAMER** provided examples of instances in which Congress and the Biden Administration are directing efforts to facilitate such markets.

DR. REAMER summarized the recommendations:

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. The WIAC specifically recommends that the Secretary direct ETA and BLS to:

1. Create a comprehensive list of agencies with a workforce component of an industrial strategy effort;
2. Ensure that these agencies are fully aware of DOL's WLMI resources and how to access and use them;
and
3. Seek to understand what improvements and adjustments, if any, these agencies would like so that they might make more productive use of the WLMI resources.

Closing and Next Steps

MR. RIETZKE thanked the Council members for their attention and contributions throughout the meeting. **MS. FORLAND** asked the Council members to review the draft recommendations overnight in order to prepare for editing during tomorrow's meeting. She reminded them of **MR. AGUH's** inspirational comments to "be bold and precise" as they consider prioritizing the recommendations.

The meeting was adjourned.