

June 17, 2024

Steven Rietzke
Chief, Division of National Programs,
Tools, and Technical Assistance
Employment and Training Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Ave. NW
Room C-4510
Washington, DC 20210

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

Dear Mr. Rietzke:

On behalf of SHRM, I write in response to the May 31, 2024, Federal Register Notice providing an opportunity to comment on issues being discussed at the upcoming June 26-27, 2024, virtual meeting of the Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC).

SHRM is the foremost expert, researcher, advocate, and thought leader on issues and innovations impacting today's evolving workplaces. With nearly 340,000 members in 180 countries, SHRM touches the lives of more than 362 million workers and their families globally.

WIAC's work, including how to evaluate and improve the nationwide workforce and labor market information systems, is critically important to human resource (HR) professionals, for several reasons. First, HR professionals frequently collaborate with the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and state statistical agencies, which collect data that informs employment projection forecasts and analyses. HR professionals also rely on high-quality workforce and labor market information (WLMI) to help understand labor and wage market trends and the dynamics of their broader industry, as well as to make informed business decisions.

As such, SHRM supports streamlining and improving the process of collecting data to ensure it is efficient for all parties involved. Today, jobs and the specific skills being demanded by employers are changing at an unprecedented rate. According to SHRM's 2024 Talent Trends Survey, over 3 in 4 organizations have had difficulty recruiting for full-time and regular positions in the last 12 months, and 1 in 4 organizations report that full-time regular positions they've hired for have required new skills.

As a result, it is critical that employers, workers, and prospective workers have an accurate and timely pulse on current and future trends in our ever-changing labor market. However, our current federal labor market system is struggling to keep up. Too often, data fails to accurately reflect the realities and intricacies of the labor market—particularly with respect to in-demand skills. Furthermore, our federal WLMI systems often fail to provide employers and HR professionals with timely or geographically relevant information that is most useful.

SHRM recognizes that these challenges are also recognized by the Members of the WIAC, and we appreciate how the upcoming meeting agenda includes the consideration of ways to improve the current system, including (1) using data more effectively to advance key policy goals, (2) identifying opportunities for and overcoming barriers to increased data sharing, (3) improving access to and presentation of data for customers, and (4) expanding and improving the currency and relevance of data on skills.

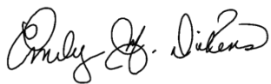
We also appreciate the WIAC's prior work to identify issues and develop policy proposals to address these challenges, including the 2017 informational report [*Challenges and Opportunities in Workforce and Labor Market Information*](#) and the 2023 report [*Recommendations to Improve the Workforce and Labor Market Information System*](#).

SHRM urges the WIAC to impress upon the Department of Labor (DOL) the importance of ensuring these recommendations and other commonsense improvements to our nation's WMLI system go beyond updated reports and are instead implemented into current practice.

We think this should include urging the DOL to prioritize working with Congress in the coming months to advance necessary, bipartisan efforts to reauthorize the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). H.R. 6655, A Stronger Workforce for America Act, passed in the House by an overwhelming margin earlier this year and makes commonsense improvements to WMLI, including SHRM-supported language that requires the provision of "real-time trends in new and emerging occupational roles and in new and emerging skills by occupation and industry, with particular attention paid to State and local conditions."

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these issues. SHRM looks forward to learning more about WIAC's goals and priorities during the upcoming meeting. SHRM stands ready to collaborate with the WIAC to ensure WLMI accurately reflects workforce trends and informs data-driven decision-making.

Sincerely,



Emily M. Dickens, J.D.
Chief of Staff, Head of Government Affairs, and Corporate Secretary
SHRM