

Workforce Information Advisory Council

Summary of Meeting
Virtual Meeting and Conference Call
2:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. EST
January 11, 2018

The Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC) convened for a virtual meeting and conference call at 2:00 P.M. on January 11, 2018. 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), and Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Council, convened the meeting, which was open to the public in its entirety. Council Chair Cynthia Forland facilitated the meeting.

In Attendance

Members of the Workforce Information Advisory Council

Cynthia Forland, Washington State Employment Security Department (chair)

Aaron Fichtner, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Bruce Madson, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Mathew Barewicz, Vermont Department of Labor

Angela Pate, University of Florida Startup Quest, OwnForce, Inc.

Jennifer Zeller, Georgia Power, Community and Economic Development Department

Mark McKeen, General Motors

Chelsea Orvella, Society of Prof. Engineering Employees in Aerospace, IFPTE Local 2001

Bruce Ferguson, CareerSource of Northeast Florida

Andrew Reamer, George Washington University

Staff

Steve Rietzke, Chief, DNPTTA, ETA (DFO)	Ruth Peebles, The INS Group, LLC
Mike DeMale, ETA	Donald Palmer, Jr., The INS Group, LLC
Don Haughton, ETA	Michelle Serrano, The INS Group, LLC
Robert Viegas, ETA	Kristin Thompson, The INS Group, LLC
Mike Horrigan, Office of Employment and Unemployment Statistics (OEUS), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)	Lester Coffey, Coffey Consulting, LLC
Rebecca Rust, BLS	Roger Therrien, Coffey Consulting, LLC
	Dani Abdullah, Coffey Consulting, LLC
	Mason Erwin, Coffey Consulting, LLC
	JJ Ketchum, Coffey Consulting, LLC

Attendees Offering Comments

Christina Peña, Workforce Data Quality Campaign (WDQC)

Others Attending All or a Portion of the Meeting

Christine Quinn, ETA, Chicago Region 5
Doug Holmes, UWC – Strategic Services on Unemployment & Workers’ Compensation
Yvette Chocolaad, National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA)
Kevin Naud, NASWA
Emma Northcott, NASWA
Jim Van Erden, NASWA
Lindsay Johnson, Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC) and LMI Institute
John Marotta, CREC/Projections Managing Partnership
Robert Demichelis II

(Members of the public in attendance were asked to identify themselves and their respective organizational affiliations. Where affiliations are not noted, it is because they were not provided by the attendee.)

Proceedings

Welcome/Approval of Meeting Minutes of November 1-2, 2017

MS. FORLAND opened the meeting by welcoming attendees and expressing excitement about the draft of the Council’s Recommendations to Improve the Nation’s Workforce and Labor Market Information System to be discussed during the meeting.

MR. RIETZKE thanked the attendees and offered introductory remarks, reminding the attendees that this meeting was the first of two January meetings, with the second to be

convened two weeks hence, on January 25. He noted that the primary purpose of the meeting was to review the draft of the recommendations report and receive a last round of input. He expressed that the goal was to have final recommendations to approve at the January 25 meeting. He requested that attendees participating via Adobe Connect type their names and organizations into the chat window and that members state their names when commenting, for record-keeping purposes.

Regarding the public comment period, **MR. RIETZKE** indicated that **CHRISTINA PEÑA**, representing WQDC, asked to address the Council. He requested that members of the public hold their questions and comments until the public comment period and noted that urgent comment could be entered into the chat window.

MR. RIETZKE then requested final comments and approval of the minutes from the Council's meeting on November 1-2, 2017. The Council approved the minutes by voice vote, contingent upon the inclusion of certain comments circulated by **MS. PATE**.

Recommendations to the Secretary

MS. FORLAND opened the discussion of the Recommendations to the Secretary with a summary of the sections of the Recommendations document and the plan to discuss and approve each section in turn. First turning to the introductory letter to the Secretary, **MS. FORLAND** reviewed the content of the letter and the present thinking of the subcommittee chairs that, due to the turnover in WIAC membership throughout the process of developing the Recommendations, the letter should be signed solely by the chair. She solicited input on both the content of the letter and the proposal for a single signature. The members voiced their approval for both. **MS. FORLAND** asked for additional comments on the letter. **MR. RIETZKE** noted a correction in the first line: change "Opportunities" to "Opportunity."

MS. FORLAND then reviewed the second page, listing current and former members who worked on the report. **DR. REAMER** asked whether there was a reason for not including former member **GRAHAM SLATER**. **MS. FORLAND** replied that the work on the Recommendations occurred after his resignation, whereas the other former members were involved in the development of the Recommendations.

Regarding the format of the list, **DR. REAMER** suggested presenting the third column first, to emphasize both that the members represent the designated constituencies and that the Council is not a political body. **MS. PATE** suggested listing the representatives of the private-sector organizations first, to emphasize that the private sector has input.

MR. HAUGHTON suggested a notation that **BRENDA LISBON** had retired and was no longer a member of the Council.

DR. REAMER requested that the name of his organization be updated to "George Washington University."

MS. ZELLER suggested adding her department's name to her employer, noting that she works for the Community and Economic Development Department within Georgia Power and that the question of her association arises whenever she speaks on economic development. **MR. RIETZKE** concurred.

MS. FORLAND summarized the changes to the list of contributing members: move the third column first, move the private-sector organizations to the top of the list, note **MS. LISBON'S** retirement, and update **DR. REAMER'S** and **MS. ZELLER'S** organization names.

Moving to the Introduction, **MS. FORLAND** reminded the group of the intention to keep the preamble brief in order to emphasize the recommendations. As such, she noted, the Introduction briefly introduces the WIAC, summarizes its statutory charter, and discusses the importance of workforce and labor market information (WLMI), before moving directly into a summary of the recommendations. **MS. FORLAND** then solicited feedback on the Introduction.

MR. MADSON asked for a correction of the term "evidenced-based."

MR. RIETZKE raised the question of the clarity of the phrase "in fulfillment of Secretary Acosta's directive," given that the Secretary had not issued a statement or order, and proposed referring instead to the WIAC Charter or the WIAC's mandate under WIOA. **DR. REAMER** noted that the language in question was a quote from the Charter, which the Secretary signed, and in which the Secretary describes what he wants the WIAC to do. He added that the footnote to the reference indicates that the quote was from the Charter. **MR. RIETZKE** and **MS. PATE** suggested that it would be helpful to state that the Secretary's directive was in the Charter. **MS. FORLAND** stated that, if a couple of people thought it was confusing, she would prefer to be explicit and suggested, "in fulfillment of Secretary Acosta's directive within the WIAC Charter."

MR. RIETZKE noted the group's agreement to retain Secretary Acosta's name in the sentence and to add a reference to the Charter.

MS. FORLAND turned the discussion to the summary of the recommendations and indicated that the subcommittee chairs had reordered them to reflect similarity or correlation in content or theme. She noted that the introduction to the summary points out that the Council was guided by objectives and priorities articulated in WIOA, as well as comments and written statements of both the Secretary and the President, in order to remind the Secretary of the basis and sourcing of the recommendations.

Beginning with Recommendations 1 and 2, **MS. FORLAND** reminded the members that the summaries provide concise statements of the recommendations, while the details are set out in the body of the report. She indicated that Recommendation 1 is presented first as a recognition of actions already under way in various states and of WIAC's focus on high-priority items as well as actionable items.

DR. HARRIGAN raised a question about Recommendation 1, which calls for enhancement of unemployment insurance (UI) wage records. He noted that BLS (and other) access to the wage records, although implicit in the recommendation, is not explicitly set out. **MS. FORLAND** indicated that wage record access is addressed in Recommendation 6, relating to Data Sharing. **DR. HARRIGAN** observed that the recommendation on data sharing is not express about access to wage records; it is more an endorsement of the Ryan Commission (Commission on Evidence-based Policymaking (CEP)) recommendations, and therefore more a general philosophical statement. **MS. ZELLER** noted that data access appeared in a previous version of the data sharing recommendation, but may have been removed in editing. **MS. FORLAND** confirmed that access to wage records had appeared in multiple recommendations and may have been erroneously edited out. She asked **DR. HARRIGAN** to raise the concern during discussion of the full-text Recommendations 1 and 6 and deferred detailed discussion until then. For consideration in the later discussion, **DR. REAMER** noted that wage record access is addressed on page 15, the second bullet from the bottom, and in the second bullet on page 14. In addition, **MR. RIETZKE** urged consideration of cross-referencing Recommendations 1 and 6, to clarify that one is dependent on the other.

MS. FORLAND then solicited comments on Recommendations 3 and 4. **MS. PATE** suggested incorporated the word “ongoing” into both recommendations, to be clear that the recommendations are not interpreted as proposing one-time events. **MS. FORLAND** suggested alternatively that Recommendation 3 be revised to include the words, “. . . develop, disseminate, and *regularly update* a K-12 career awareness program,” and Recommendation 4 to reflect, “. . . the *regular* collection of information.”

Moving to Recommendations 5 through 9, **MS. FORLAND** observed the need for a “.” at the end of the Recommendation 5 paragraph. She noted that the subcommittee chairs had located Recommendations 6 and 7 next to each other because they are related. She called for comments on the recommendations. **DR. HARRIGAN** asked for clarification of the goal of the one-day gathering proposed in Recommendation 9, and specifically whether it contemplated continued collaboration thereafter. **MS. FORLAND** replied that the group had considered recommending an advisory council or ongoing group, but were unsure of the appropriateness of such a recommendation. That said, the Council wanted to propose a concrete recommendation to promote collaboration among representatives of programs contributing to a well-functioning WLMI system. **DR. REAMER** elaborated that the discussion started with consideration of an interagency working group, but the group concluded that that might be a bridge too far. He pointed out, however, that the detailed write-up clarifies that the meeting set out in the recommendation is intended to lead to further collaboration. The issue, he stated, is that the relevant people do not know each other—or each other’s products—well, and the Council wanted to get them together and let them figure out the optimal direction to take.

MS. PATE noted that the Recommendation 9 summary implies that the recommendation contemplates only a one-day meeting and suggested revising it to propose “*an initial one-*

day gathering,” to clarify the intent for ongoing engagement. **DR. REAMER** pointed out that, because “initiate” is the verb in the first line, “initial” would be redundant and proposed the phrase “one-day organizational gathering.” **MS. FORLAND** proposed removing the emphasis from “one-day” and revising the recommendation to “convene a gathering.” The members concurred.

MS. FORLAND then introduced the discussion of the full recommendations, stating that the subcommittee chairs kept the length of each to two pages, with the goal being to provide enough information to understand the intent of the recommendation without burdening the description with too much detail. She elaborated that the Council had retained all the information that the subcommittees created and emphasized that the detailed write-ups created by each subcommittee retained their value, as they would be used in responding to the Secretary’s interest in specific recommendations.

MS. FORLAND opened discussion of Recommendation 1, “Enhance UI Wage Records,” turning to **DR. HARRIGAN** to discuss the concern raised earlier. **DR. HARRIGAN** requested an explicit acknowledgement that, in order to use the enhanced wage records, it was necessary to have access to the wage records. He clarified that the entities requiring such access were BLS, ETA, the Chief Evaluation Office, and, as appropriate, the Department of Education (ED). He stated that, because Recommendation 6 relies on the recommendations of the Ryan Commission, the access requirement is not explicit. In his view, Recommendation 1 is missing a sentence stating that a necessary requirement for using the enhanced data is access to the wage records. **DR. HARRIGAN** indicated that he had spoken to ETA and the Chief Evaluation Office, both of which supported the revision. **MS. RUST** noted that language recommending that DOL have access to the records had been included in earlier versions of the document. **MS. PATE** suggested adding a second sentence in the “Why This is Needed” section to the following effect: “Included in this need is access to these enhanced wage records by BLS, ETA, and the Chief Evaluation Office.”

MS. FORLAND queried whether, to keep it short, the first sentence in that section might be revised as follows: “The inclusion of additional data elements on wage records *and the sharing of those across state and federal agencies* would have many benefits. . . .”

Observing that the objectives of enhancement and access are separate, distinct, and complementary, **DR. REAMER** asked whether the best approach was to rewrite the recommendation to elevate and add the issue of access to make it co-equal with the issue of enhancement, or instead to make a secondary, supplemental reference to access within the enhancement recommendation.

MS. FORLAND stated her preference to address the access issue by expanding Recommendation 6, which already relates to data sharing, to include explicit access recommendations outside the structure of the CEP recommendations. She observed that there was a lot to be gained by enhancing the wage records, even if access is not increased, and wanted to retain that focus on enhancement in Recommendation 1.

DR. HERRIGAN voiced his support for providing more explicit access language in Recommendation 6. Highlighting the introductory sentence in the “How This Can Be Implemented” section of Recommendation 1, which calls for the Secretary to direct ETA and BLS jointly to lead the implementation effort with state participation, **DR. HERRIGAN** proposed adding a complementary provision to Recommendation 6, which would communicate that a critical ingredient to the recommendation is adding access to the wage records by ETA and BLS.

DR. REAMER suggested also including a reference to Recommendation 6 at the end of Recommendation 1. **MS. PATE** and **DR. HERRIGAN** supported the suggestion. **MS. ZELLER** confirmed that an earlier version of the document included the following two provisions: “. . . would recommend once it is collected, that it is shared (see related [Recommendation 6]),” and “. . . would also recommend ability for BLS to access state records.” **MS. RUST** suggested including ETA as well. **DR. HERRIGAN** indicated that he was in favor of including the organizations that WIAC represents: BLS, ETA, and the states.

Receiving concurrence on the suggested revisions from the membership, **MS. FORLAND** asked **DR. HERRIGAN** to send proposed language to **MR. RIETZKE** and **MR. HAUGHTON**. **DR. HERRIGAN** requested that **MS. ZELLER** forward the original language to him for consideration in his draft.

MS. FORLAND confirmed that there were no additional comments.

MS. FORLAND solicited comments on Recommendation 2, “Expand Information on Occupations, Skills, and Credentials.” No comments were offered.

MS. FORLAND noted that Recommendation 3, “Develop and Disseminate a K-12 Career Awareness Educational Framework,” would be revised to reflect the addition of “updating,” per **MS. PATE**’s earlier suggestion, and asked for additional comments. No comments were offered.

Regarding Recommendation 4, “Develop Information on the Changing Nature of Work,” **MS. FORLAND** noted that the recommendation would be edited to reflect **MS. PATE**’s earlier suggestion to add language clarifying the Council’s intent that production of the Contingent Worker Survey (CWS) would not be a one-time effort.

Noting that BLS was on record requesting funding to conduct the CWS every two years, **DR. HERRIGAN** verified that the intent of the recommendation was not for the survey to be conducted annually. In response to **MS. PATE**’s offer expressly to endorse BLS’s choice of timeframe, **DR. HERRIGAN** confirmed that the recommendation to conduct the survey “on a regular basis” was appropriate.

MS. FORLAND solicited comments on Recommendation 5, “Increase Support for the States’ Roles in the WLM System.” In the context of whether the chart on page 12 sufficiently supports the case, **MR. RIETZKE** asked whether it reflects nominal dollars or real dollars.

DR. REAMER stated that the chart reflects nominal dollars, but confirmed that it could be changed to real dollars. **MS. FORLAND** requested that it be adjusted for inflation, and **DR. REAMER** agreed to produce the updated chart.

Moving on to Recommendation 6, “Overcome Barriers to Data Sharing,” **MS. FORLAND** noted that the WIAC recommendation focuses heavily on the recommendations from the CEP, with emphasis on the CEP’s focus on state data. She asked **DR. HARRIGAN** to suggest how to revise the language.

DR. HARRIGAN stated that the sentence discussed previously in the Recommendation 1 comments will be helpful. He also suggested adding a specific statement regarding the states’ being able to share wage records among each other and with ETA and BLS. He acknowledged that the statement was consistent with the CEP recommendations, but recognized the value in stating it explicitly.

MS. FORLAND suggested enhancing the second implementation bullet to go beyond mere support of the CEP recommendations and proposed adding the following language, “. . . statistical purposes, *including among states and with BLS, ETA, and the Chief Evaluation Office.*” **MS. PATE** asked about including the Department of Education. **DR. HARRIGAN** indicated that, based on conversations with the ED, it was not clear what they wanted. **DR. REAMER** pointed out that ED is banned by Congress from putting together a nationwide student-unit record database, which would be needed to take advantage of enhanced wage records. He suggested not including ED, as it could raise issues unless and until the ban was removed. **MS. FORLAND** agreed and confirmed that the change would be made to bullet two in the implementation section.

MS. FORLAND asked for comments on Recommendation 7, “Improve Consistency and Availability of Program Evaluation Data.” **MR. MADSON** raised a question regarding the proposed designation of a state entity “for the provision” of WIOA workforce program participant outcomes, performance assessments and evaluations. He stated that many states outsource the provision of some of the enumerated services and queried whether such outsourcing would be consistent with the proposed language. **MS. FORLAND** suggested revising the language to designate the state entity “to oversee production” of the information. **MR. MADSON** agreed that the proposed language was a more accurate representation of the intent of the recommendation, as it allowed for other agencies to do the work, while just one would be designated to oversee the production.

MS. FORLAND solicited comments on Recommendation 8, “Create a 21st Century WLMI System Using Advanced Technologies.” No comments were offered.

MS. FORLAND stated that Recommendation 9, “Initiate Collaboration among WLMI System Agencies,” would be revised to delete reference to the “one-day” gathering, per the earlier discussion of the recommendation. **DR. REAMER** offered a change to the bullets in the box:

replace “State Higher Education Executive Officers Association” with “Education Commission of the States.”

MS. FORLAND turned the discussion to the Appendix, reminding the members that much of the content that might have resided in the Introduction—including the description of the WIAC, the Importance of WLMI, and the Development of Recommendations—had been moved to the Appendix in order to present the recommendations early in the document. In addition to the descriptions, she noted, the Appendix includes the WLMI system schematic and the footnotes—which were converted to endnotes so as to minimize interruption of the flow of the recommendations.

DR. REAMER suggested adding a footnote to the first sentence of page 22, citing the section of the law establishing the WIAC.

MS. FORLAND confirmed that the staff would make the specific edits discussed at the meeting and that an updated version would be circulated among members ahead of the meeting on January 25th, when the Council would vote to adopt the Recommendations.

Public Comments

MR. RIETZKE opened the floor for comments from members of the public and recognized Christina Peña of the Workforce Data Quality Campaign.

MS. PEÑA stated that WDQC agreed with many of the recommendations in the draft report and emphasized WDQC’s strong support for the Council’s recommendations to enhance the wage record and to improve credentials transparency.

MR. RIETZKE thanked **MS. PEÑA** for her comments and solicited additional comments from the public. No additional member of the public requested the floor.

Council Membership Update

MR. RIETZKE offered an update on Council membership. He stated that the Council had recently learned that **MS. LISBON** had retired and consequently resigned from the Council as of the first of the year. The nomination for **MR. SLATER’S** position and the solicitation for the other openings are still making their way through approvals. Because Council members may continue to serve beyond the expiration of their terms until a successor is appointed, the Council expects and hopes to continue with the current membership until there are new appointments.

New Business

DR. REAMER stated that the confirmation hearing for Bill Beech for BLS Commissioner was scheduled for today, but was postponed.

MR. RIETZKE indicated that there was no update on a nomination for Assistant Secretary of ETA. He confirmed that Deputy Assistant Secretary Rosemary Lahasky is heading things

up and that Gay Gilbert, Bill Thompson, and Nancy Rooney round out the current front office.

DR. REAMER inquired about earlier discussions about setting up a conversation with the Secretary's office when the Council delivers the recommendations. **MR. RIETZKE** indicated that he had brought it up, but that that appeared to be an atypical approach, so the consensus was that it would be more appropriate to present the recommendations through a full Council meeting in a public forum.

MR. RIETZKE reminded attendees that the next meeting, on January 25, would be held at the same time, 2:00-5:00 P.M.

DR. REAMER asked about Council activities after the January 25th meeting. **MS. FORLAND** referred to her plan to coordinate a meeting in the early Spring, around the BLS release of data related to alternative work arrangements.

DR. HARRIGAN requested a copy of the revised language for Recommendation 6 so that he could confirm its consistency with the new Recommendation 1 language.

MS. FORLAND offered brief concluding remarks and adjourned the meeting.