



Workforce Bulletin - June 13, 2014

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Senate Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Measure Passes Subcommittee, Full Committee Markup Postponed

On Tuesday, June 10, the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), Education (ED) and Related Agencies approved a \$156.7 billion discretionary spending bill that funds federal health, education and workforce programs, including the U.S. Department of Labor.

The Subcommittee markup was relatively short and no amendments were offered to the proposed bill. While the Chairman of the Subcommittee, Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), urged fellow lawmakers to support the bill as "a thoughtful approach to funding critical programs," the Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Senator Richard Shelby (R-AL) indicated he would not support the Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee bill due to its funding for health care

exchanges under the Affordable Care Act.

The text of the legislation was not released during the markup on Tuesday; however the Subcommittee provided a [summary of highlighted provisions](#). Listed below is a summary of workforce and unemployment insurance provisions provided in the document:

- **Reemployment and Eligibility Assessments and Reemployment Services (REA/RES)** – The Subcommittee bill proposes \$157.7 million for REA/RES, the same level requested in the Obama Administration’s proposed FY 2015 Budget Request. The amount allocated for REA/RES is approximately twice the amount of funding provided for these services in FY 2014, and according to the Subcommittee will result in a net savings of more than \$262 million.
- **Workforce Investment Act Grants** – The Subcommittee bill proposes increasing funding for Workforce Investment Act programs from \$2.58 billion in FY 2014 to \$2.62 billion in FY 2015, an increase of \$36 million. In its summary, the Subcommittee did not indicate whether or not there would be an increase in the WIA State Allocation, which was increased in FY 2014 from five percent to 8.75 percent.
- **Apprenticeship Programs** – The Subcommittee bill proposes \$35,000,000, an increase of \$5,000,000, (from the Administration’s request) to expand Registered Apprenticeship.

After the Subcommittee markup and passage of the legislation on Tuesday, the full Senate Committee on Appropriations was scheduled to markup and vote on the measure on Thursday, June 12; however it was cancelled, and in a brief interview, Senator Harkin said, “there are no plans” for when the markup would be rescheduled.

Senate Committee on Appropriations Chairwoman Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) said the reason for the postponement was, “there were very controversial amendments related to Affordable Care Act and scheduling issues.” There is a possibility that due to the controversial provisions contained in the Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee bill; it is unlikely the legislation will go to the full Committee and passage before the November mid-term Congressional elections.

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[NASWA Sends Letter in Support of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#)

On Friday, May 30, NASWA President Mark Henry (MS) sent a [letter](#) to members on the House Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions strongly supporting the enactment of the [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#)(WIOA), which was an agreement announced earlier in May by a bipartisan, bicameral group of lawmakers reauthorizing and overhauling the [Workforce Investment Act of 1998](#).

WIOA represents a compromise between the [SKILLS Act \(H.R. 803\)](#), which passed the House of Representatives in March 2013 and the [Workforce Investment Act of 2013 \(S. 1356\)](#), which passed through the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) with a bipartisan vote of 18-3 in July of 2013.

Primary bill sponsors include Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Chairman **Tom Harkin (D-IA)**, HELP Committee Ranking Member **Lamar Alexander (R-TN)**, Senate Committee on Budget Chairman and HELP Committee Member **Patty Murray (D-WA)**, Senate HELP Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety Ranking Member **Johnny Isakson (R-GA)**, House Committee on Education and the Workforce Chairman **John Kline (R-MN)**, House Committee on Education and the Workforce Ranking Member **George Miller (D-CA)**, House Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training Chairwoman **Virginia Foxx (R-NC)** and Ranking Member of the House Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training Ranking Member **Ruben Hinojosa (D-TX)**.

In the letter, NASWA praised the agreement, saying it “would modernize and improve existing federal workforce development programs, help workers attain skills for 21st century jobs, and foster the modern workforce critical for American businesses to remain competitive.” NASWA specifically expressed support for several of the following provisions contained in WIOA that would:

- Reauthorizes workforce programs;
- Retain the 15 percent WIA state allocation authorization;
- Retain and improve the Wagner-Peyser Act;
- Streamline or eliminate existing programs, such as the Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF);
- Restructure the Workforce Information Council (WIC);
- Reduce the number of required members on state and local workforce boards;

- Repeal the “sequence of services” provision; and
- Apply common performance measures to all federal workforce programs.

WIOA represents an informal conference agreement between the House’s H.R. 803 and the Senate’s S. 1356, and as such, will not require the new bill to go through each chamber’s respective authorizing Committee. The bill will be first considered in the Senate as an amendment to the House passed H.R. 803, where it is currently being “hotlined” among Senate offices for review. After Senators have reviewed the agreement, and if there are no objections by members, the agreement will then be able to go directly to the Senate floor. No specific date has been given as to when WIOA would be considered on the Senate floor, however staff have indicated the bill would likely not be considered until after the week of June 16 at the earliest. If the bill is able to pass the Senate, it will then go directly to the House floor for consideration.

For more information and resources on WIOA, please visit NASWA’s WIA Reauthorization Resource Center at <http://naswa.org/resources/WIA/?action=home&id=3>.

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Registration for the 78th NASWA Annual Conference Now Available!

NASWA and the Vermont Department of Labor are pleased to announce the 78th NASWA Annual Conference, which will be held September 17-19, 2014. For more information about the Conference as well as attendee, sponsor, exhibitor and vendor registration, please visit the Conference website at <http://www.naswa.org/meetings/vermont/>.

The Board of Directors will be meeting on Tuesday, September 16. The Annual Conference will start Wednesday morning, September 17, and conclude prior to noon on Friday, September 19. The Conference will be held at the Hilton Burlington Hotel on Lake Champlain in Burlington, Vermont. Information to make hotel reservations is available on the Conference website.

The Conference website includes an outline of the agenda. The agenda will be further developed in the next several weeks.

Please make your plans now to attend the 78th NASWA Annual Conference in Burlington, Vermont. Save the dates during the week of September 16-19, 2014.

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Make your Nominations for 2014 Salute to Leadership Awards Today!

Nominations are now being accepted for this year's Salute to the Leadership Awards at the 78th NASWA Annual Conference in Burlington, Vermont. Every year, NASWA's President, Board of Directors and certain Committees present awards recognizing state and individuals for their excellent contributions to the public workforce system. This year's award winners will be announced at the 78th NASWA Annual Conference in Burlington, Vermont.

To nominate an individual or state for an award at this year's Annual Conference, **login to NASWA's website with your user name and password and follow the link below to make your nominations.** Nominations not fully completed can be completed at a later date, as long as members are logged in.

Nominations being accepted via NASWA's online Awards system for the 2014 Salute to Leadership Awards include: the SEAL Award, Eagle Award, James F. Walls Employee and Team Award, the Mark Sanders Award, the Merrill Baumgardner Award, the NASWA National Business of the Year Award, the Vladimir Chavrid Memorial Award and the William J. Harris Equal Opportunity Award.

The deadline for nominations is July 8, 2014. [Make your nominations for the 2014 Salute to the Leadership Awards today!](#)

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Solicitation of Candidates for NASWA's Executive Committee

Bids for candidacy for the NASWA Executive Committee are now being accepted for the 2015 NASWA Association Year, with the positions for President-Elect, Treasurer and Secretary open for election in September at [NASWA's 78th Annual Conference](#) in Burlington, Vermont, September 17-19, 2014.

Currently, there are three state administrators who have declared their candidacies for the following posts: Scott Sanders, Commissioner, Indiana Department of Workforce Development for NASWA President Elect; Joan Evans, Director, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services for NASWA Secretary; and Renee Olson, Administrator, Employment Security Division, Nevada Department of Employment Training and Rehabilitation for NASWA Treasurer.

Administrators are encouraged to run for one of the vacant Executive Offices of NASWA. State Administrators interested in running for any of the above mentioned positions should email NASWA Executive Director Rich Hobbie at rhobbie@naswa.org. Candidates for the NASWA Executive Committee will be voted on during the business session at the Annual Conference.

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ITSC Announces New Unemployment Insurance Learning Center for States

The ITSC is announcing its new Unemployment Insurance Learning Center available at www.itsc.org. The Learning Center is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration's Office of Unemployment Insurance. Underlying the Learning Center is a learning management system allowing members to access online training, download training materials, register for instructor-led courses and track their personal learning history.

Currently, the instructor-led materials for a UI 101 Training for Vendors course are available within the Learning Center. ITSC encourages states to download and customize these materials for states. ITSC will be creating a repository of training and training materials to provide a general understanding of UI topics for employees at all levels. Additional modules being developed for release include: Boot Camp for UI IT Business Analysts; refreshed online UI Program Training courses; refreshed UI Technical Training online support materials; online IT Security courses, and others.

In order to access the training of interest to a state, sign-in to the ITSC website and follow these steps:

1. Click the UI Learning Center tab.
2. Click "Register" to sign up for access to the course catalog.
3. Within 24 hours states will have access to course materials, using ITSC Members logon credentials. Using the Quick Links menu, access the full course catalog under "Learning Catalog" or any courses directly assigned to you or that you have enrolled under "My Learning."

For assistance or more information contact ITSC Learning Strategist Tracy Henschbarger at tracy.henschbarger@itsc.org or ITSC Product Manager John Quichocho at jquichocho@naswa.org

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Demystifying the National Labor Exchange

NASWA is pleased to present [An Introduction to the National Labor Exchange for State Workforce Agencies](#) to serve as a primer for all state workforce agency staff members.

The National Labor Exchange (NLX) is a unique public-private partnership between NASWA and DirectEmployers Association, a nonprofit employer-led consortium. Created in 2007, the NLX was specifically designed to support State Workforce Agencies, employers, and jobseekers by using a sophisticated technology platform to bring “real” and available job opportunities to State Workforce Agency job banks and other trusted labor exchange partners. Every day through the US.jobs platform, the NLX makes available 1.5 million unique job vacancies to job seekers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam and Puerto Rico. The NLX partnership also brings valuable technology services, including state-led microsites and job bank hosting to state workforce agencies at no additional cost.

For information on the National Labor Exchange, please visit <http://naswa.org/nlx/>.

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Minnesota Launches New Bioscience-Focused Microsite

The National Labor Exchange (NLX) recently launched [mn-bioscience.jobs](#), the first state association-partnered microsite. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development collaborated with LifeScience Alley, a Minnesota-based trade association focusing on the bioscience community.

Microsites use search engine optimized pages designed to improve a state’s ranking on individual search results. Consequently, microsites will gradually rank higher on search engine (Google) results pages, substantially increasing jobseeker traffic back to state job banks, and ultimately facilitate a more efficient labor exchange. This is an increasingly important resource for states as, on average, there are over 613 million employment related searches performed on search engines every month.

The NLX offers state workforce agencies up to ten no-cost .jobs microsites. In addition to being mobile-enabled, the sites are search engine optimized (SEO) and social media integrated. To learn more about microsites and mobile functionality for your state job bank, please contact NASWA NLX Operations Manager Charlie Terrell at cterrell@naswa.org.

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Hilton HHonors Military Begins with Four-State Pilot Program

In September 2013, NASWA and Hilton Worldwide entered into an agreement to support veterans seeking employment assistance from state workforce agencies. The effort on behalf of Hilton Worldwide is just one small part of Hilton's [Operation: Opportunity](#) initiative to provide support to U.S. military veterans and their families. [Operation: Opportunity](#) also includes the commitment to hire 10,000 veterans at more than 3,900 hotels worldwide and in corporate offices within the next five years.

As part of the NASWA/Hilton agreement, Hilton HHonors Military has been created to provide an avenue for Hilton Worldwide to partner with individual state workforce agencies to support hotel stays related to job search activity for eligible job seekers. State workforce agencies will have the flexibility to determine eligibility criteria based on current state-wide employment and reemployment initiatives already in place for transitioning service members, veterans, and/or military spouses. The initiative officially kicked off on Memorial Day weekend in Iowa during the state's [Home Base Iowa](#) legislation signing by Governor Terry Branstad.

Piloting the Hilton HHonors Military initiative are Iowa, Minnesota, Arizona and Texas. These four states worked through the following process in getting the program ready in their states:

- Creating an MOU template between Hilton and the state workforce agency;
- Determining state-specific eligibility criteria, referral guidelines, approval flow, as well as local and state points of contact.

Each state has the flexibility to tweak the program to best serve their current eligible jobseeker population. Ultimately, these efforts have created an important roadmap for future states to use and join the initiative. NASWA looks forward to documenting efforts and reporting on HHonors Military outcomes in the near future.

For more information about HHonors Military – or if your state would like to join the initiative, please contact NASWA NLX Veteran Services Manager Lisa Stern at lsfern@naswa.org.

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Notices, Advisories and Reports

USDOL Directives & Releases

June 12, 2014: USDOL [announced](#) \$5,945,825 in grants for the fourth round of the [Workforce Data Quality Initiative](#) (WDQI). These funds will enable six states to build or expand longitudinal databases that link workforce and education data and help these states to better understand how education and workforce development programs complement each other. States to receive the WDQI grants include: CT, IN, KY, MS, NE, and NJ. Grantees will be expected to use these longitudinal databases to conduct research and analysis aimed at determining the effectiveness of workforce and education programs and to develop tools to better inform customers about the benefits of the publicly-funded workforce system.

June 12, 2014: ETA [reported](#) for the week ending June 7, 2014 seasonally adjusted unemployment insurance initial claims increased from the previous week's revised figure. Seasonally adjusted initial claims increased by 4,000 to 317,000 from last week's revised figure of 313,000. The 4-week moving average was 315,250, an increase of 4,750 from the previous week's revised average of 310,500. The unadjusted initial claims level totaled 312,129 up 47,996 from the previous week. UI continued claims, seasonally adjusted, for the week ending May 31, 2014 were 2,614,000 up 11,000 from the previous week's revised figure. The 4-week moving average decreased 13,000 to 2,622,000 from the prior week's revised figure of 2,635,000.

June 9, 2014: ETA issued [Training and Employment Notice No. 34-13](#) informing states regarding the publication of the final rule for the Data Exchange Standardization as required by Section 2104 of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012.

June 4, 2014: ETA released [Training and Employment Notice No. 33-13](#) sharing the interagency support for ensuring students and parents have relevant and timely information to make informed career decisions. This notice is meant to encourage continued coordination and collaboration across the public workforce, adult basic education, career and technical education, and human and social service systems to prepare students for education and career paths.

June 4, 2014: ETA issued a [notice in the Federal Register](#) announcing it is sponsoring the information collection request(ICR) titled, "Interstate Arrangement for Combining Employment and Wages," to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval for continued use, without change, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA). This ICR seeks to extend PRA authority for the Interstate Arrangement for Combining Employment and Wages information collection. Reporting Form ETA-586, it provides data necessary to measure the scope and effect of the program for combining employment and wages covered under the different State laws for the purpose of determining an unemployed worker's entitlement to

workers' compensation and to monitor the performance of each State's payment and wage transfer performance. Internal Revenue Code of 1986 section 3304(a) (9) (B) requires a State to provide the information covered by this ICR to the ETA.

May 28, 2014: ETA released [Unemployment Insurance Program Letter No. 34-11, Change 1](#) disseminating state Acceptable Level of Performance targets for the benefit year earnings (BYE) UI integrity performance measure for the calendar year 2014 performance period and provide information on this measure for future performance periods.

May 28, 2014: ETA issued [Training and Employment Notice No. 32-13](#) informing states and local areas about how Workforce Investment Act (WIA) formula-funded youth programs can assist youth who are currently or were formerly in foster care to complete post-secondary education and training by coordinating with state and local Independent Living coordinators to ensure youth have knowledge and access to the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Education and Training Vouchers, and State Tuition Waivers.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Reports

June 11, 2014: The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released a report entitled [Persons with a Disability: Labor Force Characteristics - 2013](#) reporting 17.6 percent of persons with a disability were employed. In contrast, the employment-population ratio for those without a disability was 64.0 percent. The employment-population ratio was little changed from 2012 to 2013 for both groups. The unemployment rate for those with a disability was 13.2 percent in 2013, higher than the rate for persons with no disability (7.1 percent). The jobless rate for persons with a disability was little changed from 2012 to 2013, while the rate for those without a disability declined.

June 10, 2014: The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released its monthly [Job Openings and Labor Turnover Summary \(JOLTS\)](#) for the month of April. According to the BLS report, there were 4.5 million job openings at the end of April, an increase from the revised March figure of 4.2 million (seasonally adjusted). In April, the hires rate was unchanged from March holding at 3.4 percent, and the separations were also unchanged holding at 3.3 percent in April.

May 28, 2014: BLS issued its [Metropolitan Area Employment and Unemployment – April 2014 Report](#), reporting unemployment rates were lower in April than a year earlier in 357 of the 372 metropolitan areas, higher in 12 areas and unchanged in 3 areas. Three-hundred and two metro areas reported over-the-year increases in nonfarm payroll employment, 63 reported decreases and 7 had no change.

Other Reports and Advisories

June 6, 2014: The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) issued its [Monthly Budget Review for May 2014](#) reporting the federal government ran a budget deficit of \$439 billion for the first eight months of FY 2014, \$188 billion less than the shortfall recorded during the same period last year as revenues are higher and spending is lower than it was at the same point in FY 2013.

Unemployment insurance outlays were estimated at \$34 billion for the first eight months of FY 2014, down \$17 billion from the FY 2013 level of \$51 billion, a 33 percent decrease mainly due to the expiration of the EUC program at the end of December 2013.

May 21, 2014: [CRS Report – Unemployment Insurance: Legislative Issues in the 113th Congress](#) – The Congressional Research Service (CRS) released a report providing descriptions of enacted and proposed unemployment insurance legislation in the 113th Congress.

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Articles were contributed by Lisa Stern, John Quichocho, Josie Link and Tim Griffith

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