



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

September 30, 2024

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Washington Update

Appropriations

On Thursday, September 26, President Joe Biden signed a three-month government stopgap bill to avert a government shutdown that extended government funding until December 20. The package, negotiated by Speaker of the House Mike Johnson (LA) and top Democrats, relied heavily on Democratic votes to approve the funding measure. The measure passed the Senate on a vote of 78-18 and the House on a vote of 341-82. Both chambers have adjourned for a long recess and will not return to Washington until after the November 5 elections.

The continuing resolution (CR) funds the government at current levels and provides \$231 million in additional money for the Secret Service, including for operations related to the presidential campaign, in the wake of two apparent attempts to assassinate former President Trump. Johnson removed the Republican proof-of-citizenship election legislation, known as the SAVE Act, after the House rejected a package that combined

government funding and the legislation. This sets up another shutdown battle in the post-election lame duck session.

[Click here](#) to access the full CR.

[Click here](#) to access a section-by-section summary of the CR.

WIOA Reauthorization

The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee has been unable to secure agreement on a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Reauthorization proposal, but the House Education and Workforce Committee and Senate HELP Committee have agreed to work through a potential pre-conference negotiation — a staff driven process to determine whether they can address the differences between the House and Senate WIOA proposals. If staff can work through those differences, it will further advance the process before the end of Congress. Congress will go on recess prior to the election, so an agreement will need to be made before the election to have any chance of consideration this Congress.

House Committee on Education and the Workforce

On Wednesday, September 25, the House Education and the Workforce Committee opened an inquiry into the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL's) Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) botched rollout of a key economic indicator in August. On August 21, BLS reported a revision to the jobs numbers for the 12 months ending March 31 that showed more than 800,000 fewer new jobs than initially estimated; however, that update was not available publicly for approximately a half-hour past its scheduled release time. During that time, a handful of overseas financial institutions reportedly obtained the findings directly from BLS officials. Committee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (NC) wrote a letter to Acting Labor Secretary Julie Su saying this could have caused "significant uncertainty and confusion and undermined confidence in that data. At worst, BLS's actions may have provided an unfair advantage to several firms." On Friday, it was reported that BLS didn't notice the jobs revisions hadn't gone out for roughly 20 minutes before scrambling to address the problem, citing public records released under the Freedom of Information Act.

In her letter, Foxx requests documents related to DOL's practices for the release of the periodic jobs reports, as well as information related to who at BLS relayed information to the foreign firms in August. Additionally, the committee asked the agency to detail what changes it instituted following a separate recent mishap tied to an unofficial "super user" distribution list. Foxx set a Wednesday, October 9, deadline for DOL to respond to the committee's requests.

[Click here](#) to access the letter.

Child Care Legislation

On Monday, September 30, nearly \$15 billion in supplemental Child Care Development Fund money sent to states from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) is set to expire — that's one year after \$24 billion in child care stabilization cash from the pandemic recovery law, which helped providers keep their doors open, also expired. On Wednesday, September 25, Democrats reintroduced two bills that would support child care facilities and the workforce — the Child Care Infrastructure Act and the Child Care Workforce Development Act.

The Child Care Infrastructure Act would establish a competitive grant program to support renovations at child care facilities, which lawmakers hope will allow providers to expand their facilities to serve more children. The bill would also authorize \$10 billion over five years to support infrastructure.

The Child Care Workforce Development Act would authorize a student loan repayment program for early childhood educators. The Department of Health and Human Services would oversee a repayment program of up to \$6,000 annually for early educators who are working for providers that receive Child Care and Development Block Grant funding. The bill would also establish a program that would provide up to \$4,000 to certain people pursuing an associate's degree or certificate in early childhood education.

[Click here](#) to read a press release on the bills.

NSTC Workforce Center of Excellence

On Wednesday, September 25, the Biden-Harris Administration announced the launch of the National Semiconductor Technology Center's (NSTC) Workforce Center of Excellence (WCoE). The WCoE is critical in addressing the rise in demand for advanced semiconductors and will bring together stakeholders from across the private sector, government, non-profits, training providers, community and technical colleges, universities, and labor organizations to develop innovative solutions to the industry's workforce challenges, accelerate best practices, promote good jobs, and strengthen recruitment and training of the next generation of semiconductor researchers, engineers, and technicians. The Department of Commerce's expected \$250 million investment into the WCoE over ten years will advance President Biden and Vice President Harris's goals of driving innovation in the United States and supporting workers in securing good-paying semiconductor jobs. As part of the announcement, Natcast, the non-profit entity designated to operate the NSTC by the Department of Commerce, announced more than \$11 million in anticipated awards across more than a dozen states and nationally through the NSTC Workforce Partner Alliance (WFPA) program to further support workforce development efforts.

[Click here](#) to learn more and access the full press release.

Senate HELP Subcommittee Hearing

On Wednesday, September 25, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety held the hearing “Reading the Room: Preparing Workers for AI.” Witnesses at the hearing included LinkedIn Chief Economist Dr. Karin Kimbrough, aiEDU Chief Executive Officer Alex Kotran, Ryan Health Senior Director of Human Resources Ken Meyer, and Seed AI Grassroots Program Manager Denzel Wilson.

[Click here](#) to watch a video of the hearing.

House Committee on Small Business Subcommittee Hearing

On Wednesday, September 25, the House Committee on Small Business Subcommittee on Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Workforce Development held the hearing “Avenues to Success: Examining Workforce Training Programs for Employees.” In this hearing, lawmakers examined the challenges of the current labor market and outlined the resources available to help small business owners expand their labor pool. Witnesses for the hearing included Community Options, Inc. Executive Director Ashley Gamba, Painters and Allied Trades Union District Council #4 Director of Business Development Frank Stento, and Indiana Kentucky Ohio Regional Council of Carpenters Joint Apprenticeship and Training Fund Director of Education Neal Strange.

[Click here](#) to watch a video of the hearing.

Initial Jobless Claims

In the week ending September 21, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 218,000, a decrease of 4,000 from the previous week's revised level. The previous week's level was revised up by 3,000 from 219,000 to 222,000. The 4-week moving average was 224,750, a decrease of 3,500 from the previous week's revised average. The previous week's average was revised up by 750 from 227,500 to 228,250. The advance seasonally adjusted insured unemployment rate was 1.2 percent for the week ending September 14, unchanged from the previous week's unrevised rate.

[Click here](#) to access the report.

New from DOL/ETA

Biden-Harris Administration Awards \$71 Million in Grants to Improve Job Quality, Prepare Workers, Expand Access to Good Jobs in Critical Sectors

The Biden-Harris administration announced the award of approximately \$71 million in grants to improve job quality, expand access to good jobs in critical sectors and prepare workers for good-paying jobs being created by the administration's Investing in America agenda. Funding from the U.S. Department of Labor's Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program, Critical Sectors Job Quality Grants Program and Workforce Pathways for Youth program will support 27 organizations serving 14 states and the District of Columbia. The department awarded nearly \$38 million through the second round of the Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program to enable 13 public-private partnerships across nine states to prepare workers for the good-paying infrastructure jobs the Biden-Harris administration is creating. The funding announced today — with the \$94 million the department announced in September 2023 — is a combined investment of more than \$130 million to support the growing demand for a skilled infrastructure workforce.

[Click here](#) to read the full press release.

ICYMI: Acting Secretary Su Champions Workforce Development Partnerships, Addresses Future Climate Leaders in North Carolina Visit

Acting Secretary of Labor Julie Su traveled to North Carolina for two events on Sept. 24, 2024, to promote the U.S. Department of Labor's Good Jobs Principles, cement public and private sector partnerships that will build equitable workforce pipelines statewide and reaffirm the Biden-Harris administration's efforts to create a generation of good-paying jobs while addressing the climate crisis.

In Charlotte, Acting Secretary Su joined local elected officials, union and community leaders, and workforce providers to announce their commitment to adopt and implement the department's Good Jobs Principles. The city's building trades and community-based organizations announced the formation of the Charlotte Regional Apprenticeship Collaboration to strengthen efforts in greater Charlotte to develop pipelines of diverse and equitable apprenticeships.

[Click here](#) to read the full press release.

U.S. Department of Labor Awards Additional \$18.4 Million in Grants, Will Measure Effectiveness of Sector-Based Training for Low-Income Older Adult Workers

On Friday, September 27, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced the award of \$18.4 million in demonstration grants to nine current national grantees operating a Senior Community Service Employment Program grant so the department can measure the effectiveness of industry or sector-based training as a bridge to unsubsidized employment for low-income, older workers. The demonstration grants will allow recipients to build and expand partnerships with employers, training providers and the public workforce system to inform and support their projects. Grantees will augment their current service model with a combination of enhanced career navigation services, occupational and on-the-job training.

The department's Employment and Training Administration awarded SCSEP Demonstration Grants to grantees announced on Sept. 20, 2024. ETA will study the effect of industry-based or sector-based training on employment outcomes for older workers and use the data to develop strategies for programs that train and employ older workers. The Senior Community Service Employment Program is a community service and work-based training program for older workers. Authorized by the Older Americans Act, SCSEP provides training for low-income, unemployed seniors.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

Expanding High-Quality Job Opportunities for Workers in Georgia

Mayor Andre Dickens is focused on improving the welfare of Atlanta's workers, partnering with Acting Secretary of Labor Julie Su, to promote the Department of Labor's Good Jobs Principles. On Thursday, September 26, Dickens and Su revealed this commitment aiming to enhance job quality and support workers across the city.

[Click here](#) to access social media posts on the event.

AI & Inclusive Hiring

A new tool will support the inclusive use of AI in hiring technology and increase benefits to disabled job seekers. The AI & Inclusive Hiring Framework aims to help employers reduce the risks of creating unintentional forms of discrimination and barriers to accessibility as they implement AI hiring technology. The framework was released by the Partnership on Employment & Accessible Technology, which is funded by our Office of Disability Employment Policy.

[Click here](#) to access the framework.

US Department of Labor Announces \$12.7M in Grants Awarded to Promote Workplace Safety, Health Training, Education

On Thursday, September 19, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded \$12.7 million to 102 nonprofits nationwide to fund education and training initiatives designed to create safer workplaces. Administered by the department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration, funds from the Susan Harwood Training Grants Program will support the delivery of training and education on hazard awareness, avoidance and controls, and inform workers of their rights and employers of their responsibilities under the Occupational Safety and Health Act. This round of funding was awarded to programs in the categories of targeted topic training, training and educational materials development, and capacity building.

The grants are named in honor of the late Dr. Susan Harwood who served as the director of OSHA's Office of Risk Assessment. In 17 years with the department, she was instrumental in developing federal standards that today protect people from workplace hazards, including asbestos, benzene, bloodborne pathogens, cotton dust, formaldehyde and lead.

[Click here](#) to read the full press release.

US Department of Labor Awards \$203M in Grants to Provide Training, Services to Low-Income Older Adults in 14 states, District of Columbia

On Friday, September 20, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced the award of \$203 million in grants through the Senior Community Service Employment Program to provide training and career services to low-income older individuals who are seeking to enter or re-enter the workforce. The department's Employment and Training Administration awarded \$194 million to 19 national nonprofit organizations through the program's general fund, and three organizations received a total of \$9 million in funds set aside by statute to provide employment services to older workers from Native American or Asian-American and Pacific Islander communities.

The SCSEP funding will enable program participants to move into unsubsidized employment in public and private sectors, foster self-sufficiency and promote part-time work experiences in community service assignments for unemployed low-income people ages 55 and older. Authorized by the Older Americans Act, the SCSEP awards provide funding through the end of Program Year 2024. This cohort of grantees may receive a total of approximately \$313 million annually for an additional three years, subject to future appropriations.

[Click here](#) to access the full press release.

WDC in the News

HUD Joins Federal Agencies and AmeriCorps to Expand Workforce Training for Clean Energy Jobs

On Wednesday, September 25, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced it is signing onto the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Departments of Commerce, the Interior, Agriculture, Labor, Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Corporation for National and Community Service (AmeriCorps) to strengthen workforce development and career pathways for America's clean energy economy. By joining the MOU, HUD is furthering its workforce development efforts and creating opportunities for residents and community members to actively participate in the transition to clean energy and a clean energy economy.

The American Climate Corps is a pioneering workforce training and service initiative launched last year by President Biden to create career pathways for good-paying jobs in the clean economy. The Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to delivering the most ambitious climate agenda in history, includes securing the largest ever climate investment and has unleashed a clean energy manufacturing boom that has created more than 270,000 new clean energy jobs. By becoming part of the American Climate Corps, HUD can expand partnerships with participating agencies and allow HUD to integrate its existing workforce development programs into ongoing efforts that focus on clean energy and climate resilience.

[Click here](#) to read the full press release.

'Boosting the Number of Jobs in Any Community is a Win-Win': Mayor Wu Talks Skills-Based Employment at Boston Globe Summit 2024

In the first event of the second day of the Boston Globe Summit 2024, Boston Mayor Michelle Wu joined Globe work and income inequality reporter Katie Johnston in a discussion about skill-based employment and education. The panel conversation opened with a speech from Marcelo Suárez-Orozco, the chancellor of the University of Massachusetts Boston, who talked about the innovations and development needs for Boston.

"We are in the cognitive age, and if Boston is to remain the cognitive capital of our country, all sectors in our extraordinary city will be in common together," Suárez-Orozco said. "The crises we're facing—the crisis in democracy, the crisis in climate, the crisis in health, the crisis in inequality—are crises that require cities to just re-engineer their algorithms to make

sure the citizens can thrive,” Suárez-Orozco told The Beacon in an interview. He added preparing people to address these challenges through education is crucial as Boston has a growing population of children and immigrant families that will define its future.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

Reports & Articles

New from U.S. Department of Energy

[New Opportunity Funds Non-Profit Education Organizations' Efforts to Grow a Diverse Clean Energy Workforce](#)

On Tuesday, September 24, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced a new program to fund initiatives aimed at developing a diverse clean energy workforce by targeting a wide variety of groups within science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. The Clean Energy Careers for All (CEC4A) program will award nearly \$3 million to non-profit educational organizations—including engineering, scientific, and technical societies—to support programs that promote awareness and interest in clean energy careers among K–12 and university students, alumni and academic professionals, veterans, and formerly incarcerated individuals.

DOE will accept applications for new or expanded workforce development programs in key clean energy sectors including renewable energy, building energy efficiency, energy storage, advanced materials and manufacturing, electric vehicles, among others. Up to 10 organizations will be awarded approximately \$300,000 each during Phase 1 of the program. Phase 1 awardees will be eligible to receive a Phase 2 award based on their initiative's performance. The top three to five teams will split an additional award pool of \$750,000 in the culmination of Phase 2. The deadline for Phase 1 submissions is December 13, 2024.

[Click here](#) to learn more and access the full press release.

New from U.S. Department of Commerce

[Biden-Harris Administration Announces First CHIPS Commercial Fabrication Facilities Award with Polar Semiconductor, Establishing Independent American Foundry](#)

Today, as part of the Biden-Harris Administration's Investing in America agenda, the U.S. Department of Commerce announced its first award under the CHIPS Incentives Program's Funding Opportunity for Commercial Fabrication Facilities of up to \$123 million in direct funding to Polar Semiconductor (Polar). The award follows the previously signed

preliminary memorandum of terms and the completion of the Department's due diligence. The award will expand and modernize the company's manufacturing facility in Bloomington, Minnesota. The Department will distribute the funds based on Polar's completion of project milestones.

The Biden-Harris Administration's investment will support Polar's efforts to almost double its U.S. production capacity of sensor and power chips within two years. This award catalyzes a total investment of more than \$525 million from private, state, and federal sources to transform Polar from a majority foreign-owned in-house manufacturer to a majority U.S.-owned commercial foundry. Through Polar's semiconductor manufacturing operations, the Administration's investment is expected to create over 160 manufacturing and construction jobs in Minnesota.

[Click here](#) to read the full press release.

New from U.S. Department of Education

Equity Webinar: Designing Equitable Career-Connected Accelerated Pathways with Hispanic Serving Institutions

On behalf of Assistant Secretary Dr. Amy Loyd, the U.S. Department of Education Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) invites you to participate in its 2024 Equity Summit Webinar Series entitled Equity in Career Connected Education: Advancing Economic Mobility. This series was developed from the 2022 Advancing Equity in Career-Connected Education Summit (Summit). This event was an important component of the Department of Education's ongoing efforts to implement Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government. One of the goals of the Summit was to identify themes and topics across those issue areas for further exploration, such as data, state or local roles, the role of industry, or existing systemic challenges such as misaligned incentives in adult education, career technical education, community colleges, and correctional education. Based on what we learned from the Summit, the webinars will focus on dual enrollment, digital literacy, career pathways, gender equity, and other areas. The next webinar in the series will be held on October 3, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. ET. This webinar will focus on designing career-connected pathways for Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

[Click here](#) to register for the webinar.

Fast Fact

The manufacturing skills gap in the U.S. could result in 2.1 million unfilled jobs by 2030, according to a new study by Deloitte and The Manufacturing Institute, the workforce development and education partner of the NAM. The cost of those missing jobs could potentially total \$1 trillion in 2030 alone.



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