

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

www.uscmwdc.org

Strengthening Cities Through
Workforce Development



THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

December 1, 2025



Administration and AI

On Monday, November 24, U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Deputy Secretary Keith Sonderling outlined DOL's plans to advance the Trump Administration's AI Action Plan with a focus on workforce readiness. DOL will expand AI-related skills development, assess AI's impact on the labor market, and begin testing new approaches for rapid worker retraining. In January, DOL also plans to launch an AI Workforce Hub to support ongoing data collection, research, and innovation pilots that inform workforce policy and program design.

A second component of the AI Action Plan focuses on strengthening the talent pipeline for AI-related infrastructure jobs. This includes identifying priority roles, updating skills frameworks, and expanding training pathways through career and technical education, apprenticeships, and partnerships with industry. In his post, Sonderling emphasizes that the workforce system must remain agile as AI accelerates changes in skills and job requirements.

On Monday, November 24, the Administration issued the Executive Order (EO) "Launching the Genesis Mission" along with an accompanying fact sheet. The EO aims to advance AI-driven innovation across federal scientific agencies and establishes opportunities for students and early-career workers to gain experience in STEM fields through fellowships, internships, and apprenticeships at national laboratories and partner institutions. It also encourages collaboration among government, education providers, and industry to strengthen the national talent pipeline in technology-driven sectors. These actions reflect the federal government's efforts to coordinate AI policy and invest in workforce readiness, highlighting opportunities for employers, workforce professionals, and educational institutions.

[Click here](#) to access the blog post.

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

[Click here](#) to access the EO Fact Sheet.

H-1B Visas

On Monday, November 25, U.S. District Judge Beryl Howell set new deadlines in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's lawsuit challenging the Trump administration's \$100,000 H-1B visa levy. The federal government must submit its response by Monday, December 1 — a partial extension from the original November 28 deadline. The Justice Department had requested a seven-day extension to coordinate with federal agencies on complex legal issues, but Judge Howell only granted a shorter timeframe.

The case centers on the Chamber's request for summary judgment against the visa levy. Judge Howell previously rejected the government's attempt to delay proceedings due to the federal shutdown. The Chamber was granted two additional days — until Wednesday, December 10 — to file its reply.

DOL Bureau of Labor Statistics

On Tuesday, November 25, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) announced it will release the State Employment and Unemployment data for September 2025 on Thursday, December 11, and Metropolitan Area Employment and Unemployment data for September 2025 will be released on December 17.

BLS will not issue State or Metropolitan Area Employment and Unemployment releases for October 2025. BLS announced that establishment survey data for October from the Current Employment Statistics State and Area program will be incorporated into the November 2025 release. Household survey data from the Current Population Survey were not collected in October due to a lapse in appropriations and will not be collected retroactively. As a result, the November data collection period will be extended, and additional processing time will be required.

[Click here](#) to access the revised news release dates.

AI for America Act

On Tuesday, November 25, Congresswoman Jen Kiggans (VA) introduced the AI for America Act, which establishes a national strategy to strengthen U.S. leadership in artificial intelligence, modernize federal research infrastructure, and remove outdated regulatory barriers. The bill directs federal agencies to develop a coordinated national plan for AI research and builds on President Trump's Executive Order 14179 by creating a statutory federal action plan for AI leadership. This plan includes measurable goals related to workforce development, research partnerships, innovation safeguards, and overall federal coordination.

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



Department of Labor Empowers States, Localities to Spur Innovation Across the Workforce Development System

On Tuesday, November 25, the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) announced new guidance aimed at empowering state and local workforce development boards to innovate and optimize service delivery of these workforce systems.

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

TEGL: Maximizing Innovation in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Programs

On Tuesday, November 25, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) released the Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) "Maximizing Innovation in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Programs."

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

Project Firewall Partnership Leads to Enhanced Federal Enforcement Against Discriminatory Hiring Practices

On Monday, November 25, U.S. Department of Labor Secretary Lori Chavez-DeRemer and Deputy Secretary Keith Sonderling applauded the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) for taking action to help prevent discrimination against American workers. The EEOC released new and updated educational materials to reaffirm and emphasize legal protections against national origin discrimination, which can include preferring foreign workers by advertising job openings as only available to H-1B visa holders.

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

Initial Jobless Claims

In the week ending November 22, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 216,000, a decrease of 6,000 from the previous week's revised level. The previous week's level was revised up by 2,000 from 220,000 to 222,000.

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



For Wu, Growing Boston's Economy Starts with People, Not Cranes

For decades, one way that Boston mayors measured success was by the number of construction cranes in the sky. Michelle Wu has been trumpeting another metric: The number of residents with good-paying jobs.

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

Healthcare Workforce Crisis: Federal and State Policy Responses to Shortages and H-1B Visa Restrictions

Healthcare workforce shortages are critically impacting multiple healthcare professions and geographies, threatening access to care and straining existing providers. Pipeline challenges are being increasingly affected by changes to the immigration landscape, including H-1B visa restrictions and increased fees that limit international medical graduate (IMG) recruitment through Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs. Policymakers at the federal and state levels are pursuing varied strategies including expanded training capacity, scope of practice reforms, loan repayment programs and immigration pathway improvements.

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

Government Workers Young and Old Need 'Shared Purpose,' Say Local Leaders

Governments are faced with a big challenge, as they wrestle with a whole generation of older workers retiring, while trying to attract younger people to fill in those gaps in the face of strong competition from the private sector.

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

Gen Z Revitalizes the Skilled Trades Amid Construction Labor Shortages

As Baby Boomers retire, they take with them decades of accumulated skill, leadership and institutional knowledge, and presently, there are not enough new workers to replace them. The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) reports that the median age of a construction worker has reached 42, about a year older than the national labor force average. Boomers now make up only 14% of the workforce, down from more than 20% in 2019.

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



New from Brookings

Defining Professional Programs: Why Evidence and Clarity Matter in ED's Rulemaking

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) recently clarified which graduate programs qualify as "professional" for higher federal loan limits under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA). Almost immediately after ED made its decision, social media lit up with claims certain careers such as teaching and nursing had been "removed" or that ED was claiming those careers were not professions.

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



Fact of the Week

According to a recent article, one in five Americans age 65 or older continues working past the traditional retirement age, and 52% of soon-to-be retirees plan to work in some capacity after leaving their primary careers. GOBankingRates analyzed U.S. Census data from 2018 and 2023 to identify the 50 cities with the highest labor force participation among adults age 65 to 74, factoring in population, participation rates, and median household income.

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



THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL