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JOBS AND OPPORTUNITY: FEDERAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE JOBS GAP

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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JOBS AND OPPORTUNITY: FEDERAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE JOBS GAP

TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 2018

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 1100 Longworth House Office Building, the Honorable Kevin Brady [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

[The advisory announcing the hearing follows:]

WAYS AND MEANS
CHAIRMAN KEVIN BRADY

Chairman Brady Announces Hearing on Jobs and Opportunity: Federal Perspectives on the Jobs Gap

House Committee on Ways and Means Chairman Kevin Brady (R-TX) announced today that the Committee will hold a hearing entitled "Jobs and Opportunity: Federal Perspectives on the Jobs Gap" on **Tuesday, April 17 at 10:00 AM in 1100 Longworth House Office Building**. This hearing will highlight policy proposals from the President's FY2019 Department of Labor Budget request and existing workforce programs to help more Americans enter, reenter, or stay in the labor force.

Oral testimony at this hearing will be from the invited witness only. The sole witness will be the Honorable Alexander Acosta, Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor. However, any individual or organization may submit a written statement for consideration by the Committee and for inclusion in the printed record of the hearing.

DETAILS FOR SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS:

Please Note: Any person(s) and/or organization(s) wishing to submit written comments for the hearing record must follow the appropriate link on the hearing page of the Committee website and complete the informational forms. From the Committee homepage, http://waysandmeans.house.gov, select "Hearings." Select the hearing for which you would like to make a submission, and click on the link entitled, "Click here to provide a submission for the record." Once you have followed the online instructions, submit all requested information. ATTACH your submission as a Word document, in compliance with the formatting requirements listed below, **by the close of business on Tuesday, May 1, 2018.** For questions, or if you encounter technical problems, please call (202) 225-3625.

FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS:

The Committee relies on electronic submissions for printing the official hearing record. As always, submissions will be included in the record according to the discretion of the Committee. The Committee will not alter the content of your submission, but we reserve the right to format it according to our guidelines. Any submission provided to the Committee by a witness, any materials submitted for the printed record, and any written comments in response to a request for written comments must conform to the guidelines

listed below. Any submission not in compliance with these guidelines will not be printed, but will be maintained in the Committee files for review and use by the Committee.

All submissions and supplementary materials must be submitted in a single document via email, provided in Word format and must not exceed a total of 10 pages. Witnesses and submitters are advised that the Committee relies on electronic submissions for printing the official hearing record.

All submissions must include a list of all clients, persons and/or organizations on whose behalf the witness appears. The name, company, address, telephone, and fax numbers of each witness must be included in the body of the email. Please exclude any personal identifiable information in the attached submission.

Failure to follow the formatting requirements may result in the exclusion of a submission. All submissions for the record are final.

The Committee seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202-225-1721 or 202-226-3411 TTD/TTY in advance of the event (four business days notice is requested). Questions with regard to special accommodation needs in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats) may be directed to the Committee as noted above.

Note: All Committee advisories and news releases are available at http://www.waysandmeans.house.gov/

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. [Presiding.] The committee will come to order. Good morning. Chairman Brady will be joining us shortly, but out of respect for everyone's time, we will go ahead and get started.

Today our committee is honored to welcome Department of Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta to testify as part of our hearing series on jobs and opportunity. While much of his Department's work is under the jurisdiction of other committees, we appreciate the Secretary taking time to testify today on issues under the Ways and Means Committee's jurisdiction—particularly the important role the Department plays in connecting the unemployed with work opportunities as our economy continues to grow.

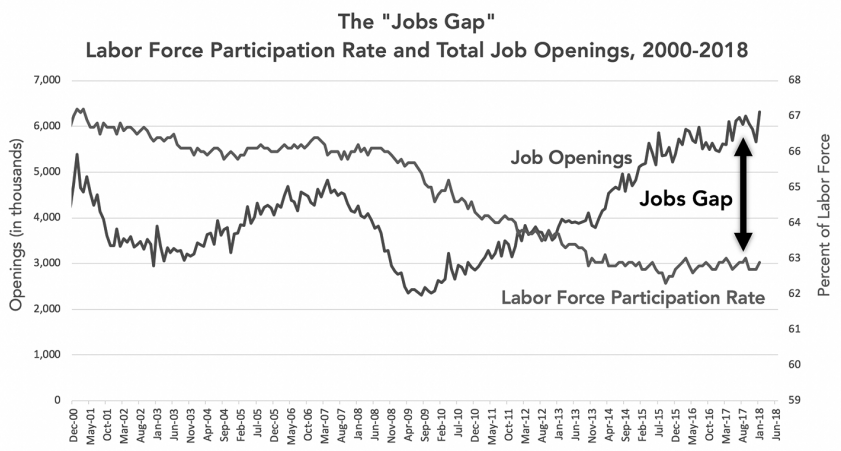
Thank you for joining us to provide a federal perspective on this important issue. Our economy is flourishing, and there are millions of jobs which need to be filled. Today, on Tax Day, we recognize that in just three months since the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was signed into law, we have seen over 600,000 new jobs created. Yet from our work in the Human Resources Subcommittee, we know there are still millions more struggling to get ahead. The labor market is strong.

Employers have added an average of over 200,000 jobs per month so far in 2018, and the unemployment rate is 4.1 percent, its lowest level since the 1990s. We are going to need more workers to fill these jobs if we are going to keep this momentum going.

This is the second hearing in an important series the committee is having to demonstrate how employers are struggling to fill jobs

in order to expand their businesses. Meanwhile, millions of Americans are stuck on the sidelines creating a major jobs gap.

[The information follows: Mr. Acosta.]



Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. You will see on the screen we have a chart showing the difference between employers' demand for workers, shown as job openings, and the declining number of individuals in the workforce, shown as the labor force participation rate. The space in the middle separating those two lines is what we are calling the jobs gap.

As an example of how tight the job market is right now, I noted in last week's HR Subcommittee hearing a report from the Wall Street Journal which indicated if every jobless citizen in 12 Midwestern states, including Nebraska, was paired with an open job, our region would still be left with 180,000 unfilled positions.

At last week's hearing we heard from several employers from across the country: homebuilders in central Arizona; a boat manufacturer from Indiana; an aerospace company in Wichita, Kansas. All of these employers have one thing in common: they are facing a shortage of workers, which is threatening their ability to fill orders and expand their businesses.

In fact, one of our witnesses, Heather Terenzio—the CEO of a software development company in Boulder, Colorado—worked with the Department of Labor to develop the first registered software development apprenticeship in the country to create a talent pipeline for bringing coders into her company.

One of the things she said was very striking: A college degree is not required to be a great software developer. One of her first hires was a janitor at a school she was speaking at who had grown up in the foster care system with his mother in and out of jail. He had grown up playing video games and teaching himself to code and was able to become a contributing member of her team.

Heather's story could be repeated across industries and employers. There are good jobs out there, and you don't need a college degree for many of those jobs. She has hired individuals from all skill levels and backgrounds and said as long as they have the desire and interest, she is able to set them on a career path in a desirable field with unlimited potential.

Another witness from our hearing, Brian Potaczek, had spent years in and out of Arizona correctional facilities and struggled with addiction to prescription drugs after having his wisdom teeth pulled. Brian participated in a training program developed through a partnership with the prison and the Central Arizona Homebuilders Association. The partnership is business-driven and focused on building a labor pipeline in the construction trades, where employers are in desperate need of workers. Brian is now an electrician earning $22 an hour and credits the training with changing his life.

Brian also told us he was far too busy with work to even think of returning to his previous ways. As far as I am concerned, this is the perfect example of a win-win situation. Arizona Homebuilders are able to fill job openings, and, most importantly, Brian has his life back and is able to restore his commitment to his family and society.

This is how important bridging this jobs gap is. If we can solve this challenge, it will be an across-the-board victory for American workers, American families, American businesses, and the American economy.

Secretary Acosta, we look forward to your testimony and finding ways this committee can work with you to help workers find jobs, support their families, and achieve the American Dream.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Without objection, Mr. Neal, I will recognize you for your opening statement.

Mr. NEAL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank the Secretary for being here to discuss these very important issues.

We agree there is a problem here. Good jobs are going unfilled, and millions of Americans need jobs or need to move up in the—better jobs from the one they have. The labor participation rate is something that we all ought to be alarmed about in America. A 2015 report by the Manufacturing Institute estimated that, over the next decade, 2 million manufacturing jobs in this country could go unfilled, due to the skills gap.

Right now, in the smallest geographic region of the country, New England, there are 18,000 precision manufacturing jobs that go unanswered. The New England Council has put these results, along with Deloitte, front and center. In a time when we are trying to compete in the global economy and families across the country are trying to reach and stay in the middle class, we can't afford that.

Here is where we don't agree. President Trump's recent executive order seems premised on the belief that we have a jobs gap because people don't want jobs. Well, I am a former mayor of a big city. I can tell you that is simply untrue. And his solution is to cut off benefits to motivate them to work like food, housing, and health care, or benefits they use to buy school supplies or just maybe put gasoline in their cars.

I believe if you offer people real opportunities, they will take them. If given a choice between a good job and something else, people will always take the good job, because they want a better life for themselves and their families. So, if people aren't filling those job openings, it is not because they don't want to; it is because in some measures they can't.

They need to be better prepared. Technology, globalization, the economy, and opioid addiction is fundamentally altering the workplace. Our jobs gap is certainly, in some measure, partially a skills gap. Many workers don't have the right skills for some of the best jobs our economy is currently producing. If we have Americans upgrade their skills, those open jobs will become opportunities, and I anticipate people would take them.

We know how to help people upgrade their skills: registered apprenticeships, community colleges, career pathway programs that combine work training; and supports like child care. All of these things could help people learn skills and lead to better jobs in the future.

Last year the President proposed cutting our main employment and training services programs by 40 percent, and this year, even after the Bipartisan Budget Act made far more money available, all the administration did was agree to continue jobs training at the current level, which is barely half of what Congress has authorized—again, on a bipartisan basis.

They proposed cutting trade adjustment assistance funding to help trade displaced workers go to community colleges and to learn new skills, and we read in the newspaper that the administration

is quietly working on a plan to cut the workers' support funding that we just approved and is provided for in the omnibus appropriations bill.

Our committee doesn't have jurisdiction over the main job training programs, but we do oversee the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, which is supposed to help people move from welfare to work, and to get families out of poverty. In the past, Republicans on the committee have strongly opposed common-sense efforts to help parents receiving TANF participation in fields like education and training that would lead to good jobs.

I hope they will reconsider that position. Our recent bipartisan work on the committee to authorize and fund re-employment services shows how much we can accomplish when we invest in workers.

At the same time, as we invest in worker skills, we should be asking employers what they are doing about the jobs gap. Basic economics says that when employers don't get the quality job applicants they are looking for, and markets tighten, the answer usually is to raise wages.

So why are wages still stagnant, even after employers got a windfall in the Republican tax bill? According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average American saw an increase of just $6.21 a week during the 3 months after the tax bill, far below the $4,000 a year we were told, and the President reinforced.

We have already seen some of these corporations and noticed how windfall is largely going to types like Wall Street, rather than Main Street. There is a real problem here, and there is a real solution. Instead of adding 2.3 trillion to our debt to provide the wealthy and big corporations with tax cuts, and then vilifying American workers who are trying to get ahead, we should fight to raise wages and invest in the skills that lead to these opportunities.

And Mr. Secretary, I am delighted you are here to talk about labor participation rates. And I would hope that the committee would focus on this as we go forward, understanding what really is happening across the country as old areas—some are being brought back to life, but many others are not. And I emphasize the changes that are taking place across New England with which I am most familiar.

So, thanks for being here, and thank you for the time, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Thank you, Mr. Neal.

Without objection, other members' opening statements will be made a part of the record.

Today's witness is Alexander Acosta, Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor.

The committee has received your written statement, Mr. Secretary, and it will be made a part of the formal hearing record. You have five minutes to deliver your remarks, and you may begin when you are ready.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE R. ALEXANDER ACOSTA, SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Secretary ACOSTA. Mr. Chairman, thank you. Ranking Member Neal, thank you for the comments. And Members of the Committee, thank you for the invitation to appear today.

I couldn't help but notice that many Americans are still hurrying to file their taxes. And I would like to acknowledge Chairman Brady's op-ed that appeared yesterday, where he pointed out that as we Americans file our taxes for the last time, we are doing so under the old Tax Code. And I do commend that opinion editorial.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to appear before you as part of the committee's "Job and Opportunity" hearing series to discuss the administration's efforts to help American job-seekers develop the skills necessary to excel in good family-sustaining jobs.

At the Department of Labor, we are creating opportunity for all Americans by expanding apprenticeships across all industries, streamlining traditional workforce education, and providing state leaders the flexibilities they need to meet the needs of job creators and their local workforces.

Since taking office, President Trump has ushered in a renewed sense of economic optimism. As a result, our economy and workforce have seen tangible and quantifiable results, and the results are quite clear. Over three million jobs have been created since November 2016. In March, the level of non-farm payroll employment reached an all-time high. For the past six months, unemployment has held steady at a 17-year low of 4.1 percent. In many states, unemployment is now below four percent. The employment rate for American veterans in 2017 was 3.7 percent, the lowest since 2001.

GDP in the fourth quarter of 2017 was nearly three percent, a number that just a year ago many economists said could never be achieved. And Americans are optimistic about the economy. Consumer confidence reached its highest point in 14 years in 2017, and remains very high, according to a University of Michigan consumer survey.

The Federal Reserve reports that industrial production, manufacturing production, and mining output are trending up, and the Federal Reserve estimates that unemployment rates will drop further.

To date, more than 500 companies have announced bonuses to more than 4 million Americans, as a result of the President's Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. And the job creation effects of additional capital expenditures, repatriation of dollars, and competitive tax rates have yet to be fully quantified.

Personal retirement accounts have soared and jobs are coming back to America from overseas.

America's average hourly earnings have started to grow. In March, the average hourly earning rose by 2.7 percent over the previous 12 months, and a 3-month average increase in earnings was the highest in nearly a decade, since 2009. We hope that growth will continue, particularly in the wage rate, as American job creators compete to attract more hard-working Americans.

Now, as I meet with working Americans, I am focused not only on where we were, but also on where we are heading, which is jobs, more jobs, and even more jobs. As the committee knows well, there

are more than six million open jobs. And to fill these jobs I want to highlight three areas.

The first is occupational licensing. We are working with states to eliminate artificial barriers to many occupations. Today, more than one in four Americans must acquire a license to work. One in four Americans. I was in a state just last week where a license to do something quite simple cost $1,200 a year. And that hits those that can least afford it the most.

Occupational licensing is a real barrier, and something that states have to address. If licenses are unnecessary, eliminate them. If licenses are necessary, streamline them. And if they are honored by one state, my question is why can other states not honor them with reciprocity?

Second, I would like to briefly touch on apprenticeships. For too long, education and workforce education have operated separately and without much coordination. We must de-silo traditional education and workforce education. Traditional classroom learning and on-the-job skills experience share the same goals, helping more Americans gain family-sustaining jobs.

This spring, the President's Task Force on Apprenticeship Expansion will issue its report and recommendation for expanding industry-recognized apprenticeships designed to provide job seekers with the demand-driven skills they need to excel in the jobs of today and tomorrow. These apprenticeships are very important.

And finally, I would like to touch on a third topic, and that is the topic of Pell Grant expansion. This is of critical importance in making high-quality, short-term programs that provide students with certifications or credentials for in-demand fields accessible.

Currently, federal law prohibits Pell Grant recipients from using their grants for courses and programs that do not meet certain time or length requirements. Short-term workforce development programs can provide immediate economic return by helping job seekers gain the skills in education necessary to quickly join the workforce.

And so, this concept is part of the President's infrastructure proposal and is also part of Chairman Foxx's PROSPER Act. Expanding Pell to shorter programs is important and will foster workforce education in a very positive way that focuses on skills, rather than simply credentials.

And so, with that, Mr. Chairman, thank you for the time, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Acosta follows:]

STATEMENT OF R. ALEXANDER ACOSTA
SECRETARY OF LABOR
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
April 17, 2018

Chairman Brady, Ranking Member Neal, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the invitation to testify today. I am pleased to appear before this Committee to discuss the Administration's efforts to help American job seekers develop the skills necessary to excel in the family-sustaining jobs of today and tomorrow. At the Department of Labor, we are creating opportunity for all Americans by expanding apprenticeships across all industries, streamlining traditional workforce education, and providing state leaders the flexibility to meet the unique needs of job creators and their local workforces.

These opportunities position American job seekers and working Americans to participate in the robust economic growth underway across our nation. 2017 was a year of significant growth for the U.S. economy and workforce. In its first year, the Trump Administration has delivered increased opportunities for working Americans, American job seekers, and American job creators.

The President's tax reform is promoting investment in the United States, strengthening the American economy, and putting money back into the pockets of hardworking Americans. Tax reform is also about job creation and opportunity. As companies have seen their tax burdens lowered, this has translated into greater investments in the American workforce and pay raises, bonuses, and benefits to working Americans across our nation—to date, over 500 companies have announced bonuses to over four million working Americans as a result of the President's tax reform. And the job creation effects of additional capital expenditures, repatriation of dollars, and competitive tax rates, have yet to be quantified.

Since taking office, President Trump has ushered in a renewed sense of economic optimism that has seen tangible and quantifiable results in our economy and our workforce.

- Since the election, the American economy has added almost 3 million jobs;
- In March 2018, for the sixth month in a row, the unemployment rate was at a 17-year low of 4.1 percent;
- In March 2018, the level of total nonfarm jobs reached an all-time high (148,230,000);
- In March 2018, average hourly earnings rose by 2.7 percent over the previous 12 months and the three-month average increase in earnings was the highest since 2009; and
- In February 2018, the number of job openings was 6.1 million.

2017 was a productive and busy year for the Department of Labor. If the first quarter of 2018 is any indication, this year we will increase the pace of our work on behalf of the American people. President Trump's commitment to working Americans and American job seekers is at the heart of the Department's work: Creating Jobs in America.

We have accomplished much on behalf of working Americans, American job seekers, and American job creators. We are hard at work to increase employment opportunities for all Americans, enforce safe, healthy workplaces for working Americans, and ensure that the Department's regulations make sense. I am proud and humbled to lead the Department of Labor in this critical work.

President Trump's priorities for the Department are to create jobs, more jobs, and even more jobs. An important part of that effort is creating favorable conditions to foster job growth in the United States—through common sense regulation, tax reform, and fair trade. An equally important part is creating opportunities for Americans to develop the skills to fill—and succeed in—the jobs of today and tomorrow.

Expanding Apprenticeships in America

The American workforce is the greatest in the world. The American workforce is skilled, hardworking, and innovative. To take advantage of opportunities, however, Americans must have the skills that the jobs of today and tomorrow demand. There are many paths to family-sustaining jobs. Apprenticeships are one way the Department is changing our nation's approach to workforce development.

High-quality programs—including apprenticeships—that instruct Americans in the trades deserve the same respect as traditional education options. The benefits of apprenticeships are well known: graduates of apprenticeship programs earn an average of $60,000 per year; and more than eight in ten graduates remain in their employment nine months after completing their apprenticeships. This represents real, tangible opportunity for many Americans.

Consistent with the President's Executive Order on Expanding Apprenticeships in America, the Department is developing a framework for Industry-Recognized Apprenticeships that will be flexible and responsive to market needs, less bureaucratic, and more attractive to American job creators. These programs will not be micromanaged from Washington, D.C. This initiative will promote high-quality apprenticeships across all industries, including manufacturing, infrastructure, cybersecurity, and health care, among others.

In October 2017, after considering hundreds of applicants, I announced the members of the President's Task Force on Apprenticeship Expansion. Comprised of companies, trade and industry groups, educational institutions, labor unions, joint labor-management organizations, states, and other third parties, the Task Force is examining how to expand high-quality apprenticeship programs across all industries. The Task Force will issue a report to the President with its recommendations late this spring.

Expanding and Supporting the Workforce

In February, the number of open jobs in the United States was 6.1 million. The construction industry alone had 196,000 openings nationwide. Manufacturing had another 426,000 openings nationwide.

There are good, family-sustaining jobs available—many which do not require a college degree—that remain unfilled because willing Americans lack the skills to fill them. The "skills gap" not only prevents willing Americans from participating in America's economic growth, but it prevents industries such as manufacturing, utilities, and technology, from maximizing their potential and unlocking further growth and opportunity. Americans across our nation are ready and willing to fill these jobs—the Department is hard at work to provide opportunities for all Americans to develop the necessary skills to do so.

One such program delivering opportunity is the Department of Labor's YouthBuild program. Last year, I visited Truckee Meadows Community College in Reno, Nevada and saw the YouthBuild program in action. I was impressed. I toured an HVAC certification program where students learn theoretical knowledge in the classroom and develop practical skills in the workshop with the guidance of experienced instructors.

I often talk about the importance of measuring metrics that matter such as outputs instead of inputs. But at times, it is important to look at other metrics like individual impact. Sometimes, an actual discussion with program participants can provide a degree of context that no statistics can provide. While visiting Truckee Meadows Community College, I spent some time speaking with the students about the program, about how they became interested in HVAC, about where they see their futures. Some of them shared impactful stories. One student, in particular, told me how the YouthBuild program had changed his life: he had gone from homelessness and hopelessness to developing in-demand skills, living in his own apartment, making a living, and now seeing a future ahead of him.

The Department's YouthBuild program provided this student the opportunity to learn the skills necessary to find a start in the HVAC industry—and he seized the opportunity. Last year, he was making about $12 an hour. Today, he is making $14 an hour. He is a few months away from graduating from the program with his skills certificate, he has medical benefits for the first time in his life, and he now plans to continue his education. He is looking forward to graduating as a certified HVAC technician, earning more, and working toward a family-sustaining future. His story is a powerful example of the opportunities that skills-based education can provide.

Too often, however, skills-based education is seen only as a secondary option, dismissed and stigmatized as a path that is "less than" success. A traditional four-year college education can be extremely valuable, but that is not always the case. For the students who fail to graduate or graduate only to find they are unable to find work in their field, the student debt they assumed reminds them that their degree may not have prepared them with the skills demanded by the modern workplace. We must ask ourselves: do we better serve students by providing them a full range of occupational options in high school—complete with average salaries, educational requirements, average times to completion, and average employment rates—for them to choose or by suggesting that they attend a traditional four-year college and assume student debt with the hope that they will find their calling?

Investing in America's Infrastructure and The American Workforce

The President's bold plan to invest in and strengthen our nation's infrastructure—including modernizing roads, bridges, tunnels, and airports—will create more opportunities across the

United States for Americans to build their careers while building a stronger foundation for our nation. This is a great time to be a job seeker in America.

If Congress passes the President's plan, the investments in our nation's infrastructure will create jobs across our nation—from Key West, Florida, to Barrow, Alaska. But the gains will not be limited to infrastructure jobs. The President's plan will strengthen the economy and create jobs in sectors beyond construction, such as hospitality, food service, and retail as infrastructure projects break ground. Americans are ready and willing to fill these jobs, and they will need specialized skills to get hired, putting them on a path to family-sustaining jobs long into the future.

The improvements will also be felt by Americans driving over new and improved bridges, roads, and tunnels; Americans traveling through airports and seaports; and Americans who depend on our nation's infrastructure as the lifeblood of their businesses—our nation's miners and growers, makers and builders, movers and drivers.

More than 40 years ago, the New River Gorge was an obstacle to swift and smooth transportation in West Virginia. Crossing the gorge required a 45 minute drive down a narrow winding road to a small, aging bridge. Most drivers would add hours to their trip to avoid the New River Gorge entirely. Using American ingenuity, American steel, and West Virginian grit, a beautiful and record-breaking arch bridge was built that cut that 45 minute trip to 45 seconds. Improved infrastructure improves the quality of life for all Americans.

With the improvements to our nation's physical infrastructure, the President has also proposed important investments in our nation's workforce development, helping to ensure more Americans are prepared to excel in the new jobs that will be created. The plan features common sense proposals to make it easier for Americans to access skills-based learning by reforming a federal bureaucracy that is often too cumbersome and limits Americans from using federal assistance outside of traditional education.

The President's plan proposes four important workforce development goals and the Departments of Labor and Education are ready and willing to work together to advance the President's plan:

1. Making high-quality, short-term programs that provide students with a certification or credential in an in-demand field eligible for Pell Grants;
2. Reforming the Perkins Career and Technical Education Program to ensure more students have access to high-quality technical education to develop the skills required in today's economy;
3. Better targeting Federal Work-Study funds to help more students obtain important workplace experience, including through apprenticeships; and
4. Reforming occupational licensing requirements for qualified individuals seeking to work on our nation's infrastructure projects.

Returning Flexibility to the States

The Federal Government has more than 40 workforce development programs spread across 14 agencies with a total annual cost of $17 billion. Despite changes in the most recent reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, now called the Workforce Innovation

and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the system remains fragmented at the Federal level, perpetuating unnecessary bureaucracy and complicating State and local efforts to meet the needs of Americans seeking workforce-related services. I am working with Secretary DeVos to develop a comprehensive plan to consolidate and reorganize Federal workforce development programs to ensure that American workers receive the highest quality services possible and are prepared to fill the high-growth jobs of today and tomorrow.

Providing States greater flexibility to administer resources efficiently and effectively is another way to better serve the individualized needs of Americans in various states and localities. To that end, the President's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget proposed broader waiver authority for the core WIOA programs, allowing the Department to trust our nation's governors with the responsibility of how best to operate their workforce systems.

Removing Barriers to Employment Through Occupational Licensing Reform

Today, there are more than 1,100 separate occupations licensed by at least one state. In 1950, only 1 in 20 jobs required an occupational license. Today, more than 1 in 4 Americans need a license to work. State licensing requirements have become increasingly burdensome and frequently create significant barriers to job opportunities for many Americans.

Occupational licensing not only creates artificial barriers to entry in many occupations across the United States, but it also stifles competition and impedes Americans' mobility between states. Military spouses and our nation's veterans, in particular, face these barriers more frequently. America's servicemen and women earn in-demand skills in the course of serving our nation. Too often, when they return home, they find their skills are not recognized and are told they need a state license to perform a job they have been doing for years in the military. Military spouses, too, may be subject to different state-specific licensing requirements each time their spouse receives a new posting, in many cases every two to three years.

The Department recently announced the next round of competitive funding grants to States to help address and encourage occupational licensing reform. States that are awarded the funds will objectively analyze their relevant licensing criteria for potential portability issues and determine whether licensing requirements are overly broad or burdensome, including requirements that present barriers to specific populations, such as returning military veterans and spouses, individuals with criminal records, and displaced workers.

My advice to state and local officials in this regard has been consistent and repeated: if licenses are unnecessary, eliminate them; if licenses are necessary, streamline them; and, if licenses are honored by one state, consider honoring them in yours with reciprocity.

Supporting America's Veterans by Helping Veterans, Service Members, and Spouses find Family-Sustaining Jobs

In 2017, the veteran unemployment rate was at its lowest since 2001 at 3.7 percent. In May 2017, President Trump signed the Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing American Military Veterans (HIRE Vets) Act and established a program that will go into effect in Fiscal

Year 2019 to recognize employers that recruit, retain, and employ veterans, and that support our nation's veterans.

In February, the Department launched the HIRE Vets Medallion Demonstration Program, which will allow the Department to demonstrate the HIRE Vets Medallion Program application process, raise awareness of HIRE Vets, and enable more employers to prepare to successfully garner recognition when HIRE Vets launches in 2019. The Demonstration Program will recognize up to 300 employers for their investments in recruiting, employing, and retaining our nation's veterans.

Conclusion

As I have traveled our nation meeting working Americans and seeing their work, there is no doubt in my mind: the American workforce is the greatest workforce in the world. The Department is keenly focused on providing all Americans opportunities to develop the skills necessary to excel in the good, family-sustaining jobs of today and tomorrow and to participate in the incredible economic growth that this Administration is creating.

American innovation, craftsmanship, and grit built iconic buildings, highways and infrastructure – the Empire State Building, the Golden Gate Bridge, the Willis Tower, and the Hoover Dam. As our nation undertakes the important work of building, rebuilding, and revamping our nation's infrastructure, it will be done by American innovation, craftsmanship, and grit.

I look forward to working with Congress on these important goals.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Thank you for your testimony, Mr. Secretary.

We will now proceed to the question-and-answer session. I would like to ask members to limit their questioning of our witness to three minutes so we can get through as many members as possible.

Without objection, so ordered.

Today on Tax Day, when American families are filing for the final time under the old code, we are here to talk about the economy driven by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. It is an economy experiencing the lowest unemployment rate since the turn of the century. And yet we still have record numbers of individuals on the sidelines and out of the labor force. It has created this jobs gap that we have discussed; a growing difference between employers' demand for workers and the number of individuals in the workforce.

This is relevant to the committee because we know when individuals and parents work full time, the poverty rate drops to just three percent. We also know how work supports—such as child care, case management, and transportation—when combined with work, can help make the American Dream a reality for more Americans.

Mr. Secretary, what is your view on the jobs gap and the role your Department plays as we prepare to re-authorize the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, or TANF. How important is cross-agency collaboration and coordination?

Secretary ACOSTA. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the question.

And first, let me begin by acknowledging what you made clear, which is the jobs gap is significant, it is real, more than six million open jobs in the United States right now. As we look at how to fill that, cross-agency cooperation and collaboration is critical, not only with respect to TANF, which you referenced, but also with respect to workforce education.

There are currently over 40 different workforce education programs across agencies. That is a number of programs that often overlap. We have requested, for now two years in a row, flexibility so that governors can redirect funds within their state from one workforce education program to another education program on the theory that I think is absolutely correct, which is all the states are different, and Nebraska is going to be very different than California, which is very different from Florida.

And so, I would point out, it is not just cooperation between the agencies, but also flexibility to allow the governors to focus workforce education funds where they best serve the needs of their states.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Nebraska, I will point out, is a great place to do business. And even at the height of the great recession, rural Nebraska communities were going to high-unemployment states to recruit workers and to fill numerous unfilled jobs. And we know that having too few people to fill the jobs will actually draw down economic growth, unless the entire region can attract more workers.

Would you have some insight for rural states or even remote areas of the country to address this issue?

Secretary ACOSTA. Mr. Chairman, as you point out, you know, Nebraska's unemployment rate is below the national average. And

so, the skills gap is particularly acute. Something that I think is important, if we look at our educational system, is our educational system doing everything that it can to address what is really a skills deficit?

Coming at it a different way, we have traditional education and we have workforce education, and we have siloed the two without much communication between them.

And so, my question is this, as we think of the universities in each of our states, we are often familiar with how many students they enroll. But do we ask how many students do they graduate? What jobs did those students acquire upon graduation? How do those jobs pay? And are we really working to inform those educational systems of the in-demand skills so that they can focus students and just give them he options?

And so, for example, you know, there are many people that engage in study abroad and my question is if you can do a study abroad, why can't you do a semester at a police academy? Or if you are studying pre-law, why can't you do a semester at a law firm? Offer credit. Some professions do that well, but many, many do not.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Thank you. I now recognize the distinguished ranking member, Mr. Neal, for three minutes for any questions——

Mr. NEAL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, what is the current labor participation rate in America?

Secretary ACOSTA. The current labor participation rate is a little below 63 percent.

Mr. NEAL. And how does that stack up against the post-war norm?

Secretary ACOSTA. It is lower than it has been.

Mr. NEAL. It has been. So right now—I use your statistics all of the time, culled carefully—it is estimated by Labor that there are 6.2 million job openings right now across the country, is that accurate?

Secretary ACOSTA. That is accurate.

Mr. NEAL. And what would you suggest is the problem with getting people into the workforce?

Secretary ACOSTA. Mr. Ranking Member, there are a number of, I think, challenges to getting individuals into the workforce. As you reference in your opening remarks, opioids are a significant issue.

A Bureau of Labor statistics survey was conducted, and it asked adult prime age men—that is men 25 to 54 who are not in the workforce—"Did you take a pain killer yesterday?" Forty-four percent responded in the affirmative. A follow-up study was conducted out of Princeton, and that follow-up study asked, "Was it a prescription pain killer?" Thirty-one percent of prime age males that were not in the workforce responded, "yes."

And so, opioids are a significant challenge, and it is a challenge that I think is particularly pernicious, because people are told by, in essence, a fiduciary, a physician who they are supposed to trust, "Here is your prescription." They then take the prescription and they get hooked. And so, I think that is one challenge.

A second challenge that we have is changing demographics. If you look at what has happened over the last decade, the number of Americans that have gone from prime age—25 to 54—versus 55 and above has shifted. And so, we need to start asking what are we doing to provide workforce education to older Americans?

Mr. NEAL. Thank you. And Mr. Secretary, in addition to what you have just stated, labor force participation rates are also predicated in some measure on supply of immigrants, correct?

I mean you have just made the argument here, given the fact that I think the average American family now is having 1.7 children, as birth rates have declined, I think that you are making the argument in some measure we need a steady stream of immigrants, a different skill set. Would you agree with that position?

Secretary ACOSTA. Sir, I believe the administration has proposed concepts that look at the skills of immigrants as they come into the Nation.

Mr. NEAL. Right, but part of the draw is also at the low end of the wage set, as well, correct?

Secretary ACOSTA. Mr. Chairman, at the low end of the wage set, one issue that I think also is very important are re-entry programs. And there are a number of Americans that are leaving prisons right now and are looking for jobs. In fact, 84 million—I believe the Department just announced a grant program for $84 million to focus on workforce education around re-entry.

Mr. NEAL. Thank you. And your participation in this this morning is really critical. It is one of the most looming issues across the country. And it has really roiled the political debate across the country. So, I hope that we can find a bipartisan path on some of the suggestions that you have offered today, as well as some of the ideas that we might have on the Democratic side.

Secretary ACOSTA. Thank you.

Mr. NEAL. Thank you, Mr.——

Secretary ACOSTA. I would be happy to.

Mr. NEAL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Thank you. I now recognize Mr. Nunes.

Mr. NUNES. I yield to Mr. Johnson.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Johnson.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary, I am pleased your department is working hard to make association health plans a reality, given how important good, quality health insurance is to workers. Mr. Secretary, wouldn't you agree that AHPs can play a role, an important role, in getting folks off the sidelines and into a job? And I will continue to follow your work closely.

Now, Secretary, in my time as chairman of Social Security, I have also been working hard on the policies to help Americans return to work. For example, my bill, the Promoting Opportunity for Disabilities Benefit Applicants Act, would help denied disability benefit applicants return to the workforce by requiring Social Security to provide information about employment support services.

Many of these folks have already been out of the workforce for an extended period, so providing information on training and employment is an important step to helping more folks return to work.

Mr. Secretary, what are some of the training and employment services your agency offers to help people get back into the workforce?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, thank you for the question. Let me take each of those parts separately.

First, you referenced association health plans. And I do think that there is a significant cost differential between the large group market and the smaller group market. To the extent association health plans would provide a mechanism for particularly small businesses, which are the engine of job creation to access the large group market, I think that would contribute to small business growth, would reduce the cost of health care, would still provide access to quality care, because the large group market is quite high quality care, and is used by all the large corporations around our Nation, and I think would help all those Americans that are looking for health care that are now unable to access it because their small businesses do not offer it.

You referenced some of the services that are provided. I have been to many, many one-stop centers, many workforce education centers. And, you know, they provide a full range of services, from efforts to help write resumes, to connecting individuals with job creators. They sponsor job fairs, they make suggestions as to how to apply, they provide access to job training. You know, well—when they are well operated, these centers are a resource for individuals to find good, family-sustaining jobs.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, sir.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Thank you. I now recognize Mr. Levin.

Mr. LEVIN. Welcome, Mr. Secretary. Talking about workforce and skills, the President's initial budget, as you know, I think, proposed cutting funding for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act by 40 percent in 1 year. Was that a good idea?

Secretary ACOSTA. Mr. Congressman, the President's budget made some difficult choices, and understood that this was a process. Congress has, for all practical purposes, fully funded the Department, and that is the——

Mr. LEVIN. Okay, but——

Secretary ACOSTA [continuing]. That we have.

Mr. LEVIN. But can you answer my question? You are now part of the administration. Was that proposal of the President a good idea?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, the budget proposal, I believe, proposed reducing three programs within ETA, which is the program you are referencing, because those programs and the needs of those programs were being addressed elsewhere.

Congress made a judgement to the contrary. We respect Congress's judgement on that. The Department has now been fully funded.

Mr. LEVIN. Okay. So you don't want to answer it. I just point it out.

It also—you talk about the Department of Labor's YouthBuild program and applaud it. The President's budget proposed cutting it by 30 percent. Was that a good idea?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, the YouthBuild—and I have seen how effective the YouthBuild program can be, I think particu-

larly when it works with community colleges and community partners, as I have seen, including businesses. It can be very successful.

Mr. LEVIN. Okay.

Secretary ACOSTA. As I——

Mr. LEVIN. But let me just ask you. You are part of the administration now. Would you propose that kind of a cut again?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, the budget makes difficult choices——

Mr. LEVIN. Okay.

Secretary ACOSTA [continuing]. Between departments.

Mr. LEVIN. Okay. I don't mean to interrupt, but—I understand you don't want to answer it. I just hope, now that you are Labor Secretary, you will not propose flawed ideas.

Let me just briefly—I have got 30 seconds—talk about unemployment insurance. Mr. Neal talked about labor participation, and it dropped dramatically during the recession. And I think, in part, because of the failure of unemployment compensation to respond, people dropped out.

Are you now working on reforming the unemployment insurance program? It—you know, the benefits now have been cut in many places, and today only 27 percent of unemployment—okay.

Are you going to work on reform of the unemployment insurance?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, we are looking very closely at a number of issues around the unemployment insurance, which, as you are aware, is administered at the state level.

Mr. LEVIN. Under a federal umbrella, sir.

Chairman BRADY. [Presiding] All time has expired. So, as part of our hearing series on jobs and opportunity, I am glad we have the opportunity to explore how we can work with President Trump and Secretary Acosta to help workers on the sidelines find jobs and support their families.

It is clear that our human services programs have a role in supporting the next wave of workers needed to continue America's economic growth.

American companies are expanding and looking for more customers overseas, and if we are going to maximize America's growing economy in this new pro-growth Tax Code, then we are going to need more workers.

I have heard from business owners across the country who are looking desperately for qualified applicants, but they are striking out. That is why today we are looking at ways to help Americans who are stuck on the sidelines find work, grow their careers, and achieve the American Dream.

I want to thank you again, Secretary Acosta, for joining us. I apologize for being late by a few minutes, and I appreciate Chairman Smith kicking off this hearing.

But before I recognize Mr. Reichert I would like to take a moment to say thank you to our departing staff director, Dave Stewart. David has been by our side throughout the challenges of tax reform. He began in the institution of the House 17 years ago. I believe he was an intern for a Ways and Means Committee member, worked for a member on this committee and in key leadership roles, and then, for the past two-and-a-half years with his steady

leadership, we were able to pass the first tax reform in a generation. This helped so many of our families.

I want to, on behalf of the committee, thank you, David, for your service to the House, to the institution, and to the Ways and Means Committee. Thank you.

[Applause.]

Chairman BRADY. So, we are turning David back to his beautiful wife, Betsy, and their two young children, and wish him the very best.

With that, Mr. Reichert, you are recognized.

Mr. REICHERT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for being here this morning, Mr. Secretary. I was the chair of the Human Resources Subcommittee for a short while and was able to work with a rock star that you just hired, Rosemary Lahasky. So, congratulations on a great hire, and congratulations to Rosemary on her future career. And good luck.

Number one, I am just going to whip through this real quick. I can give you a lot of stats, but obviously we are talking about labor workforce gap. We have that in Washington State, we have a shortage of skilled workers from a machine shop in a small town in Central Washington called Cashmere from a high-tech business in Bellevue, Washington, one of the largest cities in Washington State on the west side of the Cascades. And I understand that you have to have cooperation between the local and state governments to get this done.

For example, one ridiculous rule in Washington State is a 17-year-old can't go to work at a machine shop because they are not allowed to operate an electric-powered screwdriver. So, how do they expect to get OJT? We have to look at high school, we have to look at trade schools and apprenticeship programs. Those are the things that you mentioned, and I appreciate that so much.

The one thing I really want to talk about is veterans. In 1972 I was hired by the King County Sheriff's Office as a deputy with a 10 percent veteran's preference. So, for all of you, they are responsible for me being here in Congress today.

You touched on your efforts like this in your written testimony regarding veterans. In particular, you talked about the enactment of the HIRE Vets Act to begin recognizing employers that recruit, retain, and employ veterans. And you also discussed a new demonstration program. Can you talk about that demonstration program a little bit more, please? You have about one minute.

Secretary ACOSTA. Thank you, Congressman. The HIRE Vets Act was enacted last year, but it was not funded. We found money within our budget to begin implementation through a demonstration project. That project will, I believe, expire or end on April 30th of this year, and we have already had nearly 1,000—I believe around 965, give or take—companies apply and submit under that program so that they can highlight the veterans that they have hired, so that the Department can recognize them.

And then I think that the high level of participation for what is just a demonstration project right now speaks to the success that this program can have when it is fully implemented.

Mr. REICHERT. I yield back.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, Mr. Reichert.

Mr. Thompson, you are recognized.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for being here. I want to associate myself with those who have spoken about the troubling situation in regard to both the job gap and the skills gap that we are facing.

My district just went through a very tragic situation, where we lost in fires about 8,000 homes. And you just can't rebuild 8,000 homes under perfect circumstances. But given the lack of craftspeople, carpenters, electricians, roofers, plumbers, framers, it is impossible. If we took every home-building craftsperson from west of the Mississippi and sent them into my county, Sonoma County, they couldn't rebuild the homes that they lost in the next decade. So, we have got to do something to figure this out.

It is alarming to me that we did this tax bill in this—well, not in this committee, because we didn't have any hearings, we didn't hear from any experts, we jammed it through without even thinking about including some of the bipartisan bills that deal with the skills gap.

Do you believe it is appropriate to use tax policy to close that skills gap?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, thank you for the question. I believe Congress has made judgements in other areas to use tax policy to address and incentivize employers to do any variety of things. And so that is certainly a tool that you have at your disposal.

Let me comment, if I could, on your—you know, the gap particularly in the building trades.

One of the challenges that I think we have, and it is a bipartisan one, is we have sent a bad signal—and I would say that we, as a government, are part of that—to so many Americans that one profession is better than another profession. And we need to step back, in my opinion, and say——

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, I am willing to stipulate, Mr. Secretary, that we need folks across the board in all kinds of critical jobs. So, I certainly don't want to fall into that trap of trying to steer people where they shouldn't be.

But I am concerned that we are not using the full power of our office to incentivize those jobs, as you mention. As I say, we had bipartisan bills in this committee. They weren't even included.

Other than hoping that there is going to be all of this great stuff that comes from this tax bill that was jammed through that created a $2.3 trillion addition to our debt, is there anything in that tax bill that you can point to that at all attempts to address that skills gap?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, certainly the fact that companies are now going to have more money available to them means that they can——

Mr. THOMPSON. So, other than the trickle-down.

Secretary ACOSTA. So, as I was saying, they can now—and I have heard small businesses saying that they are investing in their workforce because they know they need better——

Mr. THOMPSON. But is there anything in the bill, policywise——

Chairman BRADY. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Thompson [continuing]. That would do that, rather than hoping——

Chairman BRADY. Secretary Acosta has answered.

Mr. Thompson [continuing]. A trickle-down will work?

Chairman BRADY. And businesses have more money to invest in their workforce.

Mr. Roskam, you are recognized.

Mr. ROSKAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Acosta, thank you for your time today. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has created a resurgence of economic activity that we are familiar with and are happy with. One developer in my district, Troy Mertz of Gilberts Development, said this: "With the passage of the business tax cuts, U.S. national homebuilders have realized a huge improvement in cash flow, which has already spurred economic activity in the industry. In my project they just executed a $12 million contract in 2018 for 150 residential lots." Fantastic.

Can you give us a sense of the types of initiatives that you are taking, as it relates to this skills gap? It is a consistent theme here, we are hearing a lot about it. I know you are doing a lot about it. Could you just continue to educate us on the initiatives at the Department?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, thank you for the question. We are doing several things.

First, as I highlighted in my opening remarks, we are expanding apprenticeships across all industries. You know, work-while-you-learn—it works. It provides on-the-job training, it provides a paycheck, it gets individuals to work, it gives them a purpose.

We are also working with the American Association of Community Colleges and others to more closely integrate traditional education and workforce education. The economy has changed, the way that we communicate has changed. Yet the way that we educate is not changing all that much. The concepts of short-term credentials, short-term certificate programs—as I mentioned, Pell should be expanded to reach those—that can be stackable, that can be attained over time, where you have got lifelong earning and lifelong learning that run simultaneously—are very important.

We are also looking at how traditional education can be encouraged to take on more what I call on-the-job training. So, if you look at the way teachers are educated, for example, teachers have to go into a classroom and student teach. Doctors have to go into a hospital and actually do rounds. And so why is it so unusual to say that when colleges are offering theory, they should also offer opportunities for students to go in and work, not just to learn the career, but learn all those soft skills that are associated with working?

You know, there are students that come to Congress all the time, and they receive credit for working here. Why can they not receive credit for working in their chosen profession?

And so, I would like to say if you are studying criminology, why can't you do a semester at a police academy, just like folks do an internship up here on Capitol Hill?

Chairman BRADY. Thank you. The gentleman yields.

Mr. Larson, you are recognized.

Mr. LARSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Mr. Secretary. Along the same lines as the questioning of Mr. Neal and also Mr. Roskam, I would be delighted—and, based on your answers—to have you come up to our district. I think this jobs gap, as we were shown at the outset, and all the inherent problems, including, as Mr. Thompson mentioned, the opioid issues, deserve a different kind of approach.

Well, we have been working very hard with the academic sector, labor unions, and the private sector to try to really get after the whole jobs issue.

Back in 2013 Goodwin College didn't offer a manufacturing program, whatsoever. They now offer a bachelor's degree, they now have a credentialing program. They now have machinists from the IAM, both who need to be retooled on advanced machinists and operations skills that are required, as well as training another generation.

The President of Goodwin College goes out and actually meets with industry and business and talks about what are the skills that they need to be perfecting. What are they credentialing that they are going to need for the workforce of the future? They do so, along with The Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology. And in a collaborative effort, everybody is pulling together.

Louis Brandeis, I think, said it best, that states become laboratories for democracy. And I think this is a great opportunity, especially given your pursuit and what you are talking about, and the need for us to advance through our educational system a different approach that is going to do strong outreach, and combine those very academic, labor, and private-sector skills that often times have gone in different directions.

I would like to ask you to come up and then have an invitation to come up and meet with those impacted entities who have put forward a plan, and perhaps with the Department of Labor we can modify it in a way that works best to get after that skills gap issue that we have been addressing here this morning.

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, thank you. Thank you for the invitation and for those words describing that program. I would be happy to come visit.

And let me add that the community colleges and the educational institutions that partner with business, where business also has skin in the game, where there are funds or in-kind contributions that business puts up and where business then hires the graduates of those programs—because the community colleges look to business for input into the curriculum, so the curriculum is designed to meet those workforce needs are what work best. And if that is what is going on, I would love to see it.

Mr. LARSON. Absolutely. Thank you.

Secretary ACOSTA. Thank you.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, Mr. Larson.

Ms. Jenkins, you are recognized.

Ms. JENKINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Secretary Acosta, for joining us today.

With a quickly expanding job market now available, in part because of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, employers are facing workforce pipeline challenges across our country. And in fact, one Kansas-based company, Spirit AeroSystems, testified last week before the

HR Subcommittee about some of the challenges that they face trying to fill open aerospace manufacturing jobs.

At Spirit's 4 United States plants they have hired more than 4,000 front-line employees since 2015. While that is great news for my state and national industry base, businesses like Spirit are increasingly struggling to find the qualified workers with the skill sets needed in today's advanced manufacturing environment. It is imperative that we look to additional policies which foster support for our private-sector workforce in order to build on the recent successful tax reform.

One policy that I believe in is the promotion of apprenticeships and technical education to strengthen and sustain our economy. In last week's hearing we heard how Spirit maintains an apprenticeship program with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, which represents roughly 750,000 workers who work in a variety of manufacturing and technical fields. So as Spirit pursues highly-skilled workers to fill job openings, one of the many steps they are taking is to launch a new apprenticeship program with one of their other labor unions this year there in their Wichita site.

Secretary, I know from your written testimony that the administration is supportive of expanding apprenticeships across the country. And perhaps this is a better question to ask you after the report from the President's task force on apprenticeship expansion comes out. But from your experience, are there particular legislative barriers to expanding these programs? Or conversely, legislative actions that we all can take proactively to further incentivize more companies to establish apprenticeship programs?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congresswoman, thank you for the question. And as you noted, your state has a particularly low unemployment rate, about 3.4 or 3.5 percent. And so, you know, in a sense it is great when job creators, really, really, really want workers because it helps the job seeker. But then it sort of also incentivizes them to participate in programs like these apprenticeship programs.

Apprenticeship programs work in part because job creators focus on the skills that are being demanded. They are part of it. They say, "This is what we need," and the apprenticeships respond by teaching those skills. And so, the administration is looking to expand them broadly.

They have been used traditionally in the building trades, and in the building trades they have worked very well. The industries outside the building trades have used them less, in part because of the regulatory barriers. And so, the vision of industry-recognized apprenticeships is to provide an alternative that has less of those barriers.

Ms. JENKINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, Ms. Jenkins.

Mr. Blumenauer.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you——

Chairman BRADY. You are recognized.

Mr. BLUMENAUER [continuing]. Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Thank you for joining us. I would like to return to something that my friend, Mr. Thompson, raised tangentially, in terms of dealing with the opioid crisis.

We have perhaps in some areas 20 percent of the population that is not able to be able to compete successfully for jobs, because they simply are either addicted or they can't pass a drug test. In some cases, there are problems using substances that are actually legal in the states—dealing with marijuana—that show up in trace amounts that are disqualifying, even if it doesn't speak to actually being impaired.

Do you have some thoughts about what we are going to do to be able to do a better job of reclaiming this vast pool of people who have, for one reason or another, been unable to pass the drug test, been unable to escape the impact of addiction in ways that can unleash the potential that they represent?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, thank you for the question. You know, this is very important, and I was thinking about it just this morning, as I was reading an article.

And, you know—there are sometimes very valid health and safety reasons why an individual that cannot pass a drug test shouldn't hold a certain job. And we need to recognize that and, if there are health and safety reasons or others, you know, then the companies certainly have the right to say you can't work in that job.

At the same time, I think sometimes, whether it is in this or other areas, job creators are not well informed about an individual's skills, and make the assumption that because there is a negative result on a test they would not be a good employee or they would pose a risk. And so, I think it is important to take a step back.

Now that, you know, we have a lower labor force participation rate, and we have all these Americans that are looking to work and ask "are we aligning our drug policies and our drug testing policies with what is right for the workforce?"

And so, for example——

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Excuse me, Mr. Secretary, my time is almost up, but I just—I appreciate what you are saying. I hope that there is a way that we can work to be more artful and specific about what we do with people to be able to judge impairment and be able to have that broader concern that you are talking about and would look forward to maybe providing a little back-and-forth with your team to be able to understand how we can build on the opportunities to reclaim them, recognizing the reality that you just outlined.

Secretary ACOSTA. I would be happy to, Congressman. Thank you.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you very much.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, Mr. Blumenauer.

Mr. Paulsen, you are recognized.

Mr. PAULSEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, as you know, in Minnesota we have got an unemployment rate of 3.1 percent, which is also significantly lower than the national average right now. Our state also ranks third, nationally, in the labor force participation rate, with over 70 percent of eligible individuals participating in the workforce; and, we rank second with the proportion of individuals who have a 2-year degree or higher, yet, in Minnesota, we face the exact same skills gap

challenges that are impacting employers of all types and sizes across the country.

And I heard from a lot of farmers who are seeking seasonal workers and various vocational industries that are seeking the next generation of those truck drivers, electricians, woodworkers, manufacturing, the trades, and they all are saying the exact same thing. They can't find enough skilled workers to hire.

I have spoken with a lot of high school counselors who are trying to also advocate on behalf of career and technical education for the students that they know may not excel as well at a traditional four-year institution, and we know that research is showing that people with career and technical education are slightly more likely to be employed than those counterparts that might just have academic credentials.

And I also know of many employers that are using the benefits of the tax cuts and the tax overhaul to reinvest in education and reinvest in training their employees. So, our employers now are working on these apprenticeship programs, similar to what Representative Jenkins had mentioned, to draw that talent to their industries.

And in Minnesota we have got organizations like RealTime Talent. They are a non-profit. They are working to specifically address the jobs gap. So RealTime Talent is bringing together education and workforce and economic development, and then private industry leaders to address our state's looming talent shortage, which is now anticipated to be about 62,250 workers short by the year 2020.

And I know last summer you visited Minnesota, you discussed some workforce development and apprenticeship programs with business executives that are in those struggles finding workers. And in your testimony today you also mentioned that high-quality programs, including those apprenticeships that instruct Americans in the trades, deserve the same respect as traditional education options.

So, with that being said, I would just like to ask if you would be willing to come back to Minnesota some time this year to visit some of those apprenticeship programs that Minnesota companies have worked with now to establish in order to accelerate workforce readiness and global competitiveness.

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, I would be happy to. I think those programs are emblematic of what we need more of, and I would be happy to visit them.

Mr. PAULSEN. Good. Thanks, Mr. Secretary. I will follow up with you in writing and give you a more formal invitation. But we look forward to that and highlighting those opportunities.

Secretary ACOSTA. Thank you, Congressman.

Mr. PAULSEN. I yield back.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, Mr. Paulsen.

Mr. Kind, you are recognized.

Mr. KIND. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, thanks for your attendance, being here today. Mr. Secretary, I am afraid that we are in a bit of a conundrum, philosophically. We have an administration in power, we have a majority power in power in Congress who believes that any need-based program is, by definition, considered welfare, and must be reformed

or cut. And yet those that we need to reintegrate into the workforce are, by definition, those who are even lacking basic skills, meaning they are going to be in need of need-based funding program.

And yet we have an administration that came into office last year, the first budget that they submitted they proposed cuts of up to 40 percent on adult job training programs.

Early last year the President came into Milwaukee in my home state, talked about this great apprenticeship program. And I went back and looked at the first budget the administration submitted. While he was talking about the value of apprenticeship, there was a 50 percent proposed cut to apprenticeship programs. Fortunately, there has been some bipartisan support to make sure that that did not happen, and it seems as if now the administration is coming around in regards to supporting apprenticeship programs.

But we are hearing recently that there is a potential budget rescission bill in the works that will cut Medicare, Social Security leading up to the mid-term elections. That would be political suicide. Defense spending won't be cut. Interest on the debt can't be cut. So that leaves that very small discretionary part of the budget that could be subject to huge, Draconian budget cuts. Your domain.

Is your Department involved at all in recommending any spending cuts to a potential budget rescission bill that might come before Congress in the next couple of weeks?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, first let me take your question in parts.

I believe that the budget that was submitted requested actually an increase in apprenticeship funding.

Mr. KIND. I am asking you now is your Department right now involved in recommending spending cuts for a possible budget rescission bill that will come before us for consideration within the next couple of weeks?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, we are discussing potential rescissions with OMB.

Going to the point that you raised, because I believe you stated that we had requested a reduction in apprenticeship funding, and my recollection is the opposite, where we actually requested an increase in apprenticeship funding——

Mr. KIND. The most recent budget you submitted, but not the first one, when this administration came into office, but——

Secretary ACOSTA. I believe that the——

Mr. KIND. So, it is my understanding—and you are able to testify for the committee that there is a budget rescission bill in the works, your Department is involved in recommending various cuts to that rescission bill. Is that right?

Secretary ACOSTA. I think, Congressman, what I said is that we are in discussions with OMB around a potential rescission. If there is a bill, that would be for Congress to determine.

Mr. KIND. Well, I would certainly hope that you would go to bat and defend these job training programs. And perhaps the chickens are coming home to roost with the recent Congressional Budget Office score showing that with the recently-enacted tax cut there would be another $2.3 trillion of national debt accumulated over the next 10 years. These programs will be in jeopardy. So, I ask you to at least go to bat for them.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you.

The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Marchant, you are recognized.

Mr. MARCHANT. Thank you for being here today, Secretary. Recently in the Dallas morning news, it was reported that because the tax reform—because of the exploding economy in Dallas-Fort Worth—that 92 percent of home builders are saying that their projects are being seriously affected and slowed down by the worker shortage.

At the heart of that is, in Dallas, a participation, the participation rate. How many able-bodied men are on government-assisted programs that do not require any work requirement?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, I don't have that data. I can tell you that in Texas the labor force participation rate is above the national average by just under one percent. It is at 63.6 percent.

Mr. MARCHANT. Well, most of the people in my district—and they talk to me at town hall meetings, they talk to me in my office—they believe, nationwide, there are millions of men that are on some kind of assistance program that have no work requirement whatsoever; and, they believe that if that were the case, then there would be another million or so workers available for our economy.

And I think the number-one impediment to our economy getting any better, especially in my district, is going to be a higher participation rate and these businesses are also complaining that their competitors, their unscrupulous competitors, are going out and employing illegal aliens, and are not participating in the program that verifies that they are legal. And so, they feel like they have been penalized by the number of illegals—not taking skilled jobs, but are taking jobs that are not on the books, they are paying into the system, they are using false identities.

So, it is the perception in Dallas, Texas that first we have a lot of men, able-bodied men, that, if there was some work requirement—required on some of their benefits, that they would enter the workplace, and that we really need some kind of a system that will make employers verify that their employee—legal employees.

Thank you.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you.

The gentleman's time is expired. You can answer in writing, Mr. Secretary, to Mr. Marchant.

Mr. Pascrell, you are recognized——

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for joining us. There are 27 million working poor in this country, people who are in the labor force working, but whose incomes fall below the poverty level. The problem is not work, the problem is wages.

Rents have risen 66 percent since the year 2000. Perhaps that is why half-a-million people are homeless, the average of whom is just nine years old.

Health care costs have increased. And, by the way, 21 states have seen an alarming increase in the death rate.

So, 1.5 million American households live on less than $2 a day. That figure has nearly doubled since 1996, the same year the welfare reform bill was passed with strict work requirements. It

passed the Congress, and my colleagues on the other side want to double down now.

The EITC has been more effective at reducing the welfare rolls than any work requirement. Economists at UC Davis and UCLA have studied this, and the EITC has long-term effects on employment, health, and education. The ranking member of this committee has a bill to expand the EITC to childless workers. Why don't we have a hearing on that?

And my question to you pertains to trade. The fiscal year 2019 budget proposed gutting trade adjustment assistance, which retrains workers displaced by trade by more than $1.7 billion. How do you explain your commitment to workers finding jobs when you slash the support?

And the second question is the ILAB, the International Labor Affairs Bureau, enforces the international labor commitments. The budget cut 80 percent from them, those two things. How does that help us get back to where you think we should be?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, thank you. Thank you for the question. Let me begin with the first.

The Trade Adjustment Assistance money is mandatory money. And therefore, it is not slashed by the budget. In fact, what the budget shows is, as more people get back to work, there would be a budget savings. So, what you call a budget reduction, it is not a reduction in funding, but is actually a budget savings from reduced unemployment insurance as more people come back——

Mr. PASCRELL. Do you think that program is a success right now?

Secretary ACOSTA. That program has some challenges. And I am happy to discuss those with the Congress. I think the mandatory funding—let me focus on the question, because the mandatory funding is not reduced, but it does have challenges.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you. The time is expired.

Mr. Reed, you are recognized.

Mr. REED. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here today.

Mr. Secretary, I am more than willing, as my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are trying to do, is trying to make a work requirement, some sort of requirement that is heartless, that doesn't show that we care about workers, and that is the farthest thing from the truth. I embrace that brand as being the party of work, because it is not just about work in regards to what it does for a person's paycheck, but what it does for a person's dignity, for their pride. And I am proud to be an individual that will support those types of requirements.

And so, one of the things I wanted to ask your input on is, as I have looked at this issue and I have studied the multiple workforce development, work requirements under TANF, and issues there, I see a silo effect throughout the country and the various organizations and agencies that are responsible for dealing with this issue.

Do you agree there is a silo effect? And what I mean by that is that the agencies can't seem to talk across their territories and work together in a very efficient manner. It seems like the left hand often doesn't know what the right hand is doing across the

bureaucracy of the Federal Government and down below, in the state and local governments.

Do you agree that is in the system? And if you do, why does that occur, and what can we do to make sure that that doesn't continue, going forward, with policies we enact here?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, I do believe there is a silo effect. I noted earlier the silo between workforce education and traditional education, and I do think there is a silo effect as well between what we do at the Department of Labor and some of the programs at HHS.

As importantly, I believe that there are congressionally-imposed artificial separations. As I mentioned, we have asked for greater——

Mr. REED. Why do you think that is there? Why do you think that is there?

Secretary ACOSTA. Well, for example, there are any number of governors on both sides of the aisle that have asked me for additional flexibility on WIOA funding. They will say that the situation is different from New Jersey to California to Nebraska to New York, and they will say, "Can we move some spending from this line to this line because we have a greater need here?"

And my answer has been to all the governors, to the extent I have waiver authority, I am happy to engage in discussions with you. But Congress has not given me waiver authority on much of the WIOA funding.

Mr. REED. I appreciate that, Mr. Secretary, because that is right in the heart of legislation we have been proposing, is to give that flexibility waiver.

So, what I hear from your testimony is to encourage us, as legislators, if we want to promote a work requirement and to reward people and give them opportunities that a skill set will be able to take care of them and their families for a generation, break those silos, give flexibility so that we accomplish a mutual goal I think that we all share, Democrats and Republicans, to empower people to have the skills to be able to go out and take care of themselves. Would you agree with that?

Secretary ACOSTA. We should trust our governors, yes.

Mr. REED. Thank you.

With that, I yield back.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, the gentleman yields back.

Ms. DelBene, you are recognized.

Ms. DELBENE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being with us.

The world has entered a period of significant technological advancement, which has sparked what is being described as the fourth industrial revolution. The economy is changing so rapidly and so profoundly that in some cases we may not even know what some of the jobs of the future may be.

According to the World Economic Forum's report, "The Future of Jobs," 65 percent of children starting school today will have jobs that do not yet exist. Additionally, an Accentia report found that 74 percent of business and information technology leaders in 31 countries say their organization is entering areas that have yet to be defined.

While this progress means new opportunities, it also means new challenges. And according to the OECD, nearly 10 percent of jobs in OECD countries are at risk of being completely displaced by automation.

So, despite all of this, I haven't heard you mention what the Department of Labor is doing to pivot to focus on the new economy or the fourth industrial revolution, and I wondered if you could tell us how the Department of Labor is allocating resources to prepare American workers for the jobs of tomorrow, and ready itself for the impact of things like automation and artificial intelligence.

Secretary ACOSTA. Congresswoman, these are very important questions. And you know, it is interesting that you cite the World Economic Forum, because I was talking about these very same questions at their annual conference.

A few points. First, the Bureau of Labor Statistics came out with a report in 1995 and came out with a follow-up report in 2005. It did not come up with a third report in 2015, but hopefully will be coming out with a report no later than this summer on the gig economy—the entrepreneurial economy—to really measure and try to quantify how our economy is changing. Between 1995 and 2005 there wasn't that much of a change, but I personally believe that there is a substantial change between 2005 and now.

The second thing—and this came up at that meeting, and was addressed by the World Economic Forum—is often we focus on the jobs that are being taken away and forget the jobs that are being added. So, one of the discussions at the World Economic Forum was between various online platforms—Etsy, eBay, and others—there are now 20 million small businesses here that have access to a global marketplace. And so, a small business, something that could be operated out of a home——

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Secretary, I am going to run out of time. But when you look at automation and artificial intelligence, those impacts are things that aren't necessarily jobs that are existing today. And so, the question is how are we being future-looking, and how are you putting resources towards being future-looking?

I have been working on legislation that would require you, along with the Departments of Education and Commerce, to help forecast the new economy. I hope you would work with me on that.

Thank you, and I yield back.

Secretary ACOSTA. Glad to do so.

Chairman BRADY. The gentlelady yields back.

Mr. Kelly, you are recognized.

Mr. KELLY. Thank you, Chairman.

Secretary, thank you for being here. Last month I had the opportunity to actually visit some places back in our district. One was Wheatland Tube, AK Steel, the Lord Corporation, and Sharon Fence. And I heard a common refrain: the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is working. But now businesses are faced with a much different problem: finding qualified workers to fill jobs.

Now, thanks to this President, we currently have record-low unemployment. But in order for it to keep growing, we need to do a better job at training and connecting workers with jobs.

It was interesting because when I heard Mr. Reed talking, about the dignity of work, that really made sense to me. And I looked this

up. Work is not a punishment or a necessary evil, nor is it a means of accumulating control, power, and wealth. Both of these ideas are contrary to the biblical view of work. We understand work as something intrinsically good. We are co-creators of God's world, and work is part of our contribution.

In light of all that, Mr. Secretary, I know the administration is taking a real serious look at work requirements and welfare programs. If you can, just a few thoughts on what role the workforce development programs can play in moving folks from welfare to work. There are so many people that are needed today in the workforce, and yet they are just not ready to go into the workforce. So, ideas you have addressing that?

And again, the main idea, that there is a dignity, there is a dignity in work.

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, thank you for your remarks. As you were speaking, I had a flash to a visit I had recently to Maryhaven Treatment Facility, which is an opioid treatment facility. And I was struck, because they do a very good job in treating someone for an addiction, but then they send them back, and often the person got there because they didn't have a job and they are leaving without a job.

And so, the Department of Labor has put out a call for proposals to do pilot programs and how we can integrate workforce services, workforce training, workforce counseling into opioid addiction treatment facilities on the theory—which I think is completely correct—that someone who has a job is going to have a purpose to avoid going back on the opioids, is going to have a purpose to then move forward.

Along the same lines, a second topic that I have talked about a lot and I truly believe, it is important not just to have a job, but a career path. And so how do we design jobs that have career paths? So, you have, for example, micro-credentials, so you begin with, for example, a pharmacy tech level one, and then someone knows that if they join an apprenticeship program they can go on to a level two or a level three, where you have a career path. And that gives individuals a purpose and a goal to move toward.

And all of those, I think, are very important.

Mr. KELLY. You are right. I got to tell you there is nothing harder for people that have an opioid addiction than to get a job after they go out of that. It is absolutely incredibly difficult. With all the good things I hear about we have to give these people a chance, you go to an employer who has a tremendous legal liability to anybody that has that type of condition, it is critical. It is hard to hire people like that.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, Mr. Kelly.

Ms. Chu, you are recognized.

Ms. CHU. Secretary Acosta, I would like to bring your attention to an LA Times article from January that found employers are increasingly threatening and intimidating immigrant workers to keep them from reporting illegal, unsafe, and unfair labor practices in the workplace.

The illegal labor practices reported a range of kinds of infringements from not paying workers, denying sick leave, and demanding

different documents than those required by federal immigration law for workers to continue their employment.

In California, 94 reports of threats and intimidation were made in 2017, and this is up from 7 that were done in 2015. So, from 7 to 94: something is clearly happening.

At the same time, administration officials like Tom Holman, deputy director of ICE or the Immigration, Customs Enforcement, have stated that they would like to see a 400 percent increase in ICE raids and audits of work site operations that employ immigrants.

I am deeply concerned that the anti-immigrant actions of this administration, particularly the drastic increase in ICE raids in places of work, have emboldened employers to increase threats and intimidation tactics against immigrant workers, and that is unacceptable.

I believe these workers who are often exploited have the right to assert their workplace rights without facing threats of retaliation from unscrupulous employers. That is why I plan to reintroduce my bill, the Protect Our Workers from Exploitation and Retaliation Act, or the POWER Act. This bill would provide critical labor protections for the most vulnerable workers involved in a workplace claim who fear significant harm from their employers by expanding visa eligibility.

This bill would also strengthen the Department of Labor's investigative powers to more effectively prosecute employers who break the law. These reforms are sorely needed in order to provide all workers with the assurance that they can speak up against illegal business practices without fear of retaliation.

And turning to a different topic, Secretary Acosta, I would like to ask you two yes-or-no questions.

Do employers currently get to decide what kind of cancer treatments their employees receive if they are sick? Yes or no.

Secretary ACOSTA. I believe that the choice of treatment should be up to the physician, not the employer.

Ms. CHU. Do employers get to decide which vaccines that children of their employers (sic) receive? Yes or no?

Secretary ACOSTA. Again, I think the choice among different vaccines is traditionally to the physician, not the employer.

Ms. CHU. And yet, when it comes to employees making decisions about birth care and birth control, a form of health care, this administration has taken a different stance. And in fact, it has released a rule that would allow virtually any employer to decide that their employees cannot have coverage of birth control as part of their health insurance. I strongly urge you to reconsider this rule and the destructive impact it will have on American women and their decisions about having a family.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Mr. Renacci, you are recognized.

Mr. RENACCI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Secretary, for being here. I want to touch on a couple areas.

But first—and I have heard this a number of times—look, the problem is not jobs, the problem is with the training to fill those jobs, in many cases. And I am seeing that back in my home state

of Ohio. And it is going to get worse, because the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act—the CBO did come out last week and say that the CBO score included that that Act would increase jobs over the next 10 years by 1.1 million more jobs. So, we are going to have more jobs without trained people.

I visit a local high school, and I was talking to the superintendent, and I ask him how many students were there. He said 1,300. I asked him how many were going to vo-tech, he said 29. I almost stopped in—just said, "Twenty-nine out of thirteen hundred?"

And what he told me was, "Congressman, there is a stigma to go to vo-tech. People don't want to go to vo-tech. They are being told the only way to be successful is go to college." So, there is this stigma that we have out there, because we have told everybody the only way to be successful is to go to college.

And I know in Medina County, which is also in my district, there is a Medina County manufacturers partnership. This industry-led group worked with the local community college on creating a curriculum attaining classroom space for technical instruction related to careers they are looking to fill. While the first group only had 5 participants, they are now expecting 30. But there is still a stigma. There is a stigma to this.

So, I am asking you. What can we do, and what can you do, as Secretary, to change that stigma? Because clearly, these are good-paying jobs. You can come out and start with 60 percent more than you can with a college education with some of these jobs.

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, thank you for the question. And there is a stigma, and I think it is unfortunate and flows from facts that aren't fully shared.

And so, as I have traveled and I have talked to governors, ideas that I have heard—one governor mentioned that maybe high schools should have a career awareness series, where they point out these are the various career choices you have, these are the estimated salaries, these are the number of years of education that you need, this is the likely debt, and so let individuals make a choice based on data and based on information.

I think of the way that we have structured a lot of the—for example, the Pell Grants. Pell Grants will for pay for degrees, but they will not necessarily pay for shorter-term, high-quality certificate programs, one of the reasons I mentioned in the opening, and one of the reasons, for example, in the infrastructure proposal and the PROSPER Act, short-term Pell Grants are being proposed. The infrastructure proposal is going to create a number of jobs. And if individuals choose to have certificate programs so they can get the skills to fill those jobs, rather than a full degree, they should have the ability to choose that and still benefit from programs like Pell.

Finally, by having those programs, we are sending a signal that one is better than the other. And those are really bad signals to send.

Mr. RENACCI. Thank you.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you.

Mr. Holding, you are recognized.

Mr. HOLDING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, it is great to see you there today. Thank you for being here.

I represent one of the fastest-growing districts in America, and we have to have more people joining the workforce if we are going to keep up the pace of that growth, and also the pace of the economic expansion that we are experiencing, as a result of tax reform.

Now, I appreciate the administration's focus on encouraging economic mobility through workforce development, and I note that the President signed the executive order last week on reducing poverty by promoting opportunity in the economic mobility, and I look at this chart that we have here today, which I believe you mentioned has 40-some-odd programs throughout the government to train folks to either enter the workforce or increase their value in the workforce.

And when I look at all the programs—and these are programs to benefit people from low income, people who are unemployed, and I think that, every program that we ought to have ought to have some sort of work fair element to it for able-bodied persons who are—you know, have the ability to work, they are not taking care of family members, they are able-bodied, you know, every one of these programs needs to have some element in there to encourage work. So many times, I believe, that we discourage work and we need to try to get over that.

So, when you look across the spectrum of what your purview is as Secretary, the—what do you view is the major hurdle that prevents us from getting more towards a work fair programs, rather than just welfare programs when it is appropriate for the certain individuals?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, thank you for the question. And so, first, let me agree that states and one-stop centers that have work fairs have been incredibly successful. And, I can't help but mention about a week-and-a-half ago I was in Iowa and the governor mentioned an idea that I thought was really interesting, where they are having, in essence, an inverse work fair.

It has gotten to the point that employers want to hire so much that they are having the individuals that are looking for jobs be present, and then the employers go and they interview applicant to applicant in an inverse way. And they have found, for example, that that allows applicants that otherwise might be nervous and might not have very good interviewing skills to be exposed to any number of employers.

And so, states are experimenting. States are looking for innovative ways to do this. And the states that have the greatest need are coming up with great ideas.

Mr. HOLDING. Well, I look forward to working with you to finding those great ideas and applying them here to anything that we can do in Washington to move towards more work fair rather than welfare. Thank you.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you.

Mr. Lewis, you are recognized.

Mr. LEWIS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Mr. Secretary. Good to see you. And Secretary of Labor, what can you do to see that people receive their wages and we are not seeing that people wages are taken from them, or wages theft?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, certainly the Wage and Hour Division has very vigorous enforcement. And if—you know, I am happy to share the data. I don't have it at my fingertips, but hundreds of millions of dollars are being returned to individuals as a result of the enforcement of the Wage and Hour Division.

Mr. LEWIS. Well, as Secretary of Labor, can you use your powerful position and influence to see that companies, businesses provide people with a livable wage?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, certainly Congress has passed any number of laws that regulate the wages that should be paid, whether it is overtime, whether it is minimum wage. And we enforce those laws, and we do so vigorously.

Mr. LEWIS. But that is hundreds and thousands and millions of our citizens work each and every day, hard labor, and they are not receiving livable wages. Is there something that you can do, something you can say?

Secretary ACOSTA. So, Congressman——

Mr. LEWIS. To create this climate, this environment, where people should receive livable wages.

Secretary ACOSTA. So, Congressman, as I said, Congress—this body has enacted laws that govern wages. Over the past year we have recovered more than 269 million in wages for more than 241,000 employees from about 29,000 cases where we enforced the laws that this body has passed. And so, we are enforcing those laws vigorously. We take the obligations quite seriously.

And in fact, if you look at the budgets—and I mention this because we have talked about budgets—the enforcement side of the budget hasn't—despite the budget pressures and the recognition that we need to reduce budgets—the enforcement side of the budget has not gone down. If you look at other parts that are closely related—EBSA that has to do with pensions and retirement collections—we have had record collections. If you look at OSHA, we have had an increase in inspections. And so, we take those obligations to enforce the laws that this body has passed quite seriously.

Mr. LEWIS. Thank you.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, Mr. Lewis.

Mr. Meehan, you are recognized.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to—coincidentally, to be grateful to be following my good friend, Mr. Lewis, who yesterday had the great pleasure to present at St. Joseph's University right near my district, where they had high praise for your moments there. Thank you for taking time to come up to Pennsylvania, Mr. Lewis.

Mr. LEWIS. Well, thank you very much. I was honored and delighted to be there to receive a medal from St. Joseph. Dr. King spoke there in 1967, and I was invited, it was unbelievable group of students, elected officials, and others. Thank you——

Mr. MEEHAN. Well, thank——

Mr. LEWIS [continuing]. For allowing me to come to your district.

Mr. MEEHAN. They loved having you there. Thank you.

And nice to see you, Secretary, again. I want to take a moment just—you talk a little bit about the apprenticeship programs which have been effective.

Speaker Ryan came to my district to Penn Machine Works, and we had the owners, who are in advanced manufacturing, but it is still—you know, it is metal nuggets and things that are specialty, and they have a hard time finding employees. And they use the apprenticeship programs in concert with some of the other local schools. And when they can get somebody, they really take advantage of it.

And these are careers. You mentioned there was almost 500,000 jobs that are available in manufacturing that are going unfilled. What are we missing with respect to making that connection with regard to using apprenticeship programs to help find those kinds of people to get the training within the program for a career-sustaining position?

Secretary ACOSTA. Well, Congressman, thank you for the question. And as you mentioned, apprenticeship programs are quite successful.

Some of your colleagues, I think, have also touched on one of the issues, which is we are sending signals to young Americans that certain careers are encouraged and certain careers are discouraged.

You know, and it strikes me that young Americans want family-sustaining jobs, good jobs, family-sustaining jobs, and we should be empowering them with the information they need to make their choice of career based on how these jobs are going to pay, how these jobs are going to reward them.

So, this past Sunday I had the opportunity to go to an event called Helmets to Hard Hats, where veterans are recruited into the trades. And there was a woman who stood up and she said, "I was in the Army and I was training to be a medic. And then I talked to my brother, who was a sheet metal worker, and he said, "Why don't you try this out." And, she did. And she said she's making great money, she got a career right away, she went straight from the military to this job, and she loves it. We need to send that signal more often.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, Mr. Meehan.

Mr. Schweikert, you are recognized.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, something I have great interest in, and particularly if you read over the latest CBO numbers, they actually have in there as one of the constraints in our Nation's economic growth is labor force participation. Basically, they allude to, hey, we just don't have enough workers, which is an amazing thing to think about what the discussions were just a few years ago of not enough jobs.

As you do—you know, you have some very smart staff around you. I guess what we are up about 63 percent on the mean labor force participation number. Have they ever talked to you about where they think we could get to?

Secretary ACOSTA. So, Congressman, maybe—so where we think is a difficult—but it is interesting, if you break it down into different categories.

And so, one of the challenges—I spoke a little bit earlier about older Americans and demographic shifts. But I ran out of time and did not speak about younger Americans. And so, one of the big, big drops in labor force participation rate has come in younger Americans. And I think one of the challenges there is—you know, it is taking—on average it now takes six years to complete college, as opposed to four. And on average, the national graduation rate for those students that begin college is a little—just a little over half.

And so, one of the issues that we need to ask is how do we engage younger Americans in the workforce? How do we empower them with the skills to hold those jobs? Is the go to college for six years and then think about work the only model? Or are there work-and-learn experiences where we can bring them into the labor force earlier, empower them——

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. No, no, and you have actually spoken very elegantly on that subject multiple times here on, you know, what do we define as work, when your plumber actually makes more money than your vet, and they are married to each other, you know there is something going on in the economy.

You may actually have some other, though, factors to think about: accreditation of university programs. When, you know, you visit Silicon Valley, or you visit these and say, well, we hire a computer science major and then spend two years training them so they can actually function in our business, wouldn't it be neat if they spent those four years getting—but then you meet with the university, and the university says, well, we can't do that because the accreditation won't give us credit for that.

Another thing is also—and this is just sort of an aside—I have great interest in sort of—is there a better way in the U6 data to be able to see discouraged workers, felons, other things that—we hear sort of anecdotes, we had some testimony here last week, there are some really neat things happening in our society where folks who have been marginalized are moving into work. How robust is that, and is there a better way to just keep that going, and have more of that happen?

With that I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, Mr. Schweikert.

Dr. Davis, you are recognized.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, I understand that DoL is working with congressional Republicans to require workers to take drug tests before they can receive the unemployment insurance benefits they have earned, even though there is no evidence that unemployed workers have a higher rate of substance use disorders than the general public, or that this requirement would be anything other than an additional humiliation inflicted on people who are working hard to find new jobs.

Since you support drug testing of workers, can you tell us the administration's plan for drug testing political appointees or senior-level management personnel?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, as you noted, there is a rule that we are developing, pursuant to congressional action. The rule was subject to a CRA. And therefore, as we develop that rule, we

are quite sensitive to the fact that there was a CRA, and that it must be substantially different.

With respect to the second question, I would refer you to the Office of Personnel Management, which would be much more familiar with those rules.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you very much. And I would be very concerned if we were to require drug testing for individuals who have earned benefits. And this category of individuals could be denied, and yet we have other individuals receiving public resources of public dollars where there is no requirement for them.

So, I thank you for your answer, and I will check that with the personnel management.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I will yield back.

Chairman BRADY. Yes, sir. Thank you, Dr. Davis.

Mrs. Walorski, you are recognized.

Mrs. WALORSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Secretary Acosta, for being here. I chaired the Nutrition Subcommittee for the Ag Committee in 2015 and 2016. We conducted a comprehensive review of SNAP, formerly known as food stamps, over 16 hearings. One thing that stuck out is the idea of moving away from just counting the number served and focusing instead on outcomes.

So, we can't just stop asking how many people received benefits, but we have got to go a step deeper. Did the recipient get and keep a job? Are they moving up the economic ladder? If not, what happened? We get a much more comprehensive picture from which we can evaluate the effectiveness of these programs.

The recent executive order on reducing poverty acknowledges, however, that the outcomes being measured also need to be aligned across agencies to the greatest extent possible, so that we can look at workforce agencies like TANF and SNAP and other programs and see how they are working and see how we can improve them.

Can you tell me about your implementation of these outcome measures? What could we learn as we look to apply them to other programs, to our programs, and what the larger vision is for using some of the same measures across programs? Thank you.

Secretary ACOSTA. Congresswoman, thank you for the question. And so, I think it is so important that we focus on outputs, not inputs. You see that in any number of government programs that measure the input and not the output. You see it in—for example, I have talked about higher education, where we measure the number of students, not how many graduates, and how many go on to get jobs, and what do those jobs, in fact, pay?

Under WIOA we had a number of output measures. I believe that there were six that were required. And we have gathered the data, and we are looking at that data, and I am happy to share that data with you or with the committee, once we have fully analyzed it.

Mrs. WALORSKI. I appreciate it, and I just want to echo the comments of my colleagues. I represent the Indiana second district, which was in the Wall Street Journal just a couple of weeks ago about what the future of America could look like.

And it was, again—and I am just re-emphasizing the point of how desperately we need those jobs, and applaud any of your ef-

forts in assisting with moving folks from where they are at right now, and flushing more people into our economy to produce jobs——

Chairman BRADY. Thank you.

Mrs. WALORSKI. We are importing jobs.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BRADY. You bet. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Ms. Sánchez, you are recognized.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Secretary Acosta, for being here today.

This Republican Congress seems obsessed with pushing an agenda that actually makes it harder for working families to get ahead in life. From passing tax cuts that is going to add $2 trillion to our debt to cutting funding for education, workforce development, and essential services that allow struggling families to put food on the table, see a doctor, or buy school supplies for their children, Republicans are working to undermine the very critical programs that help Americans get back on their feet and succeed.

Contrary to the delusions of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, large corporations haven't increased wages. They have, instead, used most of their very handsome tax breaks to buy back stock and to boost executive pay. So, they have made life much easier for corporate executives and the rich, and much harder for the middle class. Trump's corporate tax cut leaves us less money to invest in critical programs, from infrastructure to health care and education, all in the name of giving wealthy corporations a tax break.

This administration recently issued an executive order that requires agencies to cut housing, food, health care, and many other critical supports to individuals who are not currently working. Taking away those supports will not help individuals find work. It will only make it harder for many people to get and keep a stable job.

Republicans passed $2 trillion in their tax package, and now are passing the tab on to hard-working men and women. These baseline support systems allow individuals to find and keep jobs. They don't deter work.

So, Mr. Secretary, the question that I have for you is why do you believe that kicking men and women off of assistance programs, programs that provide them with basic necessities such as shelter and food, how is that going to enable people to help them find work faster?

Secretary ACOSTA. Well, Congresswoman, I think we have different perspectives in what exactly we are trying to accomplish——

Ms. SANCHEZ. I think we do, because I think cutting food assistance or shelter for people that are actively looking for work isn't going to help them find a job any faster.

Is your perspective that these programs are so generous that people don't need to go out and look for work, that they are going to be sustained by these very generous programs?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congresswoman, as we have discussed throughout this hearing, there is a skills gap, there is a skills deficit, and there is a real need to provide workforce education.

There is also a need to help individuals——

Ms. SANCHEZ. So is it fair to say that you——

Secretary ACOSTA. There——

Ms. Sánchez.—you believe that many people can't find jobs because they are not qualified for the jobs that exist?

Secretary ACOSTA. As I was saying, there is also a need to help individuals find jobs so that they can move from dependence to independence, and I think that is the goal.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Do you think that people can't find jobs, or do you think that it is that people don't have the skills for the jobs that exist?

Chairman BRADY. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Mr. LaHood, you are recognized.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Chairman, I would ask unanimous consent to allow the witness to answer that in writing, please.

Chairman BRADY. Well——

Ms. SANCHEZ. Post-hearing.

Chairman BRADY. Every witness is asked to answer these questions in writing, and I am sure the Secretary will.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BRADY. Mr. LaHood.

Mr. LAHOOD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome, Secretary Acosta. Thank you for your service to this administration and the country.

Across my district in central and west central Illinois, as I travel around and talk to businesses and companies, you know, there is a common theme of lack of qualified workers. I think about Dot Foods in Mount Sterling, Illinois, largest food distributor in the country, but they can't find truck drivers.

I think about Standard Aero, which is an aviation tech company that services airplanes. They want to go to a third shift and add workers, but they can't find aviation technicians to do that. Again, stable, good-paying jobs.

And you look at the reasons that we have talked about here today, the lack of necessary skill. Sometimes you can't pass a drug test or you have a criminal history.

And I know we have talked about a number of solutions, and I commend the administration for the executive order that was put out on reducing poverty and promoting opportunity and economic mobility.

We in the House last year passed the career technical education bill, a bipartisan bill, overwhelming. It is now over in the Senate, we hope to get that done.

Are you working on solutions in that piece of legislation? Are you following that, Mr. Secretary, on how that can be helpful?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, I am following that. One of the issues that I think we have is that there is an unfortunate siloing between labor force education and traditional education.

So, for example, the Department of Education has authority over vo-tech education, whereas we have authority over workforce education. Now, the Secretary of Education and I work very, very closely together, but I think that siloing contributes to one of the challenges that we have, where we don't integrate these systems as well as we can.

If I could, you also mentioned two areas, truck driving and Aero Tech, and I think that those are really important, because one of

the other challenges is occupational licensing. We haven't talked about that. But individuals can be licensed to drive trucks in the military, literally drive trucks with explosives, and then leave the military, and not have that military license automatically recognized. And you see that with aeronautics technicians, you see that with truck drivers.

And that is something that I would also encourage states to look at. Recognize the talents of the men and women in the military that are getting great workforce education and recognize those credentials.

Mr. LAHOOD. Yes, thank you. Last thing—this was referenced earlier—we have over 40 job programs across multiple agencies. Can you talk about your plans to remove those unnecessary burdens in that bureaucracy there, how we can make that more efficient, effective, and accountable, so that it can start working?

Secretary ACOSTA. So, Congressman, we are very much trying to streamline. We—you know, for that we really need Congress's help.

And so, whether it is part of the infrastructure bill, where we are looking at Perkins, CTE, and others, I would be happy to work with you.

Mr. LAHOOD. Thank you.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Bishop, you are recognized.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Secretary, for being here today. I am from the State of Michigan, the comeback State of Michigan, and manufacturing jobs are important to us.

Everywhere I go, as you have heard from other members, I hear about this jobs issue, people looking for skilled workers to work and to fill positions, and it is a huge problem. Our farmers are saying the same thing, that they are leaving crops in the field, and we want to make sure that we do whatever we can to create an environment where they will have a pipeline where they can get skilled workers.

I also heard today that this continuing theme that the tax reform we just passed was simply for the rich and for corporations who will retain those earnings, and not pass them along; yet, last month's job report showed that 22,000 manufacturing jobs were created just in the last month alone. And over the past 6 months a total of 163,000 manufacturing jobs were added, which is really great news. I mean that is the largest 6-month gain in 20 years.

Can you characterize what the cause is for that? Is it the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act? Is it regulatory reform? Is it just renewed consumer confidence? What are your thoughts?

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, I think you touched on three very important parts. Certainly, renewed consumer confidence—Americans feel it is a great time to invest, and therefore it is a great time to hire more individuals as they expand their businesses.

You know, certainly streamlining of regulation is contributing very much to the faster economy.

The tax cuts have contributed, you know, just—it is a fact that companies have told more than four million Americans, "Here is a bonus, here is a wage increase, here are real dollars," because of those tax cuts, and that is simply—that is a fact. That is what companies have told Americans.

And so, I think in so many ways the economy is strong and getting stronger. The Federal Reserve is estimating that unemployment will fall below four percent this year.

Mr. BISHOP. Wow. That is adding to the confusion, though. Last month's job report came back and it is below expectations. Nonfarm payrolls only increased 103,000 in March. But at the same time there were 326,000 jobs created in the months of February and March. It is about 200,000, on average. It is confusing. How would you characterize this labor market?

Secretary ACOSTA. Well, Congressman, the labor market is strong and steady. Jobs are being created—nearly three million jobs since the election. And there is variance month to month, but it remains strong.

Mr. BISHOP. Sorry to ask you that question, big question——

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, Mr. Bishop.

Mr. BISHOP. I yield back.

Chairman BRADY. Mr. Higgins, you are recognized.

Mr. HIGGINS. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, to create excitement behind job training, you have got to create a demand for those jobs people are being trained for. And I think that brings us to an age-old tradition in America, and that is infrastructure spending.

The United States is now 11th in the terms of the quality of our infrastructure, based on the World Economic Forum. We have 56,000 structurally deficient bridges in America. And the President's infrastructure plan is transparently weak, ineffective, and unworkable. And let me tell you why.

The President proposes to spend $200 billion over a 10-year period, which is nothing. In fact, the United States taxpayers have spent almost $200 billion over the past 10 years to finance road and bridge construction in Iraq and Afghanistan. And the local provinces weren't required to provide a local match.

So, the President wants to spend $200 billion over the next 10 years and require for $1.5 trillion overall plan. So, every $6.50 that a local or state spends on infrastructure, the Federal Government will provide $1. And how do state and localities finance infrastructure? They issue debt. They issue bonds which they pay back over the life of the infrastructure. That is how they are able to do it.

There is no enthusiasm for the President's infrastructure plan. Nobody is talking about it with any sense of viability when it, in fact, should be with great urgency.

Now, we just passed tax cuts in this House, and the best economic studies say for every dollar that you spend in a tax cut you would get $.30 back on that. So,n it necessarily creates a deficit situation.

Here is what I would ask you to consider: a $1.5 trillion infrastructure bill that would create almost 500,000 jobs every month over a 5-year period. That infrastructure investment would have a very robust multiplier effect. In fact, it is said for every dollar you

spend on infrastructure you get a buck-60 back in economic impact. I just think that we need to get enthusiasm behind a real infrastructure bill.

And I have heard this President say in meetings that he rejected the public-private infrastructure because it hasn't worked in places like Indiana. And if it hasn't worked in places like Indiana it is not going to work in America. So, I think we need to get real about it, and I think everybody of every political persuasion would benefit tremendously by a robust infrastructure investment, rebuilding not Afghanistan, not Iraq, but America.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, the gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Rice, you are recognized.

Mr. RICE. Mr. Secretary, I need your help. South Carolina is doing well, economically. And I have eight counties in my district—I am one of seven districts in South Carolina, I have eight counties. But three of my counties are not doing well. They lag behind our averages terribly. South Carolina's unemployment is between 4 and 4.5 percent. These three counties are around eight percent unemployment.

The wage in South Carolina is about the national average, a little below. But these three counties, the wage is two-thirds below the South Carolina—or two-thirds of the South Carolina average. They have declining populations.

Now, on the other hand, I have three technical schools in my eight counties, and all of them do a great job. And they all tell me they are dying for students. And they have programs like welding or plumbing or machining that have 100 percent placement rates at salary levels higher than the state average.

So, we have got this glaring need, on the one hand, for employees. On the other hand, we have an idle population. How can we help these technical schools? How can we help these employers to engage this population? Does the Department of Labor have programs, do they have people that they can send into my district and help to engage these folks? Because these counties desperately need it.

Secretary ACOSTA. Congressman, thank you for the question. Let me offer up two or three ideas.

First, I think it is so important to engage parents and kids in high school, so that they are aware of these opportunities early on. Engage teachers, bring them in, show them what these careers are like. Show them how well these careers pay. Show them these are good, family-sustaining jobs.

Secondly, the Congressman referenced the infrastructure plan. And, I really would encourage Congress—this is something that should be bipartisan, and Congress should come together and look at it. And within that, there is an important provision which is the extending of Pell to certificate programs.

Right now, we tell young Americans if you go and you get a degree, even if that degree leads to more debt than you can pay off, we will support you. But if you go and you get a certificate program in welding, we will not. So why are we limiting Pell to certain programs and not others? Why are we not allowing young Americans to make that choice for themselves?

Mr. RICE. Mr. Secretary, my technical schools tell me that if you make below a fairly modest wage in South Carolina, that these programs are free. They are free. There is no possibility of debt. With the South Carolina lottery and the other grants that are available, these kids can go to school for nothing, and yet they can't fill these programs.

There is computerized digital machining, they have a 2-year program, they can take 80 kids. They have two problems: one, they can't get but 40 kids a year to sign up; and number two, they don't finish. And why don't they finish a two-year program? Because after a year there is such a need the employers hire them away.

Secretary ACOSTA. That is right.

Mr. RICE. So how do we connect this disconnected population?

Secretary ACOSTA. We are sending them—I am happy to speak to you individually. We are sending a horrible signal to young Americans across the country that this—these are not good careers when, as a factual matter, they are. They are great, family-sustaining jobs.

Mr. RICE. Thank you, sir.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, members.

Secretary, thanks for being here today. Two quick questions.

So, I think media and Democrats make a pretty compelling case. CBO is no fan of the new Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. But even if you accept their extremely low estimates, a million new jobs for Americans, over a million new jobs for Americans seeking work today. That is crucial. Paychecks going up by over $1 trillion. Think about that. After a decade where paychecks have been flat for most Americans, $1 trillion in higher wages for working families.

Over $6 trillion of new economic growth from last April to June. The only thing different is the new Tax Code that we have today, and a re-balanced regulatory environment, $6 trillion of a higher economy, and—media doesn't report this—more revenue for the Federal Government now, because of tax reform, $1 trillion more for a tax cut of $1.5 trillion.

So, two-thirds of the static score under the worst-case scenario at CBO has already been paid for, going forward. The only thing that is missing from all of that are the workers. If you look at every economic analysis of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, they predict higher economic growth for America, higher economic growth for the world. In the out-years they start to pull their punches.

And why? It is because they are not convinced America will develop the workers we need to take advantage of, now, one of the most competitive Tax Codes on the planet. They are not convinced that we will get—close this jobs gap, that we will train the workers of the future. They are not convinced we will get people off the sidelines who too many in Washington have given up hope on.

Republicans don't. We actually believe we can get people in to prosperity and opportunity from government dependency today. And yes, we have to get immigration right for the long term, no doubt about it.

So, you are working with us in a bipartisan way, because I am convinced Democrats and Republicans both want to see people get back to work. I think that is crucial. That is why you are here. Thank you for that work.

Final point: 2012, President Obama signed legislation to allow states to begin to drug test those on unemployment for those seeking jobs in industries that required those drug tests. So not willy-nilly, but to have them job-ready in the industry they are interested in.

But over the five years—six years now, Department of Labor dragged their feet, basically blocked states from doing this. And even as they were walking out the door, put in place a rule that stopped the states, who were very effective at matching local workers, you know, with local jobs from doing this. Congress repealed that final rule.

I understand revised regulations appeared on the unified regulatory agenda that can begin this work. Can you give us a quick update?

Secretary ACOSTA. Mr. Chairman, that is correct. There is a revised regulation that we are looking at. It is on the regulatory agenda.

As we go forward, one of the issues that we are looking very closely at is how this interacts with the CRA. It will be quite possibly the first test of the CRA. And so that is an issue that overlays.

Chairman BRADY. Yes, I just think it is important. Look how Texas was the first state to raise their hand, "We think we can do a better job of matching those local hope-to-be workers with local jobs." We are anxious to do that.

I also want to commend you on having with you today two of our former Ways and Means team, Rosemary Lahasky, who is here today, and Robert O'Quinn. We think you have a good choice in the labor team folks.

Ranking Member Neal would like to make a comment.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I think, despite some of the differences that were expressed today, there was also a lot of common ground. And I think there is broad agreement on that notion of the number of jobs that go on in America every day. As the Secretary pointed out, I think there is some room here on apprenticeship programs, community college expenditure, and getting people into voc-ed.

I think that the committee could have, I think, some meaningful input—again, on a bipartisan basis. And where we might have disagreement over broad strokes of policy, I think that I might encourage us at the committee level here, Mr. Chairman, to continue to pursue this line of discussion and reasoning, as we go forward for the remainder of the year, on the whole notion, as you know, that I have been obsessed with, and that is labor participation rates. Thank you.

Chairman BRADY. Thank you, Ranking Member Neal. I would like to thank our witness for appearing before us today.

Mr. Secretary, please be advised that Members of the Committee have two weeks to submit written questions that will be answered later in writing. Those questions and your answers will be made part of the formal hearing record.

With that, the committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:58 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

[Questions for the Record follow:]

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

COLOMBIA

Mr. Pascrell: As you know, the AFL-CIO and a number of Colombian labor unions filed a petition identifying a number of areas in which Colombia has failed to adequately implement its commitments under the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement. After reviewing the petition, the Department of Labor highlighted "significant concerns" with Colombian labor practices. To my knowledge, the Colombian government has still not made sufficient progress on the underlying concerns identified by DOL.

Given this lack of progress, I was disappointed with the Administration's decision to allow Colombia to pass through the OECD Labor Committee last month. I have also been frustrated that this Administration has failed to take meaningful action on the FTA petition or on Colombian labor issues generally.

Moving forward, what is the Department's plan for ensuring that the Colombian government lives up to its labor commitments?

Mr. Acosta: The Department works closely with the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) and the U.S. Department of State, as well as other agencies, to monitor and enforce the labor provisions of the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement, to ensure that Colombia does not reduce workers' protections in order to gain an unfair trade advantage or attract investment. The Department has closely engaged with Colombian officials and other key stakeholders in Colombia on their efforts to address labor concerns.

In December 2017, the Department posted a Labor Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Bogota, Colombia to support this engagement. The Labor Attaché is assisting with enhanced monitoring and enforcement efforts and working closely with the Government of Colombia to ensure progress in four areas of concern identified by the Organization for Economic and Cooperative Development's (OECD) Employment, Labor, and Social Affairs Committee (ELSAC): labor informality and subcontracting; labor law enforcement; collective bargaining; and violence against trade unionists.

In January 2018, the Department published its First Periodic Review of Progress related to the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) petition filed by the AFL-CIO and others, finding meaningful recent progress made by the Colombian government but also identifying some areas of concern. Since publication of the 2017 FTA Petition Report (Report), the Department and the Colombian government have held four rounds of contact point consultations to discuss the following: the issues identified in the Report, the recommendations provided by the Department to address those issues, and progress toward implementing the recommendations. The Department's Bureau of International Labor Affairs continues to provide technical-level engagement with Colombia regarding the implementation of the Department's recommendations to identify a path forward on these issues and to support further progress by the Government of Colombia.

In March 2018, the Department also secured the inclusion of rigorous annual post-accession reporting requirements by Colombia on labor issues in the OECD ELSAC and biennial validation reporting by the OECD Secretariat.

The Department, together with USTR and the U.S. Department of State, will continue to monitor and assess progress by the Government of Colombia in addressing these issues. The Department will continue to consult with you and your colleagues on these issues in the future.

NAFTA

Mr. Pascrell: One of the major flaws of the original NAFTA was that it did not include enforceable labor provisions. That may be a primary reason as to why we are renegotiating. In the new NAFTA, how will DOL ensure that the labor obligations are enforceable and will actually be enforced?

Mr. Acosta: The Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) is working diligently to complete negotiation of the new North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Thus far, USTR has reached a tentative agreement with Mexico and is working collaboratively to reach an agreement with Canada. The Administration is committed to vigorously negotiating, monitoring, and enforcing free trade agreements. In accordance with the objectives Congress set out in the Trade Promotion Authority, and consistent with the language in the May 10th Agreement, the Administration is strengthening and incorporating labor obligations that are currently in the NAFTA side agreement into the core agreement. Further, the Department is working with USTR in ongoing NAFTA negotiations to include enforceable labor standards that are subject to the same dispute settlement mechanisms and remedies as other enforceable provisions under the agreement.

Mr. Pascrell: Under the US Dispute Settlement proposal, especially Section 18 et seq (Set Aside, Implementation, Non-Implementation), how do you foresee labor disputes will be settled?

Mr. Acosta: The Administration, in consultation with Congress, is considering a number of options for the dispute settlement chapter of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). That chapter and the new labor chapter, being negotiated by the Department and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, will allow for vigorous enforcement of the new labor obligations, as well as ensuring that the enforceable labor standards are subject to the same dispute settlement mechanisms and remedies as other enforceable provisions under the agreement.

Mr. Pascrell: How are you ensuring that the labor language in the May 10th Agreement is fully enforceable, and is a floor -- not a ceiling -- in NAFTA?

Mr. Acosta: The Administration's top priorities for the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) include creating incentives to increase manufacturing in the United States, reducing the U.S. trade deficit, and improving export opportunities for U.S. producers and workers. In accordance with the objectives Congress set out in Trade Promotion Authority, and consistent with the language in the May 10th Agreement, the Administration is strengthening and

incorporating labor obligations that are currently in the NAFTA side agreement into the core agreement. Further, the Administration's tentative agreement with Mexico represents the strongest labor provisions of any trade agreement and is fully enforceable. The Office of the United States Trade Representative is working to include Canada in the new NAFTA.

Mr. Pascrell: What is the Administration doing in the NAFTA renegotiation to ensure that Mexico will actually comply with the labor obligations in the agreement and that workers in Mexico have rights and the ability to see their wages rise over time?

Mr. Acosta: The Department is engaged with the Government of Mexico through its longstanding collaborative relationship under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) labor side agreement. Additionally, the Department—with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR)—has reached a tentative agreement with the Government of Mexico in its ongoing NAFTA discussions. As with other free trade agreements, the Department's Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) has a role in negotiating, monitoring, and enforcing the labor provisions of NAFTA as part of its work to ensure that trade partners do not reduce workers' protections in order to gain an unfair trade advantage or attract investment. ILAB is monitoring the progress of labor legislation in the Mexican Congress, the passage and ratification of which is part of the tentative agreement reached between the United States and Mexico in NAFTA, and remains in regular contact with the Government of Mexico.

In March 2018, Ambassador Lighthizer and I met with Mexico's Secretary of Labor Campa and representatives from the Mexican Ministry of Economy to discuss labor legislation. During that meeting, I expressed the critical importance and necessity of mechanisms that allow Mexican workers to express their views through secret ballot elections. Our joint efforts are reflected in the results of the tentative agreement reached between the United States and Mexico.

Additionally, as noted above, ILAB is closely monitoring the implementation of Mexico's landmark constitutional labor reforms that will overhaul the system of labor justice. The tentative NAFTA agreement reached between the United States and Mexico locks in this progress. As part of these reforms, changes in protections for the freedom of association and collective bargaining are expected to lead to increases in wages.

In accordance with the objectives Congress set out in the Trade Promotion Authority, and consistent with the language in the May 10th Agreement, the Administration is strengthening and incorporating labor obligations that are currently in the NAFTA side agreement in the core agreement. Further, the Department is working with USTR in renegotiating NAFTA to include enforceable labor standards that are subject to the same dispute settlement mechanisms and remedies as other enforceable provisions under the agreement.

Mr. Pascrell: Given that Mexico has taken no effective actions in the past 25 years to live up to its obligation even to adequately enforce its own labor laws, please explain USTR's strategy to improve monitoring and enforcement of labor obligations. In particular, how can I explain to my constituents, some of whom believe NAFTA is a dirty word, that a new NAFTA will actually stop outsourcing, support their jobs, and raise their standards of living?

Mr. Acosta: Please see the response to the prior question.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Pascrell: Republicans in Congress recently worked with the Trump administration to enact a tax bill which will add more than $2.3 trillion to our national debt in order to give big tax breaks to corporations and wealthy individuals. The Administration promised that would lead to higher wages for workers – an average of $4,000 a year. Instead, the average worker has seen a weekly income increase of just $6.21, and corporations have given their windfalls to Wall Street. Why did the Administration ignore the needs of middle-class workers?

Mr. Acosta: The President's tax reform plan is promoting investment in the United States, strengthening the American economy, and putting money back in the pockets of hardworking Americans. Tax reform is also about job creation and opportunity. As companies have seen their tax burdens lowered, this has translated into greater investments in the American workforce and pay raises, bonuses, and benefits to working Americans across our nation. To date, more than 700 companies have announced bonuses to more than four million working Americans as a result of the President's tax reform plan. Moreover, the job creation effects of additional capital expenditures, repatriation of dollars, and competitive tax rates have yet to be quantified. As businesses become more competitive with a lower tax burden, American workers will further benefit. That is why the Administration continues to focus on building the skills of American workers and job seekers so they can take advantage of current and future job opportunities.

Mr. Pascrell: In Washington, "consolidate and reorganize" often translates into "cut," and that's certainly what your Administration proposed for job training in its first budget, and in its second budget before Congress made a bipartisan agreement to improve discretionary funding levels. We hear all the time from local workforce development programs that they have effective programs that can help move people into good jobs. What they need is resources to pay for them. What is your administration doing to provide the resources and investments needed to help Americans upgrade their skills – not moving around programs and offering to waive accountability requirements for Governors, but actually investing in workers?

Mr. Acosta: The American workforce is the greatest in the world. To take advantage of opportunities, however, Americans must have the skills that the jobs of today and tomorrow demand. Apprenticeships are one way the Department is changing our nation's approach to workforce development. The Department's Fiscal Year 2019 budget request prioritizes investments in effective programs, such as apprenticeship, that help align workforce development efforts with market demands.

The Department is committed to increasing the number of high-quality apprenticeships, including expansion into high-growth, emerging sectors where apprenticeships have historically been rare. Pursuant to the President's Executive Order 13801, Expanding Apprenticeships in America, the Department is developing a framework for industry-recognized apprenticeships that are flexible and responsive to market needs, less bureaucratic, and more attractive to American job creators. The Executive Order established a Task Force on Apprenticeship Expansion, including members from companies, trade and industry groups, educational institutions, labor

unions, and others. The Task Force convened weekly to discuss how to engage more job creators and rapidly expand these models to help more Americans get back to work and issued its Final Report to the President on May 10, 2018. The Department is starting to implement many of the recommendations outlined in the report. Industry-recognized apprenticeships will expand on the successes of the apprenticeship model. Industry-recognized apprenticeships will offer the workforce the benefit of companies, trade and industry groups, educational institutions, labor unions, and others coming together to fill open jobs by discerning the skills demanded by job creators and connecting those skills needed for job seekers. Once private, third-party certifiers are in place, industry-recognized apprenticeships will benefit from a streamlined process that ensures high-quality apprenticeships.

In addition to establishing the Task Force, EO 13801 directed the Department to consider proposing regulations that promote industry-recognized apprenticeships. As part of that effort, on July 27, 2018, the Department issued a Training and Employment Notice (TEN). The TEN outlines information that certifiers will be expected to have in place to establish standards, establish certification intervals determined by industries, evaluate and certify programs focused on outcomes and process, report results, and maintain records. Organizations will be able to seek a determination from the Department that their apprenticeship certification practices meet these criteria, thus ensuring that certified programs provide apprentices with a pathway to a family-sustaining career.

On July 19, 2018, President Donald J. Trump issued another Executive Order, Establishing the President's National Council for the American Worker. The Council will provide a forum for the development of a national strategy to address urgent workforce issues, including reskilling workers to account for new technology and automation for future economic growth.The President's bold plan to strengthen our Nation's infrastructure—including modernizing roads, bridges, tunnels, and airports—presents an important opportunity for Americans to build their careers while building a stronger foundation for our nation. The President's proposal for Rebuilding Infrastructure in America would help strengthen the economy and create jobs in sectors beyond construction, such as hospitality, food service, and retail as infrastructure projects break ground.

The President's plan would not only invest in physical infrastructure, but importantly it would invest in workforce development, helping to ensure more Americans are prepared to excel in today's open jobs as well as the new jobs that will be created as infrastructure projects begin across the country. The plan features common sense proposals to make it easier for Americans to access skills-based learning. The workforce development proposals would empower more Americans to build skills that job creators desire and obtain portable credentials that lead to good, family-sustaining jobs. Expanding Pell Grant eligibility, providing more career-oriented opportunities in the Federal Work-Study program, and reducing excessive occupational licensing barriers across states would provide more Americans with the right skills and credentials to fill these good, family-sustaining jobs and expand our nation's workforce. The Administration applauds Congress for its bipartisan effort in reauthorizing the "Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) Act of 2006" (as amended by the "Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act"), which is also administered by the U.S.

Department of Education. Reforming and passing CTE was an important component of the President's infrastructure plan.

Finally, in accordance with the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Department is also developing an Eligible Training Provider Scorecard. When complete, the Scorecard will provide job seekers, employers, and workforce system administrators with outcome information on individuals in WIOA-funded workforce development programs, including such as short term certification programs aimed to help get people back to work quickly. This information, which will include data such as employment rates and earnings levels, will help support informed skills instruction and career training decisions. The Department anticipates releasing the Scorecard in late 2019.

Mr. Pascrell: Americans need skills to get good jobs, but a lack of training and education is not the only reason there is a skills gap. For instance, people also need access to child care, affordable housing, and support services. People can't go to work if they don't have a roof over their heads or they don't have someone to watch their children. What is the Department of Labor doing to help employers who are providing this kind of support to workers themselves?

Mr. Acosta: Under the WIOA Title I authorized programs overseen by the Department, funding is permitted to assist workers with support services such as child care, housing, and transportation expenses. These important benefits help both employers and employees to find and keep good, family-sustaining jobs. In addition, the President's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget includes a six-week paid parental leave program for the birth or adoption of a child. Using the Unemployment Insurance system as a base, the proposal would allow states to establish paid parental leave programs in a way that is most appropriate for their workforces and economies.

The Department's programs also provide support for those on public assistance. Importantly, these programs are generally required to provide services alongside those services provided under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Act, at more than 2,400 American Job Centers across the country. This co-location of services ensures that families receiving TANF benefits are also connecting to important workforce development services to improve their economic outlook and obtain good, family-sustaining jobs.

Mr. Pascrell: There are a lot of hard-working men and women in this country who get up every day and go to work. But unfortunately, they just don't make enough to make ends meet. What do you say to all of these Americans and their families when they are doing all the right things and working a full-time job – sometimes multiple – but they just can't get ahead? What do you make of the fact so many people are working and still living in poverty? Do you think the Department of Labor can do more to help these people beyond the work the Wage and Hour Division does to enforce pay standards?

Mr. Acosta: In today's rapidly-changing economy, it is more important than ever to prepare workers to fill existing jobs and to prepare workers for the jobs of the future. As technology advances, our educational and workforce systems must prepare individuals to acquire new skills that enable individuals to become lifelong learners.

The Department is committed to increasing the number of high-quality apprenticeships, including expansion into high-growth, emerging sectors where apprenticeships have historically been rare. Pursuant to the President's Executive Order 13801, Expanding Apprenticeships in America, the Department is developing a framework for industry-recognized apprenticeships that are flexible and responsive to market needs, less bureaucratic, and more attractive to American job creators. The Executive Order established a Task Force on Apprenticeship Expansion, including members from companies, trade and industry groups, educational institutions, labor unions, and others. The Task Force convened weekly to discuss how to engage more job creators and rapidly expand these models to help more Americans get back to work and issued its Final Report to the President on May 10, 2018. The Department is starting to implement many of the recommendations outlined in the report. Industry-recognized apprenticeships will expand on the successes of the apprenticeship model. Industry-recognized apprenticeships will offer the workforce the benefit of companies, trade and industry groups, educational institutions, labor unions, and others coming together to fill open jobs by discerning the skills demanded by job creators and connecting those skills needed for job seekers. Once private, third-party certifiers are in place, industry-recognized apprenticeships will benefit from a streamlined process that ensures high-quality apprenticeships.

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An overwhelming majority of apprenticeship programs registered with the Department and state apprenticeship agencies are limited to job preparation in the traditional trades, such as construction. The Department has been working to expand apprenticeships, particularly into non-traditional industries where the Department sees the most growth and opportunity for employment in a local community and region. Industries such as advanced manufacturing, infrastructure, cybersecurity, and health care are new to earn-while-you-learn strategies and offer more flexibility and the ability to work remotely, more so than other sectors of the economy.

WORK REQUIREMENTS

Mr. Pascrell: It is impossible to imagine how someone without access to healthcare, food, safe housing, or child care, would be able to sustain employment. Yet, this administration and Republicans in Congress have proposed or succeeded in scaling back every single one of these. What is the Department doing to ensure those who would be impacted by stricter work requirements have the basic necessities needed to maintain employment?

Mr. Acosta: Under the WIOA Title I authorized progams overseen by the Department, funding is permitted to assist workers with support services such as child care, housing, and

transportation expenses. These important benefits help both employers and employees to find and keep good, family-sustaining jobs. In addition, the President's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget includes a six-week paid parental leave program for the birth or adoption of a child. Using the Unemployment Insurance system as a base, the proposal would allow states to establish paid parental leave programs in a way that is most appropriate for their workforce and economy.

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BUDGET CUTS

Mr. Pascrell: How can you say that this Administration is committed to working Americans and American job seekers when President Trump proposed draconian cuts to the Department of Labor's employment and training programs – a 40 percent cut for Adult Employment and Training Activities alone? Only after Congress passed a two-year budget deal to raise the discretionary caps has the Administration been forced to allocate more money.

Mr. Acosta: The President's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget addendum restored the proposed funding cuts for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I formula programs. In addition, the FY 2019 Budget requested broad waiver authority for the WIOA Title I formula programs, which would allow state and local leaders to better address their workforce needs. Providing states greater flexibility to administer resources efficiently and effectively is another way to better serve the individualized needs of Americans.

TAX CUTS HURT DOMESTIC PRIORITIES

Mr. Pascrell: We just passed a tax cut that adds $2.3 trillion to our debt to pay for tax breaks for wealthy Americans. Can you give us a sense of the magnitude of that scale – that is, how many Americans could have received career and technical education we invested $2.3 trillion in upgrading skills? Couldn't we have wiped out the skills gap—or at least made a huge dent? How big is the entire Department's budget by comparison? How many times could that money have fully funded the budget of the Employment and Training Administration?

Mr. Acosta: The Department's budget, as currently funded by Congress, is $12.2 billion. The President's tax reform plan is promoting investment in the United States, strengthening the American economy, and putting money back in the pockets of hardworking Americans. Tax reform is also about job creation and opportunity. As companies have seen their tax burdens lowered, this has translated into greater investments in the American workforce and pay raises, bonuses, and benefits to working Americans across our nation. To date, more than 700 companies have announced bonuses to more than four million working Americans as a result of the President's tax reform plan. Moreover, the job creation effects of additional capital expenditures, repatriation of dollars, and competitive tax rates have yet to be quantified. As

businesses become more competitive with a lower tax burden, American workers will further benefit. That is why the Administration continues to focus on building the skills of American workers and job seekers so they can take advantage of current and future job opportunities.

Mr. Pascrell: There's been a lot of talk about how "jobs can't find workers." Basic economics says that when the supply of qualified workers is lower than demand, wages should rise. That doesn't seem to be happening. In light of the tax law and the trillions of dollars going to corporations – why aren't we seeing employers simply raise wages? Isn't paying people more a way to attract talent?

Mr. Acosta: Please see the response to the prior question.

[Submission for the Record follows:]

Managing the Jobs Gap Starts at the Top

I believe that our country's efforts to address the jobs gap should begin within the Department of Labor. This agency is tasked with developing programs to bolster the health of our workforce. However, the DOL's dependence on H-1B workers, especially the overuse of H-1Bs by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, undermines the DOL's message to employers seeking to hire workers and confuses our citizens seeking work.

The overuse of H-1B visas disinclines educational institutions from guiding students toward information technology and frustrates efforts by private business to retrain workers to meet the demand for information technology professionals.

I have attached a listing of the LCAs submitted by companies for positions at DOL addresses. I pulled these LCAs using the DOL's Labor Certification Registry located at:

https://lcr-pjr.doleta.gov/index.cfm?event=ehLCJRExternal.dspLCRLanding.

Of these LCAs, 86.7% are for workers with minimal experience. Either the associated employers are fraudulently under-classifying the wage levels for their workers or the DOL is procuring resources for positions that should be earmarked for new and retrained workers.

Wage Level	Count	Percentage
I	14	18.7%
II	51	68.0%
III	6	8.0%
IV	2	2.7%
Not Checked	2	2.7%

If you would like additional information regarding these LCAs or the use of H-1Bs by other federal agencies, I'd be happy to provide the data.

FY 2018 YTD (as of 3/29/2018) LCAs for USDOL Addresses

Job Title	Employer	Wage	Work Address	State	Zip	Wage Level	Prevailing Wage
ETL DEVELOPER	SOFTECH, INC.	$90,000	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE, NW	DC	20210	II	$86,403
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	22ND CENTURY TECHNOLOGIES, INC.	$70,283	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW	DC	20210	I	$70,283
SYSTEMS SOFTWARE DEVELOPER	ILOGIK, INC.	$100,194	200 CONSTITUTION AVE NW	DC	20210	II	$100,194
SCCM PACKAGER	CYBECYS, INC.	$120,000	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW	DC	20210	III	$113,755
BUSINESS ANALYST	ADROIT ASSOCIATES, INC.	$87,000	POSTAL SQUARE BUILDING	DC	20212	II	$86,798
SOFTWARE QC APPLICATION ANALYST/TESTER	MEJENTA SYSTEMS, INC	$92,019	200 CONSTITUITION AVE NW	DC	20210	II	$92,019
AWS/DEVOPS ENGINEER	TEAMITSERVE INC	$95,000	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW	DC	20210	II	$94,182
SAS CONSULTANT	INNOVATIVE INTELLIGENT SOLUTIONS LLC	$96,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NE	DC	20212	II	$82,326
SR.SYSTEMS ENGINEER	SYSTEM SOFT TECHNOLOGIES LLC	$121,000	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE, NW	DC	20210	III	$101,878
SENIOR CONSULTANT	DIGITAL MOBILE INNOVATIONS, LLC	$95,259	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NE	DC	20212	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE DEVELOPER (APPIAN DEVELOPER)	RAAS INFOTEK LLC	$92,500	200 CONSTITUTION AVE NW	DC	20210	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	INDUS CORPORATION	$102,107	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NE	DC	20212	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE DEVELOPER	MALVI SYSTEMS LLC	$93,100	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVE NE	DC	20002	II	$93,019
SYSTEMS ANALYST	SYSCONS CORPORATION	$83,000	200 CONSTITUTION AVE NW	DC	20210	II	$82,326
SR. JAVA DEVELOPER	HCL GLOBAL SYSTEMS INC	$94,182	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW	DC	20210	II	$92,019
MIDDLEWARE SOFTWARE ARCHITECT	AWARE EON LLC	$92,019	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NE	DC	20212	II	$94,182
SOFTWARE ARCHITECT	DATA 5 SOLUTIONS, LLC	$95,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NORTHEAST	DC	20002	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	BELL INFO SOLUTIONS, LLC	$92,019	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NE	DC	20212	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE ARCHITECT	JNIT TECHNOLOGIES, INC.	$84,480	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVE NE	DC	20212	I	$68,682
SAILPOINT CONSULTANT	DEXPERTS INC.	$63,918	200 CONSTITUTION AVE NW	DC	20210	I	$63,918
SENIOR SOFTWARE ENGINEER	INDUS CORPORATION	$102,107	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NE	DC	20212	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE DEVELOPER	TECHNOCRAFTS, INC	$72,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVE NE	DC	20212	I	$70,283
APPIAN DEVELOPER	SYSINTELLI INC	$92,500	200 CONSTITUTION AVE NW	DC	20210	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE DEVELOPER (JAVA UI)	APPRIDAT SOLUTIONS, LLC	$92,019	DEPARTMENT OF LABOR	DC	20210	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	SYNAPSIS INC	$92,019	200 CONSTITUTION AVE	DC	20210	II	$92,019
SCCM ARCHITECT	CYBECYS, INC.	$130,000	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW	DC	20210	III	$117,104
SOFTWARE DEVELOPER (APPIAN DEVELOPER)	RAAS INFOTEK LLC	$92,500	200 CONSTITUTION AVE NW	DC	20210	II	$92,019

Job Title	Employer	Wage	Work Address	State	Zip	Wage Level	Prevailing Wage
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	SYNAPSIS INC	$92,019	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVE NE	DC	20212	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE DEVELOPER	BAE SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS & SERVICES	$84,100	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NE	DC	20212	NC	$84,100
SOFTWARE ENGINEER 3	DIGITAL MANAGEMENT LLC	$98,959	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NE	DC	20212	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	BAE SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS & SERVICES	$70,283	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NE	DC	20212	I	$70,283
SOFTWARE ENGINEER 3	DIGITAL MOBILE INNOVATIONS, LLC	$113,755	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NE	DC	20212	III	$113,755
SAS DEVELOPER	EUREKA INFOTECH INC	$92,050	POSTAL SQUARE MUSEUM BUILDING	DC	20002	II	$92,019
JAVA/ORACLE ADF DEVELOPER	ARSPHERE INFOTEK, INC.	$92,100	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW	DC	20210	II	$92,019
FULL STACK JAVA DEVELOPER	DOLPHIN SOLUTIONS INC	$82,400	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVE NE	DC	20212	II	$82,326
SECURITY ENGINEER	ICONIC INFOSYS, INC.	$91,150	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE	DC	20210	II	$91,146
PROGRAMMER ANALYST	CONFIMINDS LLC	$85,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NE	DC	20212	II	$81,370
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	INFODRIVE SYSTEMS, INC	$93,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVE NE	DC	20212	II	$92,019
SAILPOINT CONSULTANT	DEXPERTS INC.	$63,918	200 CONSTITUTION AVE NW	DC	20210	I	$63,918
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	ANJS TECHNOLOGIES LLC	$95,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NORTHEAST	DC	20002	II	$92,109
SR.SYSTEMS ENGINEER	SYSTEM SOFT TECHNOLOGIES LLC	$121,000	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE, NW	DC	20210	III	$120,182
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	MULTIVISION LLC	$93,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NE	DC	20001	II	$92,019
SCCM ARCHITECT	CYBECYS, INC	$140,000	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW	DC	20210	IV	$136,677
SOFTWARE ARCHITECT	ANJS TECHNOLOGIES LLC	$95,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NORTHEAST	DC	20002	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE DEVELOPER	MULTIVISION LLC	$72,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NE	DC	20212	I	$70,283
SYSTEMS ANALYST	SAICON CONSULTANTS, INC.	$66,560	200 CONSTITUTION AVE, NW	DC	20210	I	$61,942
SR. SOFTWARE ENGINEER	BHARGAV COMPUTER CONSULTANTS USA-MA, INC	$104,000	200 CONSTITUTION AVE NW ROOM # C4312	DC	20210	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	DATA 5 SOLUTIONS, LLC	$95,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NORTHEAST	DC	20002	II	$92,019
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER	GAR TECHNOLOGIES INC	$82,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVE NE	DC	20212	II	$81,370
SR. PROGRAMMER ANALYST	HCL GLOBAL SYSTEMS INC	$92,019	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW	DC	20210	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE DEVELOPER (APPIAN DEVELOPER)	RAAS INFOTEK LLC	$92,500	200 CONSTITUTION AVE NW	DC	20210	II	$92,019
PROGRAMMER ANALYST / IT ENGINEER	IDEXCEL, INC.	$92,400	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW	DC	20210	II	$92,019
SAS PROGRAMMER/SOFTWARE ENGINEER	TEKSKY LLC	$92,019	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NE	DC	20002	II	$92,019
SR. COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYST II	PERSISTENT SYSTEMS, INC.	$82,326	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW	DC	20210	II	$82,326
SOFTWARE ENGINEER II	BAE SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS & SERVICES	$101,836	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NE	DC	20212	II	$92,019

Job Title	Employer	Wage	Work Address	State	Zip	Wage Level	Prevailing Wage
SYSTEMS ANALYST	UNIFY SOLUTIONS, INC.	$83,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVE NE	DC	20212	II	$82,326
SOFTWARE TECHNICAL ARCHITECT	TANVI IT SOLUTIONS INC	$92,100	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVE NE	DC	20212	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE ARCHITECT	ANJS TECHNOLOGIES LLC	$95,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NORTHEAST	DC	20002	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE TECHNICAL ARCHITECT	TANVI IT SOLUTIONS INC	$92,100	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVE NE	DC	20212	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	MULTIVISION LLC	$95,000	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NE	DC	20212	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	22ND CENTURY TECHNOLOGIES, INC.	$70,283	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW	DC	20210	I	$70,283
SR. SYSTEMS ENGINEER	CYBECYS, INC	$130,000	200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW	DC	20210	IV	$123,115
SR. SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR	DATA AIXSYS, INC	$90,000	200 CONSTITUTION AVE. NW	DC	20210	II	$85,280
SAILPOINT CONSULTANT	DEXPERTS INC.	$70,283	200 CONSTITUTION AVE NW	DC	20210	I	$70,283
SOFTWARE DEVELOPER	WINNING EDGE SOLUTIONS LLC	$72,000	200 CONSTITUTION AVE., NW	DC	20210	I	$70,283
EMERGENT TECHNOLOGIES SPECIALIST	INDUS CORPORATION	$119,060	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NE	DC	20212	NC	$96,488
SOFTWARE QC APPLICATION ANALYST/TESTER	MEJENTA SYSTEMS, INC	$78,000	200 CONSTITUITION AVE NW	DC	20210	I	$70,283
SENIOR JAVA SOFTWARE ENGINEER	INTERNATIONAL SOFTWARE SYSTEMS INC	$94,000	200 CONSTITUTION AVE NW	DC	20210	II	$92,019
SYSTEMS ANALYST	SAICON CONSULTANTS, INC.	$66,560	200 CONSTITUTION AVE, NW	DC	20210	I	$61,942
APPIAN DEVELOPER	SYSINTELLI INC	$92,500	200 CONSTITUTION AVE NW	DC	20210	II	$92,019
RUBY DEVELOPER	SWANKTEK INC	$92,019	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR	DC	20210	II	$92,019
SHAREPOINT DEVELOPERADMINISTRATOR	MAGANTI IT RESOURCES, LLC	$93,600	200 CONSTITUTION AVE, NW, ROOM N 5620	DC	20210	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	BAE SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS & SERVICES	$118,019	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NE	DC	20212	III	$113,755
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	VALSATECH CORP	$92,019	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NE	DC	20212	II	$92,019
SOFTWARE ENGINEER	VALSATECH CORP	$70,283	2 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE NE	DC	20212	I	$70,283