

**Employment Security Advisory Board Meeting
Connecticut Department of Labor
June 24, 2016
Minutes**

Members Present: Mark Sullivan, Shawn Coyne, Sue Garten, Dave Bosco, Robert Niedermeier, Eric Gjede

Absent: John Olsen, John Barrasso, John Toomey

Agency Staff: Commissioner Scott Jackson, Deputy Commissioner Kurt Westby, Carl Guzzardi, Daryle Dudzinski, Bruce Berman, John Matteis, Ken Petow, Ram Aberasturia, Mike Lucente, Anne Rugens, Heidi Lane, Steve Lattanzio, Maria Hagen, Susan DeVito.

Observers: Kerin Burke - USDOL; Bill Welz, Nicole Ayala – Office of the Governor

Introductions

Mark Sullivan called the meeting to order at approximately 9:30 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the February 26, 2016 meeting were approved; Eric Gjede abstained.

Legislative Update

Heidi Lane provided an update of the activities that affected DOL in the 2016 legislative session.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) Benefit Program Update

Daryle Dudzinski provided a UI Benefit Program Update. Beginning this week, a new “CT Direct Benefits” web-based system will be in operation to permit claimants to file initial and continuing claims online. The SIDES system will be rolled out in early October. Claimants are now requested to provide email addresses and cell phone numbers which are forwarded to the CTHires Employment Services system. Due to the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and to improve customer service, UI staff are now located in the comprehensive American Job Centers. As of this time, the five UI experts have assisted over 20,000 individuals.

Kerin Burke of USDOL provided some comments on USDOL’s appreciation of CTDOL’s work for UI customers.

Employment Services Program Update

Ram Aberasturia provided an update on ES Operations. Ram noted, in particular, the success of the Connecticut Advanced Manufacturing Initiative (CAMI).

UI Trust Fund Update

Carl Guzzardi provided a UI Trust Fund Update. Carl shared that DOL no longer has any outstanding federal loans and will no longer be collecting the special assessments. Carl also shared that the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) tax will be dropping from 2.7% for 2015 to 0.6% for 2016 which will result in a decrease of approximately \$147 per person.

Carl emphasized that Trust Fund Reform remains of utmost importance, as Connecticut will in no way be prepared for the next recession.

Commissioner Jackson noted that it is important to build off of the work already performed by the Advisory Board while striving towards comprehensive reform where everyone has to give. Deputy Commissioner Westby noted that in order for the Trust Fund to succeed, consensus is needed from both sides.

Future Agenda Items

The next Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for October 14, 2016.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:51 a.m.