

The CT Low Wage Employer Advisory Board Meeting
March 21, 2017 – 3:00 P.M. - Conference Rooms A&B
Connecticut Department of Labor, Wethersfield, Connecticut

Minutes

Members present: Co-Chair James Bhandary-Alexander, Co-Chair Jennifer Putetti, Stanley McMillen, Merrill Gay, Helene Figueroa, Susan Coleman, Paul Lavoie, Merle Berke-Schlessel and Eddie Stephens (by telephone). **A quorum of members present was reached.**

Members absent: Michael Seid, Deborah Schwartz (on maternity leave) – represented by Deb Chernoff, SEIU 1199, Kurt Westby – represented by Carolyn Treiss, CT Department of Labor and Monica Morneau.

Other Attendees: Chris Caruso, CT Department of Labor.

Welcome and opening remarks: Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander welcomed his fellow Board Members and convened the meeting at 3:03 P.M.

Review and approval of the February 21, 2017 Board Minutes: Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander entertained a motion by Helene Figueroa to approve the minutes. Stanley McMillen seconded the motion. **There being no changes to the minutes, the motion passed unanimously.**

Co-Chairs proposal regarding the formation of Work Groups: Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander recommended the Board consider forming work groups to discuss and study subject matter that could be included in the December 1, 2017 Report to Legislative Leaders and State Commissioners. After much discussion, the Board established the following Work Groups, and assigned subject matter to each:

- **Job Training and Workforce Development** – This Group’s focus will include but is not limited to; training, skill enhancement, education, job prep- readiness, occupational licensing and reentry workforce programs. The Board members interested in serving are, Stanley McMillen, Susan Coleman, Paul Lavoie and Merle Berke-Schlessel.

- **Barriers to Work** – This Group’s focus includes but is not limited to; transportation, childcare, housing, access to social services and criminal records. The Board members interested in serving are, Co-Chair James Bhandary-Alexander, Co-Chair Jennifer Putetti, Monica Morneau and Helene Figueroa.

- **Social Services Research** – This Group’s focus includes but is not limited to; benefit cliffs, self-sufficiency, wages, wage disparities and State costs to support low-wage earners. The Board members interested in serving are, Deborah Chernoff (representing Deborah Schwartz), Merrill Gay and Carolyn Treiss (representing Kurt Westby).

Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander suggested the Work Groups meet between monthly Board Meetings and provide updates to the Board as needed. The Co-Chair also stated he will reach out to those absent Board Members to solicit their participation in at least one of the Working Groups.

Carolyn Treiss and Chris Caruso offered their assistance to any or all of the Work Groups. Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander and Putetti thanked them.

Legislative Update: Paul Lavoie asked that a legislative update be added to the agenda. At that point, Carolyn Treiss provided the Board with a list of pending legislation on pertinent subject matter of interest to the Board and its work. Carolyn said she would periodically update the Board until the end of the Legislative Session on June 7.

Public Comment: There were no members of the public present.

Adjourn:

After Co-Chair Bhandary-Alexander thanked the Board, he entertained a motion by Paul Lavoie and seconded by Susan Coleman to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. **The Board adjourned at 4:04 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Caruso
CT Department of Labor