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Subgroup/Office of Origin: Domestic Policy Council

Series/Staff Member: Diana Fortuna

Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 12024

FolderID:

Folder Title:

Bureau of Labor Statistics - Measuring UE [Unemployment] Rate of People with Disabilities

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Row:

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Section:

2

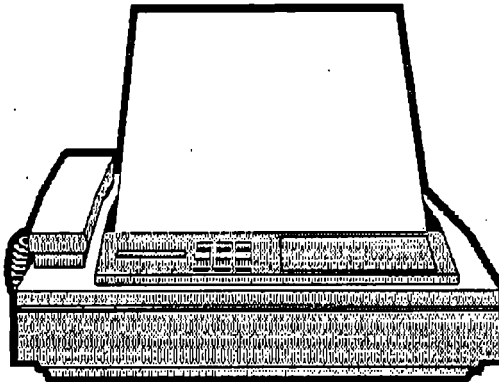
Shelf:

10

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FACSIMILE



To: Diana Fortuna

Fax #: 456 -7431

Re: Meeting on Disability Data Issue

Date: 9/26/97

Pages: 2, including this cover sheet.

Attached is a draft memorandum that you may wish to use to record the agreements reached at yesterday's meeting. Katherine Abraham has not yet ~~the~~ cleared

From the desk of...

Gary B. Reed
Director

Office of Program Economics
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy
200 Constitution Ave, NW Room S-2312
Washington DC 20210

(202) 219-6026 ext 134
Fax: (202) 219-6523

the specific language. Our
Asst Deputy, Bill Barron,
believes that she will
later today -

TH. D.

DRAFT

September XX, 1997

Memorandum for: Attendees at September 24 Meeting on Disability Data Issue

From: Diana Fortuna, DPC

Subject: Outcome of Meeting

I thought it would be useful to lay out my understanding as to the agreements that were reached at the September 24 meeting on the disability data issue. These are as follows:

- BLS agrees to set up a work group that will include external disability statisticians to: (1) evaluate the accuracy and reliability of the current 2-question set of disability questions that could be added to the CPS, and (2) if needed, continue developing and testing either new or revised questions that could be added to the CPS.
- Disability advocates agree that monthly CPS estimates of employment rates for persons with disabilities should not be mandated in the Executive Order given the uncertainty of developing a set of questions that meets both criteria of: (1) being feasible to add to the monthly CPS in terms of size (e.g. 2 questions); and (2) produces statistically reliable information.
- Accordingly, all parties agree that the language in the current draft of the E.O. regarding data on employment estimates should be revised so that it no longer mandates monthly CPS estimates but does give some definition to the process, including an explicit way of developing alternative ways of generating regular measures of employment rates if it turns out to be not feasible to produce monthly estimates.

One way of implementing this agreement on revised language could be to make the Task Force responsible for developing and recommending to the President the best way producing statistically, reliable employment data on a regular basis if monthly data prove to infeasible. The Task Force could be responsible for assessing whether this is best done through an annual supplement to the CPS and whether the added costs of doing such a supplement require new budget resources or could be done within existing budgets.

As discussed at the meeting, I will take the lead in having new E.O. language on this issue developed and sent to you for review and comments. Please let me know if you have any comments about the summary of the meeting provided above.

Meeting

DOL — Seth Harris if possible
— Gary Reed

Me

OMB — ^{was} Matlack

Lori Schack
Joanne Cianci
Naomi Tinklepaugh
Anne T.

Mac Reed

PCEPD — John Lancaster
— to invite other apptees

Commerce — Ask Doyle / Lane
— Ask Tony + John Lancaster too

Bill White, OPL

9/19/92

→ 2 wks in clearance
- re write - Mac, Larry + John
- OMB/Kitty - \$

DISABILITY EXECUTIVE ORDER SUMMARY AND ISSUES

- Commerce conversation - how
- mtg on BLS: what progress
- BLS (Comm)
- OMB
- PCEPD
- others?

- Threshold question is whether we want to put this into clearance in roughly the form it is in now. Would create a task force and outline a few specific tasks. Key question is how to balance it between internal "advocates" and others to ensure buy-in on both sides.
- Establishes "national agenda" on this issue, with goal to move US to employment rate of people with disabilities "approximating that" of the general employment rate. (Earlier drafts said rate should be "as close as possible" to general rate, which is preferable.) ✓

Section 1 -- Task Force Organization and Mandate

- Establishes task force with 7 agencies:

- Labor
- Education
- HHS
- SSA
- Treasury
- NCD
- President's Committee on Employment of PWD (PCEPD)

EOC
Commerce SBA - what them
- reach out to others
Howard - DOL, Ed, SSA

- Question of whether multitude of other agencies should be part of this is unclear.

- Chair to be decided. Options are (1) Labor; (2) Labor and Education; (3) PCEPD; and (4) Labor and PCEPD

Kitty - DOL is avg
- Commerce

Tony - I chair
- Commerce out of box, but think it

- Description of task force's mandate is unclear, redundant, and gives them powers they can't or shouldn't have, but this can probably be fixed.

- OMB - DF to add
- \$ for TF - Larry
\$ is flexible
Howard - contract
each order \$1.
Kitty/Elena - L+C

- Reporting structure and timeline is all over the place.

SD - focus on
essentials -
not #5, 6, 7, 8
that cost \$/time
focus on algo P
can do in
new of term

Section 2 -- Specific Activities Outside of Task Force

Good, Specific Items That Need Resolution:

- Make federal government a model employer (OPM and EEOC)
- Make Defense Dept. Computer Accommodations (CAP) program government-wide (budget implications) - puts on Larry
- Move toward monthly or regular reporting rate of unemployment rate (issues are how quickly BLS can do it and budget)

Vaguer Items that Need Discussion:

- Vague mandate that all agencies shall review everything they do
- Make sure welfare reform complies with disability rights (DOJ, DOL, HHS) - not thought of giving them that
- Vague small business/microenterprise assignment (ED, DOL, Commerce, HHS, SBA, etc)
- Transportation and HUD to "examine programs to create incentives to work."
- Remedies to new judicial trend of estoppel (DOJ, EEOC, SSA)
- A few others

Deadline?

9/19

Elena

Tony

Mac R

Susan D

Andy J

Paul M

John L

Kathy

Seth

Howard

Liz

Darryl M

Brian W

Labon G

OMB

Joanne C - SSA

Lori S. - Labon

Annet - heth

Naomi T. - educ

place in the CPS. As such, we strongly recommend modifying the language to read:

"The Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor and the Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce will continue the plan, agreed to in consultation with the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, to test the feasibility of producing monthly estimates of the employment status of persons with disabilities. Once the feasibility has been established, BLS and the Census Bureau will implement, as soon as possible, survey modifications necessary to produce such data. In the interim, the agencies will continue to provide data and analysis from currently available sources on the employment status of persons with disabilities."

Attachments

September 25, 1997

Status of efforts at BLS/Census to expand availability of data on the employment status of persons with disabilities

In accordance with our agreement with the President's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities (PCEPD) and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Bureau of the Census have undertaken three projects. The following is a brief description and status report on these projects.

The first was to provide existing data on employment trends for persons with disabilities from the Census Bureau's Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) to PCEPD for their release. The Census Bureau provided those data in the summer of 1996. PCEPD issued a news release on July 22, 1996, with PCEPD, Census, and BLS staff listed as contacts.

The second effort is a detailed analysis, to appear in BLS' Monthly Labor Review, of the employment and earnings characteristics of the disabled and nondisabled populations. The data are from the 1994 SIPP disability module. Extraction of the data from the SIPP microdata files has recently been completed and analysis has begun. The article is expected to be completed in early 1998.

The third project is the development and testing of two questions designed to accurately identify persons with disabilities within the questionnaire constraints of the monthly Current Population Survey (CPS). The "state of the art" method of identifying persons with disabilities in household surveys requires a lengthy battery of questions, as in the SIPP disability module. The monthly CPS cannot accommodate such a lengthy set of questions. Indeed, for an individual adult, the SIPP disability module is far longer than the entire CPS questionnaire. BLS and Census Bureau subject matter and questionnaire-design experts developed two questions that we believe are consistent with relevant definitions of disability and meet the constraints of the CPS. These questions were tested in the April-July 1997 SIPP wave. The success or failure of these questions to identify correctly persons with disabilities will be evaluated by comparing the results of that test with the results of the full battery of disability questions included in the August-November 1997 SIPP wave. A full microdata file containing the results of the first of the two waves is expected to be ready for analysis in June 1998, and a file containing the results of the second wave in October 1998.

get data
4 computer
test, get to field

Cleaned up then
Jan look at dirty data - early read
helps if in big trouble
1/99 @ earliest

U. S. Department of Labor

Commissioner for
Bureau of Labor Statistics
Washington, D.C. 20212



APR 24 1996

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

FROM : KATHARINE G. ADRAHAM *Katharine Adraham*
Commissioner

SUBJECT : Adding disability data to the
Current Population Survey

This is in response to the letter you forwarded to me from Tony Coelho about the collection of employment data for the disabled. I want to assure you that the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is ready to assist the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities in developing accurate and meaningful information on the employment status of persons with disabilities and that work on this effort has not stopped, as Mr. Coelho feared.

The original request from Mr. Coelho's staff and representatives of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was for a single question, or, perhaps, two or three questions, to be added to the Current Population Survey (CPS) that would allow for the identification of disabled persons and the regular publication of labor force statistics for this group. Our research and our discussions with experts in disability measurement suggest that one or a few questions are unlikely to be sufficient for reliably identifying the disabled. Furthermore, with a limited information base, we would be unable to make any distinctions within the group of perhaps 40 to 50 million disabled adults based on the severity or type of their disabilities.

The ability to make such distinctions is vital if the data are to be used to measure the impact of disability on market work. For example, data available elsewhere suggest that severely disabled persons are only a third as likely to work as are persons whose disabilities are less severe; persons with less severe disabilities are about as likely to work as those who report no disabilities. Under this proposal, we could not make such basic distinctions. In short, I am dubious that any very simple measurement framework would provide data on the disabled that are analytically meaningful.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY--2

APR 24 1996

The "state of the art" in obtaining disability information through self-response requires a checklist approach that describes functional limitations (seeing, hearing,...); limitations in Activities of Daily Living (ADL's--getting out of bed, dressing,...) and limitations in Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL's--going outside the home, preparing meals,...). Collecting this information requires a fairly long battery of questions, and asking all of these questions each month would place an undue burden on our CPS respondents.

If funding were available, however, it would be possible to conduct a supplement to the CPS to collect the extensive data necessary to identify the disabled as early as mid-1997. It would be difficult, however, to justify the additional cost and respondent burden of a CPS supplement approach, because data very similar to those that a supplement would produce already are being collected on an ongoing, periodic basis, through the Census Bureau's Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). The SIPP is a large nationally representative longitudinal survey which, as its name suggests, has an emphasis on data on participation in government programs, but also collects basic labor force data using questions and concepts that are similar, though not identical, to those used in the CPS.

Within the last 5 years SIPP has collected two modules (supplements) on disabilities, with two more scheduled in 1997 and 1999. The disability concepts used in the modules were developed through a close collaboration among experts at the Census Bureau, the Department of Health and Human Services, and other organizations. Table 24 in the attached SIPP report provides data on the employment status of disabled individuals, with considerable detail on their disability status. Despite the differences in concepts and methodology between the two surveys, the employment count based on SIPP data shown for all persons is quite similar to that obtained through the CPS for the same time period.

Finally, although, as already indicated, I have very serious reservations about the value of information on disability status obtained by means of one or a few questions, BLS certainly could test such an approach. The best way to conduct such a test would be to compare the categorization of individuals as disabled based on one or a few questions with the categorization based on the larger battery of disability questions in the 1997 SIPP. That would allow us to evaluate whether we can, indeed, identify a population

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY--3

APR 24 1996

that is similar in size and makeup to that obtained from the more lengthy questionnaire using a set of questions that it might be feasible to include on the CPS on a reasonably regular basis.

My staff and I would be happy to meet with Mr. Coelho or his representatives on this subject at his convenience. We appreciate his desire for better data in this area, and hope that we can agree on an approach that he and others with an interest in improved data about the labor market experiences of disabled Americans will find acceptable.

Attachment

In May 1996 the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Census Bureau, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities met and agreed on an agenda for BLS and Census to explore possibilities of producing more frequent data on the employment status of persons with disabilities than previously has been possible.

Completed Activities

* Detailed tabulations from the Census Bureau's Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) on persons with disabilities were produced. The Bureau of the Census, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and outside experts agree that the SIPP data provide an excellent, extensive, and accurate means of assessing the labor market experience of disabled individuals. Provision of these data enabled policy officials and external advocacy groups to demonstrate important labor market improvements on the anniversary of the passage of the ADA in the summer of 1996.

In Process

* Data collection by the Census Bureau of a new SIPP panel is underway and will continue for the remainder of calendar year 1997. This will provide--using the best existing data source--the most current picture possible of the labor market situation of persons with disabilities.

* A test to determine the possibility of obtaining annual or even more frequent measures of the labor market experience of disabled individuals has been designed and is in the field, also as part of SIPP. Data collection will continue until late in calendar year 1997 and the Census Bureau expects to have tabulated survey results in August 1998. At that time the two statistical agencies can evaluate the results.

* A joint Census Bureau/Bureau of Labor Statistics detailed analysis of the labor market experience of disabled persons based on SIPP data is in preparation and is expected to be published by BLS early in 1998.

Current Proposed Executive Order

The current proposed Executive Order (EO) on people with disabilities contains a provision (Section 3a) which states that BLS and Census should produce monthly data on the employment status of persons with disabilities within one year of the signing of the EO. It would not be feasible for

this goal to be met as stated. Further, as is described above, significant work already is underway on testing this approach. BLS has not been informed that the agreement reached last summer is no longer operative, and thus is concerned about why the proposed EO has this provision.

BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
AUGUST 7, 1997



President's Committee on Employment
of People with Disabilities

June 18, 1996

MEMORANDUM

TO:

Paul Miller, EEOC
Andy Imparato, EEOC
Katherine Abraham, BLS
Bill Barron, BLS
Phil Rones, BLS
Paula Schnider, Census
Jack McNeill, Census
John Gray, Dept. of Commerce

FROM:

Paul Hippelitus, PCEPD

SUBJECT:

Follow-up Actions Resulting from our
May 13th Meeting

According to my notes, the following items were identified for follow-up action. The purpose of this memo is to establish our next steps in the process to better document the employment of people with disabilities.

1. Census to release all available data on this subject.
(Note: Jack has already sent me some information.)
2. Census/BLS will work on developing better SIPP question(s). The long term goal is to both improve SIPP data collection on disability and employment and to strive to develop a question or two which might eventually bring people with disabilities into the monthly CPS.
3. Census/BLS will work on a possible follow-up question which will collect data on environmental barriers faced by people with disabilities.
4. BLS to publish a Monthly Labor Review article clarifying the purpose of the March Supplement to the CPS question, "Does anyone in your household have a health problem or disability that prevents that person from working"? The goal of this article is to dispel the impression that exists that the data this question collects is a true measure of the employment of people with disabilities.
5. BLS/Census to take a leadership role in producing appropriate reports on the employment of people with disabilities. These reports will be based on SIPP data.

6. BSL/Census will do a press release statement clarifying the validity or lack, thereof, of the March Supplement question to the CPS for employment related data on the employment of people with disabilities.

7. PCERD/EEOC will help publicize the appropriate data on the employment of people with disabilities, as it's released from BLS/Census.

8. Census/BLS will formally release, after appropriate statistical tests or checks are completed, the preliminary SIPP data on the employment rate of severely disabled for 1991, 1993 and 1994. These data, as shown to us by Jack McNeil during the May 13th meeting, reveal an upward trend in the employment of severely disabled individuals over recent years. This is news worthy because it runs counter to the impression made by the release of CPS data on the same subject. Release of these SIPP data will be both enlightening and encouraging.

If you have other follow-up actions that I may have missed, or if your perspective or recollection on these items is different, please call me on 202-376-6200.

Attached are the remarks the President made during our recent Annual Conference (May 23rd). Please note his mentioning our efforts to develop "a better system for tracking the unemployment rate of people with disabilities." For the full quote, see page 3, paragraph 4 of his remarks. The President is very supportive of our efforts.

I will be calling you shortly to request a follow-up meeting to discuss further implementation of these actions.

Again, on behalf of Chairman Coelho, thank you for your leadership and technical assistance on this important matter. Chairman Coelho is sending formal "thank you" letters to Secretary Reich and Secretary Kantor for your assistance in this effort.



**President's Committee on Employment
of People with Disabilities**

July 2, 1996

**Honorable Robert B. Reich
Secretary of Labor
Frances Perkins Building
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Room S-2018
Washington, D.C. 20210**

Dear Bob:

The purpose of this letter is to express my appreciation for your support of my recent request regarding the need to collect and publish data on the employment of people with disabilities.

As you know, with the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, a new category of the American work force has reached the level of "protected class." No longer can people with disabilities be discriminated against in employment and lack legal recourse. This advance in national policy both warrants and begs for full and equal treatment in all other aspects of our nation's employment enterprise, including employment data collection. Such attendant support signals full acceptance for the principles of ADA. Without these parallel advances, ADA is in danger of languishing and failing to reach its full potential.

Therefore, your leadership in this area is greatly appreciated by me and by the nation's 49 million Americans with disabilities who view the ADA as their civil rights act.

As a result of your response to my April 2, 1996 letter, Paul Miller, Commissioner, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and I met with Katherine Abraham, Bill Barron and Phil Rones of BLS, along with representatives from the Census Bureau, EEOC and the Department of Commerce. This meeting generated great promise for a serious breakthrough on the employment data collection for people with disabilities. Katherine, Bill and Phil all demonstrated a keen understanding for this issue and a commitment to resolve the problem. I look forward to our continued efforts to accomplish the goals we set for ourselves at this meeting.

07/01/96

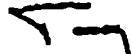
12:32

0202 376 6868

PCEPD

Again, thank you and your staff for your receptivity, understanding and response to this important concern.

Sincerely,



Tony Coelho
Chairman

TC:PH

cc: Leon Panetta, Chief of Staff to the President
Carmel Rasco, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy
Paul M. Igarashi, Vice Chairman, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Paul S. Miller, Commissioner, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

VSCPS - 1 &

FINAL

8-15-96 version

PROPOSED SIPP TEST QUESTIONS ON DISABILITY

Q1. This question concerns common daily activities such as seeing, hearing, walking, climbing stairs, driving a car, and going out to shop for groceries. Do you have a LONG-TERM physical or mental condition that makes it difficult to perform any of these kinds of activities?

☐ YES
☐ SOMETIMES
☐ NO

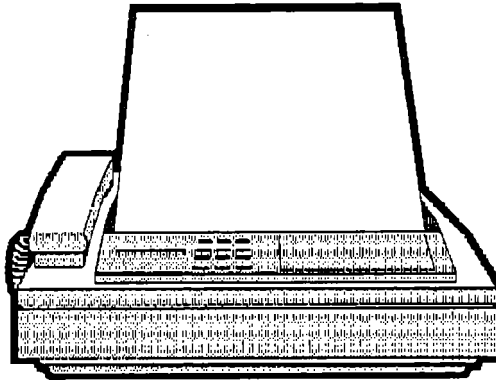
(INTERVIEWERS NOTE: By "long-term," we mean any condition expected to last at least 6 months.)

Q2. Does your condition SUBSTANTIALLY LIMIT your ability to perform any common daily activities; again, I am talking about seeing, hearing, walking, climbing stairs, driving, shopping, and other everyday activities?

☐ YES
☐ SOMETIMES
☐ NO

(INTERVIEWERS NOTE: By "substantially limit," we mean that the person cannot perform the activity or that the person can perform it only with someone's help.)

FACSIMILE



To:

Diana Fortuna

Sandy Dangel

Fax #:

456-7431

Re:

BLS Issue

Date:

9/22/97

Pages:

3, including this cover sheet.

FYI Some additional background
on this issue relating to a meeting
that occurred last year.

From the desk of...

Gary B. Reed
DirectorOffice of Program Economics
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy
200 Constitution Ave, NW Room S-2312
Washington DC 20210(202) 219-6026 ext 134
Fax: (202) 219-6523



President's Committee on Employment
of People with Disabilities

June 18, 1996

MEMORANDUM

TO:

Paul Miller, EEOC
Andy Imparate, EEOC
Katherine Abraham, BLS
Bill Barron, BLS
Phil Rones, BLS
Paula Schnider, Census
Jack McNeil, Census
John Gray, Dept. of Commerce

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OPTIONAL FORM 99 (7-90)

FAX TRANSMITTAL

of pages 1

Author: Kate Seelman at WDCI03

Date: 8/11/97 2:07 PM

Priority: Normal

Receipt Requested

TO: Howard Moses at WDCI02

TO: VApuzzo@DOL.gov (apuzzo) at INTERNET

Subject: Need for BLS collection of disability empl. stats

To	Howard Moses	From	Katherine Seelman
Dist/Agency	c/o Diana Fortuna	Phone #	202 205-8134
Fax #	202 456-7028	Fax #	202 205-8997
NSN 7540.01 317-7368		5099.101 GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION	

----- Message Contents -----

Among both sexes, the employment rate for persons with no disability was 80.5 percent, but the rate was 27.6 percent for persons with a severe functional limitation and 20.6 percent for persons who need personal assistance with an ADL or IADL. (1991-92 SIPP)

This is SIPP data but SIPP does not process this data on a regular basis. Further, SIPP is interested in Federal programs. SIPP collects data on income and program participation, e.g., Social Security benefits. SIPP does not adequately monitor employment status.

BLS is the only survey that could collect unemployment data on persons with disabilities on a continuing basis and find out about changes in work status. BLS gathers employment data on a monthly basis. BLS processes and disseminates that information soon after collection. The following are examples of BLS monthly survey questions:

Are you working?
Were you working during the last week?
Did you work part time?
Were you looking for work?

BLS data is crucial for understanding unemployment among individuals with disabilities.