



**MEETING OF THE
TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION**

DATE

AUGUST 22, 2023

1 Tuesday, August 22, 2023

2 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Good morning, everyone.

3 This meeting is called to order. Mr. Trobman, has anyone signed
4 up for public comment?

5 MR. TROBMAN: Good morning, commissioners.
6 Les Trobman, general counsel. We have one individual who would
7 like to offer comment this morning. Mr. Ross, if you could ahead
8 and unmute yourself, and begin.

9 MR. TROBMAN: Mr. Ross? Eric Ross, can you
10 hear me?

11 ERIC ROSS: Good morning. Can you hear me?

12 MR. TROBMAN: Yes, sir. Go ahead.

13 ERIC ROSS: Good morning, commissioners.
14 Thank you for this opportunity to make a public comment. My name
15 is Eric Ross, and I'm from Houston, Texas. I am speaking here
16 today in regards to TWC unemployment benefits insurance.
17 Unemployment insurance has been a lifeline to many hard-working
18 Texans separated from their job through no fault of their own.
19 Without this critical need to help people get back on their feet
20 after a job loss a lot of workers would have no place to turn
21 for financial assistance. I'm here to share my appreciation, to
22 say thank you to the great state of Texas, the agency, and its
23 staff, and its commissioners who have compassion to understand
24 the needs from the employers' perspective and the employees'
25 right to minimize the economic impact to Texas because of people

1 being out of the workforce. Thank you again for your hard work,
2 leadership, and public policy that benefits all citizens of the
3 great state of Texas and I look forward to supporting TWC in
4 2023-2027 strategic goals to ensure that Texas workforce system
5 supports employers and all businesses and industries to thrive
6 to ensure a skilled workforce is prepared and equipped to fill
7 critical in-demand jobs both now and in the future and to
8 provide exceptional customer service and support to all
9 workforce system stakeholders. Thank you and God bless.

10 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right. Thank you very
11 much. Good morning, Mr. Treadwell.

12 MR. TREADWELL: Good morning.

13 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: The motion passes with the
14 exceptions noted. I think that concludes our work on Items 1
15 through 7. We'll take a short recess.

16 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: This is Agenda Item 8,
17 Apprenticeship Training Program Performance Measures.

18 KERRY BALLAST: Good morning, Chairman
19 Daniel, Commissioner Demerson, Commissioner Treviño, and Mr.
20 Serna. For the record, Kerry Ballast, Workforce Development
21 Division. Texas Administrative Code Section 837.28 authorizes
22 TWC's three-member commission to adopt performance measures on
23 individual apprenticeship training programs. Today staff
24 recommend adoption of performance measures as listed in your
25 notebook materials. If adopted, these measures will be used to

1 calculate performance of apprenticeship training programs
2 receiving Texas Education Code Chapter 133 funds, and to
3 determine eligibility beginning fiscal year 2025. This concludes
4 my remarks and I'm happy to answer any questions.

5 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Any comments or questions?

6 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None here.

7 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: None here.

8 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion?

9 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Mr. Chairman, I move
10 that we approve the apprenticeship training program performance
11 measures as described in the discussion paper and presented
12 today by staff.

13 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: I second the motion.

14 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
15 seconded and the motion carries. This is Agenda Item 9, Texas
16 Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Grant Program Interim
17 Processes and Requirements.

18 KERRY BALLAST: Good morning, commissioners.
19 For the record, Kerry Ballast. House Bill 2784 of the 86th Texas
20 Legislature Regular Session created the Texas Industry-
21 Recognized Apprenticeship Grant Program. During the 88th Texas
22 Legislature TWC was allocated funding for fiscal years 23 and 24
23 to support what we now refer to as the TIRA grant program. In
24 alignment with proposed rules for the TIRA grant program, staff
25 recommend the following. Number one, issuing a notice of

1 availability for grants. Number two, accepting applications from
2 private sector employers representing industries in the state's
3 25 target occupations, and finally designating TWC's executive
4 director or his designee to review and approve applications for
5 TIRA funding. This concludes my remarks. I'm happy to answer any
6 questions.

7 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Any comments or questions?

8 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Kerry, right now we
9 have the rules out for public comment, correct?

10 KERRY BALLAST: Yes, sir.

11 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: OK, thank you. No
12 other comments.

13 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: No comments.

14 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion?

15 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I move that we
16 approve the Texas Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Grant
17 Program Interim Processes and Requirements as described in the
18 discussion paper and presented today by staff.

19 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: I second the motion.

20 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
21 seconded and the motion carries. Thank you. Agenda Item 10,
22 Initial High School Equivalency Voucher Distribution.

23 MAHALIA BALDINI: Good morning, Chair
24 Daniel, Commissioner Demerson, Commissioner Treviño, and Mr.
25 Serna. For the record, Mahalia Baldini with the Workforce

1 Development Division. The Texas Education Code Section 48.302
2 requires that the Texas Education Agency enter into a memorandum
3 of understanding with the Texas Workforce Commission in order to
4 transfer funds to subsidize the cost of a high school
5 equivalency exam for individuals who are 21 years of age or
6 older. Currently the interagency contract with the Texas
7 Education Agency and TWC is set to expire August 31, 2023, but a
8 new contract is currently being reviewed by our general counsel
9 and is scheduled to be signed by the end of the month. This will
10 enable TEA to transfer \$750,000 to our agency annually through
11 August of 2027. In anticipation of the funds transfer, staff are
12 seeking direction on implementing the subsidy program by doing
13 two things, approving an initial allotment of high school
14 equivalency vouchers to AEL grant recipients as outlined in your
15 notebook materials, and also by approving a plan that allows
16 staff to distribute the remaining vouchers for fiscal year 2024
17 to AEL grant recipients and allow those grant recipients to
18 develop policies to distribute the vouchers at the local level
19 to individuals who are not current or former participants. I'm
20 happy to answer any questions that you may have.

21 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Any comments or questions?

22 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None here.

23 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: None here.

24 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion?

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1 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I move that we
2 approve the initial allotment of high school equivalency
3 vouchers for fiscal year 2024 and approve the voucher
4 distribution plans described in the discussion paper and
5 presented today by staff.

6 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: I second the motion.

7 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
8 seconded and the motion carries.

9 MAHALIA BALDINI: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: This is Agenda Item 11,
11 Minimum Threshold for Child Care Reimbursement Rates for Board
12 Contract Year 2024.

13 REAGAN MILLER: Good morning, chairman,
14 commissioners. Reagan Miller with the Child Care & Early
15 Learning Division. The TWC child care rules require boards to
16 establish child care rates at or above a level established by
17 the commission. This morning we're bringing forward
18 recommendations on the child care minimum threshold for board
19 contract year 2024 child care payment rates. Our recommendation
20 is based on data from the most recent Market Rate Survey as well
21 as data from the Cost of Quality Report. The Cost of Quality
22 Report data is focused only on child care centers, licensed
23 centers. Our next Cost of Quality Report will have data on home-
24 based providers. As outlined in more detail in your materials,
25 we're recommending that the commission set the BCY24 minimum

1 threshold for child care rates at the 75th percentile of the most
2 recent Market Rate Survey or at the baseline rate from the Cost
3 of Quality Report, whichever is higher, and I'd be happy to
4 answer any questions.

5 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Comments or questions?

6 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None here.

7 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: None here.

8 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion?

9 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I move that we
10 approve the board contract year 2024 minimum threshold for child
11 care reimbursement rates as described in the discussion paper
12 and presented today by staff.

13 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: I second the motion.

14 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
15 seconded and the motion carries.

16 REAGAN MILLER: Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you. An executive
18 director's report.

19 MR. SERNA: No, sir. Nothing to report.

20 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there any other order
21 of business to come before the commission?

22 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Chairman, Mr. Ross,
23 Eric Ross I think made comments this morning so we want to thank
24 him for those generous comments that reflected back on the
25 agency and the staff.

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COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: I agree.

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion to
adjourn?

COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: So moved.

COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: I second the motion.

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
seconded to adjourn and we're adjourned.