

## Fourth Stimulus Increasingly Likely



## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

June 8, 2020

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# Washington Update

### Coronavirus Relief Package

On Friday, June 5, President Donald Trump and Senate Republicans acknowledged the need for a fourth coronavirus pandemic relief package to help boost the economy and jobs. According to a Senate GOP aide, funding in a fourth bill needs to be targeted and focused on the economy and schools reopening safely. Despite the addition of 2.2 million jobs last month, the unemployment rates still remain at levels comparable to the Great Depression. During a press conference at the White House, President Trump said he's still interested in a payroll tax cut, more stimulus money and additional aid for the restaurant and entertainment industries. House Democrats feel the unemployment report shows the need to take aggressive action, like passing their \$3.5 trillion package "The Heroes Act."

### Appropriations

On Tuesday, June 2, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (MD) announced that the House aims to pass all 12 appropriations bills by the end of July. The coronavirus

pandemic halted the House's progress on marking up and passing all the fiscal 2021 spending bills and the chamber isn't scheduled to vote again until June 30. Subcommittee and full committee markups on appropriations bills won't begin until the end of June/beginning of July, after Congress can agree on a fourth round of pandemic relief. The Senate, however, plans to mark up several appropriations bills toward the end of June and the remainder after the July Fourth recess.

## Senate HELP Committee

On Wednesday, June 3, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee approved six nominees to fill various positions at the Department of Labor (DOL), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the National Labor Relations Board. If confirmed by the Senate, the nominees would fill all five seats at the EEOC and four of five seats at the NLRB. By voice vote, the committee approved DOL Wage and Hour Division deputy chief Keith Sonderling to a Republican slot on the EEOC; Jocelyn Samuels, currently executive director of a think tank on sexual orientation and gender identity at the University of California, for a Democratic seat on the EEOC; and former NLRB member Lauren McFerran to fill one of two vacant Democratic spots on the board.

The committee also advanced the nomination of Julie Hocker, to lead DOL's disability employment policy office; Marvin Kaplan, who was renominated to his Republican seat on the NLRB; and Gibson Dunn lawyer Andrea Lucas for a Republican slot on the EEOC.

## Unemployment Rate

On Friday, June 5, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released the jobs report for May - indicating the unemployment rate, surprisingly, fell to 13.3% and the economy gained 2.5 million jobs. It was the largest monthly gain in new jobs since the Bureau of Labor Statistics started tracking the data series in 1939. The labor market seems to have rebounded from April's dramatic losses. The Department also noted that during the pandemic, millions of workers were misclassified as 'employed but not at work,' when they should have been counted as 'unemployed on temporary layoff.' If it wasn't for those misclassifications, the unemployment rate would have been higher - around 19.2% in April and 16.1% in May, not including seasonal adjustments. Still, economists' estimates for the May report were way off, with expectations around 20% and about 8 million jobs lost.

[Click here](#) to read the full report.

## **U.S. Department of Labor Announces Next Step Toward Better Connecting Transitioning Service Members Skills with Employers' Need**

On Thursday, June 4, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced that three finalists chosen to build an application to better match transitioning service members' skills with employers needs will begin field testing on June 22, 2020. The finalists – Eightfold, LinkedIn and Square Peg Hires – will present their software solutions to transitioning service members (TSMs) from various Army installations through virtual Transition Assistance Program (TAP) courses. The TSMs will evaluate their user experience and provide feedback as part of the competitive review process.

In December 2019, the Department's Veterans' Employment Training Service (VETS) – with in-kind support in testing and review from the U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs – established the Veterans Employment Challenge to develop a better job-matching tool. After three phases that included more than 50 competitors, the three finalists will begin field testing in the challenge's fourth phase.

[Click here](#) to read the full press release.

## **Statement By Secretary Scalia on the May Jobs Report**

U.S. Secretary of Labor Eugene Scalia issued the following statement on the May 2020 Employment Situation report:

“Today's report shows much higher job creation and lower unemployment than expected, reflecting that the re-opening of the economy in May was earlier, and more robust, than projected. Millions of Americans are still out of work, and the Department remains focused on bringing Americans safely back to work and helping States deliver unemployment benefits to those who need them. However, it appears the worst of the coronavirus's impact on the nation's job markets is behind us.”

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# **WDC in the News**

## **The Transformation of Work Summit**

On Tuesday, June 23, at 12:00 p.m. (ET) Protocol will host *The Transformation of Work Summit*. There is a broad national consensus that American workers need to learn new skills to succeed in the modern economy. But there's less of a consensus on what

specific skills are needed, how they are verified, how they should be taught and learned, and who should pay for it.

How is COVID-19 shaping the long-standing conversation about employable skills, workforce training, and concrete progress now? We will explore these questions through interviews with the Congressional Future of Work Caucus co-chairs and a panel of experts from the tech, policy, human resources, and education communities.

[Click here](#) to register and learn more.

## **The Economic Impact of the Coronavirus on the Louisville Region**

Economic conditions in the United States have changed at an unprecedented rate in the last 90 days due to the COVID-19 pandemic, going from record-low unemployment rates to record-highs in just a few months. The closure of non-essential businesses and dramatic declines in consumer spending have left millions of workers jobless. New data released Wednesday from the Bureau of Labor Statistics sheds light on how the Louisville metropolitan region's economy has been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. The data reveals the local economic conditions in mid-April, at the height of the pandemic.

The Louisville region's unemployment rate jumped to 16.6% in April, the highest rate ever recorded for the region. The previous record was hit during the slow recovery of the Great Recession, when in February 2010 the region's unemployment reached 11.9%. Compared to April of last year, this year's unemployment rate is 13.1 points higher.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

## **The Millions of Young People Forgotten Amid the Pandemic Response**

As Congress debates its next steps to save and rebuild the economy, it would be wise to remember the nearly 5 million "Opportunity Youth" — young adults aged 16 to 24 who aren't in school or employed, but were overcoming great odds to improve their lives before the pandemic hit. It is common for people to discount opportunity youth because some were recently homeless or involved in the juvenile justice or child welfare systems. But, as former domestic policy advisors to two presidents — one Democrat, one Republican — we work with many of them, side-by-side; recognize their potential, goals and contributions; and know a full recovery from this crisis will not occur without them. Opportunity youth play an increasingly critical role in our communities and our economy.

The pandemic has ushered in unprecedented unemployment among young people in America. Nearly 8 million workers under the age of 30 are unemployed. Three million dropped out of the workforce between mid-April and mid-May. Blacks and Latinos have been hit harder than other racial groups. As young adults who are disproportionately from communities of color, the implications for opportunity youth are laid bare as these numbers continue to rise.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

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## Reports & Articles

### **New from Brookings**

#### **Examining Options to Boost Essential Workers Wages During the Pandemic**

Essential workers are being asked to carry a heavy burden for the rest of society during the COVID-19 pandemic. They are doing jobs that require them to be physically present at a place of work even as public health risks remain. They are disproportionately in low-income jobs while those able to work from home tend to have more education and be higher income.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

#### **Online College Classes are Here to Stay. What Does that Mean for Higher Education?**

Of the many things that are uncertain about how American higher education will look in fall 2020, one thing is not: Online learning is here to stay. That doesn't mean that there will be no in-person instruction. Whether or not they are offering some in-person instruction, colleges will need to enable students to participate remotely. This is true despite the announcements by multiple colleges of plans to resume on-campus classes in the fall.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

### **New from Aspen Institute**

#### **Open to Good Jobs: Now is the Time to Improve Equity and Job Quality in Restaurant Work**

On Tuesday, June 9, at 2:00 p.m. (ET) the Aspen Institute will host the webinar *Open to Good Jobs: Now is the Time to Improve Equity and Job Quality in Restaurant Work*. Restaurants and their workers have been hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the crisis, food and drinking establishments were an important part of the business fabric in communities across the country, and these businesses employed over 12 million people. But as food businesses lost business, millions of restaurant workers lost work. The most recent US Bureau of Labor Statistics report shows employment in restaurants and bars has been cut in half, with industry observers estimating even greater job loss. And among those who continue to work, many still endure limited hours, low wages, and poor benefits that have characterized the industry for far too long.

As we start to emerge from this crisis, can we reimagine restaurants, and restaurant work, so that workers, businesses, and communities all thrive? This conversation will talk about ideas for business practices, public policies, and partnerships, including an innovative public/private effort that's addressing the interests that workers, small business owners, and communities all share in a thriving restaurant sector.

[Click here](#) to register.

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## Fast Fact

***In a recent survey, among those who feel valued by their employer, 94% of respondents say they are more committed to their company than they were before COVID-19.***



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