

Speaker Calls House Back Early From Recess

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WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

August 17, 2020

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The House and Senate are out of session until September.

Washington Update

Coronavirus Stimulus Bill

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called on the House to return to session “later this week” to vote on House Oversight Chair Carolyn Maloney’s “Delivering for America Act,” which prevents the Postal Service from “implementing any changes to operations or levels of service it had in place on January 1, 2020.” This comes as the USPS told 46 states and the District of Columbia that it could not deliver ballots in time for the November 3 election following organizational changes to operations and services implemented by newly appointed Postmaster Louis DeJoy. The House may also vote on an economic package, as President Trump has indicated he is willing to strike a deal to give \$25 billion to the USPS if Democrats come back to the table with the tax cuts that he wants for American workers, and the relief he wants for those who are jobless and still looking for work.

Initial Jobless Claims

In the week ending August 8, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 963,000, a decrease of 228,000 from the previous week's revised level. The previous week's level was revised up by 5,000 from 1,186,000 to 1,191,000. The 4-week moving average was 1,252,750, a decrease of 86,250 from the previous week's revised average. The previous week's average was revised up by 1,250 from 1,337,750 to 1,339,000. The advance seasonally adjusted insured unemployment rate was 10.6 percent for the week ending August 1, a decrease of 0.4 percentage point from the previous week's unrevised rate.

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

DOL/ETA

Department of Labor Announces Guidance for the Lost Wages Assistance Program to Provide Needed Relief to Americans

On Wednesday, August 12, the U.S. Department of Labor announced the release of guidance to help states implement the Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) program. LWA is authorized by Presidential Memorandum, and provides claimants in most Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs up to \$400 per week additional benefits, starting with weeks of unemployment ending on or after Aug. 1, 2020, and ending Dec. 27, 2020 at the latest. LWA will be administered by states and territories through a grant agreement with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and with support from the Labor Department. To qualify for LWA benefits, individuals must provide self-certification they are unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), and the state must confirm that the individual is receiving at least \$100 of underlying unemployment benefits.

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

Department of Labor Awards \$68 Million in Grants to Indian and Native American Organizations and Tribes

On Wednesday, August 12, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded \$68 million in funding to 340 organizations and tribes as part of the Indian and Native American Programs grant that provides training opportunities at the local level. Of the total award amount, approximately \$54 million will go towards adult programs and \$13 million will go towards youth programs. On Dec. 20, 2019, the President signed the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020 (P.L. 116-94). This act provides \$55,000,000 for Native American programs under section 166 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Of this amount, \$550,000 was set aside for technical

assistance. The act also provides funding for youth, with \$13,693,590 awarded to 170 INA grantees to provide supplemental services to low-income Native American youth on or near Indian reservations and in Oklahoma, Alaska and Hawaii.

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

WDC in the News

Congress' Failure To Reach Agreement On Aid To State And Local Governments Leaves Them In An Untenable Position

The failure of Congress to reach a compromise on a new coronavirus relief package imperils the ability of state and local government to maintain sound operations and critical services for residents, and puts jobs further at risk for the 15 million public servants carrying out services on the ground ranging from health care to education to public safety. After weeks of talks with no agreement on important issues including much-needed assistance to state and local governments, the seven bipartisan associations that represent states, cities, counties and other local governments warned that the lack of action would lead to massive cuts to the very services that are sustaining millions of Americans during the pandemic and recession, and that are necessary for a rapid and sustainable recovery.

State and local governments aren't seeking a bailout. They are seeking fiscal stabilization to immediately address revenue shortfalls caused by emergency measures enacted at every level of government to contain the spread of COVID-19. Both the House and Senate bills now recognize the need for replacing lost revenue because of significant losses during the COVID-19 pandemic. These revenue losses come as costs for health care, emergency response, workforce assistance, education and other vital programs are skyrocketing.

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

Job Openings

Founded in 1982, the National Immigration Forum (Forum) advocates for the value of immigrants and immigration to our nation. The Forum has worked to advance sound federal immigration solutions through its policy expertise, communications outreach and coalition building work, which forges powerful alliances of diverse constituencies across the country to build consensus on the important role of immigrants in America. The National Immigration Forum is hiring for two full-time positions - Vice President of Corporate Engagement and Vice President of Communications - based in DC but virtual until at least the end of the year.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the Vice President for Corporate Engagement position.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the Vice President of Communications position.

Reports & Articles

New from MDRC

Strategies for Promoting College Completion in the Age of COVID-19

COVID-19 threatens college completion for millions of students far beyond 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has already exacerbated inequities in higher education. Educators fear that the pandemic and ensuing recession will make it impossible for many students to start, or to continue, their college education this fall. No one knows yet how the college landscape will look this fall. Fortunately, however, we do have a lot of research evidence on “what works” in higher education that can illuminate better ways of supporting students, especially low-income students, during the pandemic and through to graduation day. Even before COVID-19, college graduation rates were low. At two-year colleges, for instance, which disproportionately serve the nation’s low-income students, only 35 percent of first-time students graduate within three years. At four-year colleges only about 60 percent of bachelor’s degree seekers complete their degree within six years. Costs are one important driver of low completion rates — and those costs go far beyond the tuition “sticker price.” Students must also pay for transportation, textbooks, housing, and food, which together can easily exceed tuition. Paying for college and covering these costs will now be even harder for millions of students and families who have lost jobs. But even when these costs are covered, many students still struggle.

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

Does Technology-Based Advising Promote Equity in Career and Technical Education?

Since the mid-2000s, career and technical education (CTE), formerly known as vocational education, has been undergoing a renaissance. Characterized at one time by programs that directed academically underprepared students into a relatively limited set of occupations with few opportunities for advancement, CTE today is more often linked to high-growth, high-wage career sectors designed to help students move toward sustainable, middle-class futures. Modern high school CTE programs are often referred to as “high-quality CTE,” and they are designed to help students build career skills and earn credentials through sequenced coursework, postsecondary credit acquisition, and exposure to relevant work-based learning experiences. These kinds of programs, which are on the rise, are poised to expand even more in the coming years. The updated Perkins V legislation (passed in 2018), which provides funding and oversight for state

secondary and postsecondary CTE programs, encourages the development of more work-based learning opportunities and continues to push states to increase the academic rigor of CTE through a variety of means, including an emphasis on attaining industry-recognized credentials (for example, Autodesk AutoCAD, Adobe Expert) and earning postsecondary credit while still in high school.

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

Fast Fact

One percent of U.S. employers allow employees to take naps during working hours.



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