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Public Comment - Example Submission (GENERAL COMMENT)

Re: Docket No. ETA-2022-0003, RIN: 1205-AC02, Document Number: 2022-07628

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Document Number: 2022-07628. I oppose the Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing Proposed Rule as written.

I am... [1-2 sentences introducing yourself / credentials, as they relate to your comment]. Examples:

- *“As a workforce development board member, I’ve seen firsthand the significant positive impact ...”*
- *“During my career as a Service Center Manager...”*
- *“As a Michigan Works! partner, my organization ..”*

The proposed rule would have a devastating impact on the delivery of workforce services in Michigan, leaving employers and job seekers, especially the most vulnerable, with a disjointed, less efficient structure and fewer staff and locations to serve them.

Michigan Works! uses Employment Service (Wagner-Peyser) funding to offer flexible employment solutions that meet the needs of employers and creative services to job seekers. Without this funding, nearly 400 local Employment Service staff will be reduced to 100 state merit staff, who are already overwhelmed with the volume of support needed, while an estimated 20 of the 99 Michigan Works! American Job Centers would be forced to close, many of which are located in rural locations..

We must maintain the Michigan Works! network’s demonstration status, allowing it to continue successful Employment Service delivery and support to Michigan’s job seekers and employers without disruption.

Michigan residents who are most vulnerable including refugees and immigrants, veterans and youth would encounter forced discontinuation of critical workforce services. A dramatic reduction of business services to the 32,000 Michigan employers served annually, including decreased assistance filling job openings, reduction and elimination of job fairs, cutting of industry-led collaboratives, and decreased or no access to job training programs would occur.

Employment Service (Wagner-Peyser) funding allows Michigan Works! to leverage other state, federal and non-governmental programs and funds to better serve people and businesses. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment on why I oppose the Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing Proposed Rule as written.

Sincerely,

[Name, Title, Organization]



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Public Comment - Example Submission
(ADDRESSING SPECIFIC RULE SECTIONS)

Re: Docket No. ETA-2022-0003, RIN: 1205-AC02, Document Number: 2022-07628

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Document Number: 2022-07628.

I would like to bring to the agency's attention data that is highly relevant for the decision-making process regarding the proposed Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing Proposed Rule, Document Number: 2022-07628.

The proposed rule text cites the following comments. The related data from Michigan, as summarized below, does not support the new structure approach presented by the Employment and Training Administration.

Please take the following data and its impact into consideration when reviewing the Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing Proposed Rule as written:

Pp 23702, second column, last sentence of the carry-over paragraph from column one.

And, as noted previously, it is important that the States use State merit staff to deliver ES services because of the critical alignment between the ES and UI programs.

The Michigan Works! System has proven its current method of Wagner-Peyser Employment Service delivery is best-in-class. Michigan is consistently outpacing the national median for performance, all at one of the lowest costs per participant in the country.

In PY18 and PY19, Michigan was one of the 10 states with the lowest Career Services cost per participant served, utilizing Wagner-Peyser funds. In PY20, Michigan was #17, within \$5 of the national rate.

Moving Wagner-Peyser funding out of the Michigan Works! System would devastate Michiganders' access to critical workforce resources.

If implemented, the new staffing rule would also result in job loss in the system, estimated at the loss of 220 full time equivalents.

This total loss of Wagner-Peyser funding would result in staffing funds that are currently distributed among more than 400 staff with different skills and specialties being cut down to 100 full-time state merit staff who will have to assume a caseload of nearly 1,000 people a year without the direct connections to other programs or funds to serve them.

Pp 23707, third column, first paragraph.



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Colorado and Michigan both use only merit-staffing to deliver ES services, but they employ merit staff at both the State and local level to deliver services. For these States, the proposed regulation would require that they discontinue their use of local merit staff and use only State merit staff

Accordingly, while disruption in service delivery may occur due to this change, the Department anticipates that disruption to these States' ES service delivery will be minimal. As noted in the regulatory impact analysis, prior to publication of this NPRM, the Department surveyed the demonstration States on any transition costs that may be incurred by the proposed State merit staffing requirement. While the Department acknowledges that there may be some cost to these three States due to this change, the Department believes that the rationale for requiring the use of State merit staff applies equally to the demonstration States, and that the long-term benefits of having cross-trained ES staff outweigh the cost to these States of transitioning to the use of State merit staff.

The Department seeks comment on the benefits and costs of transitioning to a State merit-staffing requirement in instances where States are using staff other than State merit staff to deliver services.

In addition, the Department seeks comment on any positive or negative impact this change would have in terms of the quality of services provided within the American Job Centers—including those funded by WIOA.

The proposed rule as written would end Michigan's long-standing service delivery model which uses local staff to ensure quick and efficient responses.

A survey of the 16 Michigan Works! Agencies (MWA), compiled with state and federal performance data, found the following ways in which Michigan's workforce development services would suffer if the proposed Wagner-Peyser Staffing Act rule is implemented.

Impacts on Michigan Residents

- 80% of MWAs would be forced to reduce services to Veterans without Wagner-Peyser funding.
- 62% of MWAs would be forced to eliminate Refugee and Immigrant Navigator Services, while another 18% would reduce them.
- 63% of MWAs would be forced to eliminate Clean Slate services, while another 31% would reduce them.
- In the past four years, more than 9,000 career awareness events have been held by MWAs. 86% of MWAs would be forced to reduce these services without Wagner-Peyser funding.
- MWAs provided 43,000 workshops for job seekers in the past four years. 81% of MWAs indicated that these workshops would be reduced, with a majority reducing them by at least 50%. With an average of 10 attendees per workshop, that is a potential of over 108,000 job seekers that will no longer receive this service.



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Impacts on Business

- Michigan Works! System has provided more than 141,000 services to businesses.¹ 88% of MWAs state that the services provided to businesses will be reduced without this funding, while 1 said that they would be totally eliminated.
- In the past four years, more than 3,600 services have been provided by MWAs to Industry-Led Collaboratives. 87% of MWAs would be forced to reduce these services without Wagner-Peyser funding.
- In the past four years, more than 7,500 job fairs have been held by MWAs to support employers' hiring activities. 100% of MWAs would be forced to reduce the number of job fairs they could provide. More than half of those MWAs would reduce job fairs by at least 50%.
- 88% of MWAs state that support for GoingPro Talent Fund provided to businesses will be reduced without this funding, while 2 said that they would be totally eliminated.

Impacts on Customer Service

- 62% of MWAs report that the number of centers in their region may have to be reduced. It is estimated that at least 20 of the 99 American Job Center locations would close, primarily in rural areas.
- Almost half of the 99 American Job Center locations in Michigan would have to reduce the number of hours they can operate.
- Over 87% percent of MWAs will be forced to reduce their service center operations, while 12% report they will be forced to eliminate these essential services entirely. This includes:
 - 100% of MWAs report that staffing and referrals to other programs would be impacted.
 - 100% of MWAs report that virtual services would be impacted.
 - 93% of MWAs report that greeting the public would be impacted.
 - 87% of MWAs report that answering the phones would be impacted.
 - 81% of MWAs report that computer availability and resource room resources would be impacted.

Pp 23732, third column, last sentence of the carry over paragraph from column two.

Revise §652.215 to read as follows: §652.215 What staffing models must be used to deliver services in the Employment Service? (a) Staffing Requirement. The Secretary requires that the labor exchange services described in §652.3 be provided by ES staff, as defined in part 651 of this chapter.

The proposed rule as written would remove the State of Michigan's authority over its workforce system service delivery model. It would have a devastating impact on the delivery of workforce services in Michigan, leaving employers and job seekers with a disjointed, less efficient structure.

Michigan Works! uses Employment Service (Wagner-Peyser) funding to offer flexible employment solutions that meet the needs of employers and provide creative services to job seekers. These services and funds are integrated into everything Michigan Works! does. Employment Service is the foundation of the System.



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Most significantly, Michigan residents who are most vulnerable including refugees and immigrants, veterans and youth would encounter forced discontinuation of critical workforce services. Additionally, a dramatic reduction of business services, including 88% of Michigan Works! Agencies providing decreased assistance with recruiting and retention services, 100% forced to reduce and eliminate job fairs, and 87% forced to cut support of industry-led collaboratives.

Michigan residents would encounter forced discontinuation of critical workforce services with the removal of Employment Service (Wagner-Peyser) funding, with 80% of Michigan Works! Agencies being forced to reduce services to Veterans, 62% eliminating and 18% reducing immigrant and refugee navigator services, 63% eliminating and 31% reducing Clean Slate services for formerly incarcerated people, and 86% having to reduce the more than 9,000 career awareness events – mostly for youth and college students – including the award-winning MiCareerQuest events.

If implemented, the new staffing rule would also result in job loss in the system, estimated at the loss of 220 full time equivalents. This total loss of Wagner-Peyser funding would result in staffing funds that are currently distributed among more than 400 staff with different skills and specialties being cut down to 100 full-time state merit staff who will have to assume a caseload of nearly 1,000 people a year without the direct connections to other programs or funds to serve them.

In consideration of the evidence-based data above, revising the Wagner-Peyser Staffing Act rule would have catastrophic consequences for our state's businesses and talent.

Please consider these implications regarding the effectiveness of this rule in achieving its stated purpose.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment that outlines why I oppose the Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing Proposed Rule as written.

Sincerely,

[Name, Title, Organization]