**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Stakeholder Consultation**

**Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2016 &   
Alignment of Senior Community Service Employment Program's (SCSEP) with the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Primary Indicators of Performance**

**Tuesday, May 16, 2016**

*Transcript by*

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LAURA CASERTANO: Now I'm going to go ahead and move us right into today's presentation. Again, I want to welcome everyone to today's webinar, and I'm going to turn things over to Steven Rietzke, division chief at the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Steve?

STEVE RIETZKE: Hi, everyone. This is Steve Rietzke. I'm the division chief for national programs, tools, and technical assistance here in the national office in Washington for the SCSEP program. We're the program office. We sit within the Office of Workforce Investment at the Employment and Training Administration.

Thank you for joining us today. This is our stakeholder consultation for the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2016. So just to go over the agenda real quick, I'm going to go over the purpose of today's session and talk a little bit about how the session will flow.

I am talk about the Older Americans Act reauthorization. Obviously we'll start with a general overview of what that law entails, and then I'll move into essentially a summary of the specific changes that you can find in that law. And then obviously we're looking for your input as stakeholders, and I'm going to talk a lot more about that and what we expect.

I also want to mention I'm here joined by the SCSEP team in the national office with me in the room. I'm going to do most of the speaking today, although Michi McNeace is here and she's going to jump in periodically to do some polling questions, just to mix things up a little bit.

So moving on to the purpose of today's session. Basically we are looking to gather input from the SCSEP community as well as other stakeholders who are interested in older worker issues. It looks like we've got a little over 150 people on the line here today, and this invitation went out pretty broadly to not just the SCSEP grantees but broader workforce system folks, other stakeholders in the community, and we're glad you could join us today.

As I mentioned right up front, what we're looking for is your input regarding the changes to SCSEP that are required by the reauthorized Older Americans Act. And just for shorthand today, I'm going to refer to the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2016 as OAA-2016, because the former phrase is a bit of a mouthful.

So why are we looking for this? Basically your input can really help to inform our development of the regulations that will implement the changes in the law; things like what issues do you think we should consider, how do you see these changes impacting your organization, do you have specific recommendations for how we might look at particular issues in implementing what's in the law.

One thing I do want to mention up front is that this conversation will not be focused on the budget for SCSEP. We definitely recognize that there is some uncertainty about SCSEP appropriations in FY 2018 depending on what actions Congress takes in the response to the administration's budget proposal; but right now we're really just focused on proceeding with the activities that are necessary to implement the requirements of the Older Americans Act and to do that by the statutory deadline. So really, this conversation is going to stay focused on the changes in law and your input regarding how we might implement those changes in regulations.

So in terms of the information flow here, as I said, I'm going to be covering – basically hitting the highlights of the changes in the law. Throughout the presentation you're free to type into the chat box. Primarily what we're looking for is your input, and we're going to use that input in the draft of the regulations and take it into consideration as we go forward with guidance and program operations.

If you do have questions, there's some types of questions that we can probably answer and there's some types of questions that we won't be able to answer. So if you have questions where you're looking for clarification on something that I've said in this presentation, go ahead and ask it. If you have questions about, you know, what the Department of Labor is thinking in terms of the way it might implement something in regulation, that's not something we'll be able to address today because we're at that input-gathering stage.

So that's a little bit of stage-setting for this conversation. Again, our main purpose here is to give you what we hope is a helpful summary of the changes in the law and get your input on how you see that affecting you and ways that we might – things that we might consider in implementing those changes

So that's some of the overview. I think we've got a quick poll here, and I'll turn it to Michi to run that part of the agenda.

MICHI MCNEACE: Great. Thank you, Steve.

So our first poll is we're asking, "What stakeholder groups are you a part of?" Our first response would be SCSEP grantee or subgrantee; SCSEP host agency; WIOA partner, One-Stop operator or American Job Center affiliate; one of our national and/or local aging organizations (N4A,NASUAD, AAAs,ASA,ADRCs); anybody with ACL; and anybody that might fall under the other.

And right now we're seeing as though that we have a lot of our – the SCSEP grantees and subgrantees that have joined. We have some workforce partners and some national and/or local aging organization; and some – a very small (section ?) from the "other" group. We do know we have a representative from Administration for Community Living that has signed on. Let's give it a couple minutes. Our SCSEP grantees and subs are in full force here with us.

MR. RIETZKE: Great. Well, thank you all again for joining us, and obviously we're very glad to see that the grantee community is represented here, but also glad to see that we have some decent representation from some of these other categories, particularly the WIOA partner category. It'll be a recurring theme throughout this presentation that a big part of what the reauthorization act – its reason for being, essentially – is to drive more integration and coordination with WIOA. So the majority of the changes that we're going to be talking about kind of all follow along that same theme.

So going on to the session flow slide, I've talked already a little bit about this, but just to reiterate, we are in listening mode; meaning, as I just talked about, we're hearing from you. Today's session, we're going to be relying on your use of the chat feature.

So because we've got so many people on the line, this is kind of the fastest and most efficient way for us to hear from you. The phone lines would obviously be kind of unwieldy with this big of a crowd. So we thank you for your use of the chat feature.

At the end of the session we'll be leaving a dialogue box open for a little while to let you share any additional information or feedback that you'd like to provide. But you don't have to wait until the end. If you have something you want to say as we're getting to it, go ahead and type it in. And if you have more thoughts throughout, don't hesitate. That's really why we're here, is to hear from you.

So as I mentioned before, your responses here we'll be reviewing and analyzing those as we're working on the draft regulations and then planning any future guidance or technical assistance where some of your thoughts might come in handy.

I do want to say – and there's a slide on this much later in the presentation – but I want to mention right up front that today's not your only chance to say what's on your mind. We do have an email address set up where you'll be able to send additional comments after the webinar over the next three weeks. So if you have thoughts today and then you have more thoughts later, great. If you're not even sure what to say today and need to look at the slides again and (noodle ?) on them a little bit, that's perfectly fine, and we'll share that email address. I think it's on the second-to-last slide in today's presentation.

So we're going to hit the highlights of the changes in the law, we're going to get your input, and you'll have a chance to provide that input both today and over email later.

OK. Let's talk about the OAA-2016; again, the reauthorization act. As I'm sure you all know, the OAA Title V is the law that authorizes the Senior Community Service Employment Program, or SCSEP. The OAA-2016 was signed into law by the president on April 19th, 2016.

Basically the changes that are specified in the reauthorization act are somewhat limited in scope. It's not a reinvention of the program but really maintains the dual purpose of SCSEP in promoting community services and work-based training activities for unemployed persons age 55 with other with poor employment prospects.

So as I mentioned upfront, the main thrust of the OAA-2016 is to reinforce and drive more alignment and coordination between the SCSEP program and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act system and programs, which was enacted in 2014. So as I said before, this is kind of a recurring theme of the presentation here. The majority of changes that you will see in the reauthorized Older Americans Act essentially flow from this purpose – driving more alignment with WIOA in planning, operations, and in particular, performance measurement.

So just so you know, if want to Google it – I don't think we have this on the slide – what we're talking about today, the law itself, is Public Law 114-144, and it's Section VI of that law. That's where we're drawing from. This law, it's written as an amendment to the Older Americans Act, so it's one of those laws that's kind of hard to read because it's strike-that, insert-this, etc. So hopefully what we're doing here in the presentation is making it much easier to follow and get to the essential changes.

So moving on, we've got another poll. Michi, take it away.

MS. MCNEACE: Another poll. Here we go. Our question number two is, "Who familiar are you with the Older Americans Act Reauthorization of 2016?" It's either, I have read and understand the OAA and the 2016 amendments; I read the OAA 2016 but don't understand the impact of the changes; I am somewhat familiar but need further clarification; or I have not read the Older Americans Act of 2016; or, what is the Older Americans Act.

So thus far we have about 51 percent that says I am somewhat familiar but need further information or clarification; followed by I have not read the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act of 2016. Give it a minute or so. (Pause.) So right now it seems like the majority are somewhat familiar but need further information or clarification, Steve.

MR. RIETZKE: Got it. Good to know. So it looks like a few of you have done some reading – or a lot of you have done some reading and a few of you it's clicking with and a lot of you are looking for clarification, so I think that's good because I think what we're doing here is really going hone in and highlight some of the differences between the new law and the old law. So good to know.

Let's move on to the required changes to SCSEP under the OAA-2016. We'll start to get into the details now, and just to frame that a little bit, the changes basically fall into a few different categories.

The first actually isn't on the slide. The first is funding and obligations. We didn't put it on the slide because I'm actually not going to cover it today. This is essentially where the reauthorization act authorizes certain funding levels in future years. Because those funding levels are really dependent on future appropriations and that isn't likely something we would address in regulation, I'm not going to discuss it except for right now.

So moving on, the first category that is on the slide is terminology. This is just the changes – this'll be a quick part of the discussion. These are some changes where the language has shifted in the Older Americans Act to be more consistent with WIOA; again, following along that theme of integration and coordination. The folks who wrote the law changed certain key words so that they matched what's in WIOA to hopefully reduce some confusion between the laws.

The second category is state plans; again, driving more integration and coordination between SCSEP and the WIOA broader workforce system. There's language to that effect around the state planning process that we'll talk about in more detail.

And then finally, the bulk of the changes really fall under the category of performance, particularly performance measures, where there's some redefining of performance measures; again, aligning more with WIOA. But then there's also some discussion of the factors to be considered in negotiating performance levels as well as the negotiation timeframe. So that kind of outlines the detail that we're going to talk about today.

So first up is terminology. This is semantically important but probably one of the less interesting slides in the presentation. As I mentioned, there were a number of changes in the Older Americans Act under the reauthorization to simply update the terminology so that it matches WIOA. The new line aligns OAA Title V with those pertinent WIOA terms. You can see a list of examples on the slide; things like changing "WIA" to "WIOA," which is kind of an obvious one; changing "workforce investment boards" to "workforce development boards;" "core indicators" becoming "primary indicators." So those are some of the language changes that you'll see in the new law; again, really just getting into more alignment in language between the Older Americans Act and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

So that's all I have to say on terminology. State plans, I think this is a little more interesting, but again, continues the same theme of alignment and integration between WIOA and SCSEP. The new law discusses the process for developing SCSEP state plans in coordination with WIOA state planning.

As I'm sure most of you know, the SCSEP state plan is a four-year plan that must be updated not less than every two years. Basically the OAA now says that in lieu of the SCSEP state plan – which we've previously referred to as the standalone state plan – states may include SCSEP in their WIOA combined state plan.

This was already authorized under WIOA. I know that many of you did this already last year, and some of you still submitted standalone state plans; many of you did SCSEP as a portion of the combined state plan. And so the new law also amends the SCSEP state plan requirements to require description of how the activities of grantees within the state are to be coordinated with activities carried out under Title I of WIOA and with other related programs; as well as how the state will reduce unnecessary duplication between the activities carried out under the OAA and WIOA and related activity.

So here's another poll. This is a good question.

MS. MCNEACE: Good question. "What type of SCSEP state plan does your state currently have?" You can choose from standalone state plan, combined state plan; or hmm, I really don't know. (Pause.) Standalone seems to be leading – well, I really don't know. (Chuckles.)

OK. So right now it's "I really don't know" followed by "standalone" and then "combined state plan."

MR. RIETZKE: Interesting.

MS. MCNEACE: OK. That's interesting. Yeah.

MR. RIETZKE: I'm guessing all the um-I-really-don't-know crowd is probably national grantees –

MS. MCNEACE: Or subgrantees.

MR. RIETZKE: – or subgrantees. OK. Good to know. There's a lot of folks clicking that "combined state plan" button. If I remember correctly, that might be about the number of combined state plans we've got.

MS. MCNEACE: Yeah. All right.

MR. RIETZKE: All right. Well, thank you. All right. Here's a slide with smaller font on it, so there's a little more going on here.

We are getting into now the performance indicators, and this is where I think there's some more substantive change to the new law, the reauthorization act. But this is following along that same theme again – I think I've said this 10 times now, and I'll probably say it a few more – but really following the same theme of alignment with WIOA.

In particular the changes here are driving more consistency in how the performance is measured. In a lot of cases the way that this shakes out in the new law is that they align the performance measures by just using the same measure. So what we've got on the slide here are the three main examples of this, so I'll just walk through each one of them.

The first one is what we would call today the measure of entered employment, which is currently measured in the first quarter after exit. Under the reauthorization act, this changes to the percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment measured at the second quarter after exit. This is a similar measure but you notice that the timing is different.

You'll also notice that we didn't actually use a term here like "entered employment" because that isn't specified in the law. What we've cited here is essentially the language from the law itself, which goes as far as what's on the slide in terms of defining this measure.

The second measure highlighted here, what we would call today employment retention, which is currently measured in the second and third quarters after exit, you don't see the term "retention" in the reauthorization act. What you see is a new measure which measures the employment rate at the fourth quarter after exit from the program.

And then finally, the current measure that we refer to as average earnings in the second and third quarters after exit becomes median earnings. There's a shift in the actual – from statistics you know that the median is different than the average, so the actual measure is changing. And then those median earnings are measured in the second quarter after exit. That's the same quarter that we're taking the measurement for the first measure of employment. So again, average earnings in the second and third quarters becomes median earnings measured in the second quarter after exit.

Again, we're measuring very similar things, but there's a shift in the way – in the definition of those measures, and of course it's a shift so that it aligns with the way that WIOA measures the program; which obviously, as I said, drives a lot more consistency between the program, makes it a little bit easier to compare apples-to-apples between programs; and generally gets SCSEP into better alignment with WIOA.

So moving on, this slide highlights another change in the performance measures. Currently under the OAA pre-reauthorization we have an additional measure, of satisfaction in serving participants, employers, and host agencies – basically, how satisfied are those constituencies with their experience in SCSEP. We do this right now through customer satisfaction surveys and it's defined as an average of the American Customer Satisfaction Index, comes out of the score.

The new measure, it takes this from what we referred to before as an additional measure and it makes it one of the primary indicators of performance. So the new indicator is the effectiveness in serving participants, host agencies, and employers. Again, this is a similar measure but it's kind of bumped up from being an additional measure to being a primary measure.

And in the law – it's worth noting that in the law itself you'll notice that the language there is not as specific in terms of its definition as the other measures are. The law goes as far as to say employment in the second quarter after exit, fourth quarter after exit, etc. In this case the law just says indicators of effectiveness in serving participants, host agencies, and employers.

And the reason I point this out is that I'd say we're particularly interested in input that you have on this because it's a little bit less defined. We're especially interested in hearing your thoughts on this measure.

So moving on to participation and community service measures. The OAA-2016 retains all three SCSEP participation measures – service level, community services, and service to most in need. The OAA-2016, the reauthorization language for these measures, is identical to the current law – to the previous law. The statutory language remains unchanged.

So moving on to the next slide, another thing worth noting is that the reauthorization act eliminates the Secretary of Labor's authority to establish additional indicators of performance. If you know the previous law, you know there's a bullet or a subparagraph within the law that says essentially "and any other measures that the secretary establishes." The new law strikes that bullet point and essentially eliminates that authority.

So as a result, the current measures that we refer to as additional measures are eliminated – volunteerism, retention at one year; I mentioned a couple slides ago we are capturing a similar measure when we look at employment at the fourth quarter after exit. But that retention at one year measure is eliminated.

And then I talked a little bit about this a slide or two ago. Again, satisfaction of participants, employers, and host agencies; this is essentially now captured under that new measure that talks about effectiveness in serving participants, employers, and host agencies. So it's a similar kind of measurement.

So moving on to the current factors for negotiating expected levels of performance. Now we're changing gears a little bit; moving from the performance measures themselves to some specifics about performance negotiation.

Everything on this particular slide is the current language or the old language. The OAA before the reauthorization specifies adjustment factors to be used in adjusting negotiated performance levels. It specifies five different factors. What you see on the slide is language that we've pulled from the previous law.

Essentially, just to paraphrase each of these, there's high rates of unemployment or poverty; significant downturns in the area served or the national economy; significant numbers or proportions of participants with barriers to employment; changes in minimum wages at the local, state, or federal level; and then the last one is limited economies of scale for the provision of community service employment and other activities performed in the area.

So again, the previous law specified these as factors that shall be used in negotiating expected levels of performance. The new law – going on to the next slide – it changes the structure of this section a little bit. It kind of splits things into two different subparagraphs. The first is called factors; the second is called adjustment based on economic conditions and individuals served during the program year.

So just to kind of walk through these a little bit, the first subparagraph called "factors" discusses factors that the grantees and the secretary shall consider in reaching agreement on performance level. Again, to paraphrase these, those factors are how do the performance levels involved compare with the expected levels of performance for other grantees. It specifies that the performance levels will be adjusted using an objective statistical model based on the one established under WIOA.

The slide doesn't include this language from the new law, but the reauthorization act does actually cite this specific section of WIOA that discusses that objective statistical model. So it says here that we're going to adjust the levels with an objective statistical model based on that model.

And then the third factor here, continuous improvement, will take into account the extent to which the negotiated performance levels promote continuous improvement in performance and accountability.

Then there's the second subparagraph called "adjustments" – the full title again, adjustments based on economic conditions and individuals served during the program year. This says that the secretary shall in accordance with the objective statistical model referenced above adjust the expected levels of performance to reflect the actual economic conditions and characteristics of participants.

These negotiations and these adjustment factors are another area where I would say we're particularly interested in your thoughts. This new language, again, it's getting at similar things but there are some differences. There's obviously less detail here in the reauthorization act about those specific adjustment factors. In the previous law it got a little more descriptive about high rates of unemployment or significant downturns in the economy, etc.

In this new law there's a little more brevity in this section about the adjustments, and it essentially refers back to that objective statistical model; so again, a good area for us to hear your input and your thoughts about how you see that affecting your program.

OK. So what we've got up on the screen now is a crosswalk of previous measures versus new measures. I don't think I need to walk through this in detail now. I think it's a good reference point for you.

Why don't we pause? I know a lot of you have been typing into the chat box and we can pause and look at some of the questions and comments that have come in so far, and I think we're going to address a few of them now.

So I'm going to put you all on mute just for a minute so we can put our heads together, and I promise I'll be back very shortly. (Pause.)

MS. CASERTANO: All right. Great. And while he looks over the comments that came in I just want to remind everyone that you can download the transcript of today's webinar as well as the PowerPoint and you can view the recording of today's webinar on WorkforceGPS in about two business days. But for now you can download the PowerPoint directly to the bottom left-hand corner of your screen. You see the file share window; you can download the PowerPoint right from there. And then again, in two days you can watch the recording and download the PowerPoint and transcript on WorkforceGPS. (Pause.)

Hi, (Dennis ?). I saw your question about the file share window. It's in the bottom left-hand corner of your screen under the closed captioning. You can click today's PowerPoint and download the file right from there. (Pause.)

MR. RIETZKE: Hi, everybody. Sorry to keep you waiting. We're back. Thank you for your thoughts that are coming in. Keep them coming.

I do want to address a few of the questions that have come in. There's actually quite a few questions about the effectiveness in serving participants, employers, and host agencies measure. Some of the questions y'all are asking – you know, will we create new surveys since the questions to measure effectiveness would be different than the questions to measure satisfaction; will the survey process be the same; how will we measure effectiveness, etc.?

So my answer at this point is that we're really looking for your input for any thoughts that you might have on how we might do that. At this point, as I mentioned on that slide, this is an area where there's not as much specificity in the law. It's an area where there wasn't as much specificity under WIOA, either. It could potentially be a challenging thing to measure and we're certainly going to put a lot of thought into how it's defined and how the measurement will work, but I think right now we're at an input-gathering stage. I don't have those answers yet, and we really want to hear your thoughts.

And your thoughts can range anywhere from, here's why that would be really challenging, or here's an interesting way I thought about doing this. You can give us a range of thoughts on this and we're happy to hear from you because obviously you're going to have live with this and actually put it into practice. So please give us your input.

There's a few questions about the timing, and it's actually on the very next slide. We just haven't quite gotten there yet. But because there's some questions in here I think I'll go ahead and address the way we see this unfolding. And I'm going to preface this whole concept by saying that this – you know, we're still in the process of nailing all of this down. So what I'm going to tell you is what we expect to happen.

Obviously as a federal agency we're kind of a flux period right now where we're transitioning between administrations, and so there's some processes that take a little bit more time than they might otherwise. But here's what we think is going to happen at this point. That's subject to change, but this is our best estimate.

So what we do know is that the law requires us to implement the changes in the performance measures by December 31st, 2017. The way that we are essentially proposing to implement those changes is through what's called an interim final rule that would publish by that date, by the end of 2017.

Our expectation right now – again, this could potentially change – our expectation right now is that the first quarter on which you would report these new measures would be the first quarter of PY 2018. That's the quarter beginning July 1st, 2018.

So if that timeline turns out to be how things flow – and we hope it is – then essentially we'd publish that rule by the end of this calendar year. There would be a gap between when the rule publishes and the beginning of that first program year subsequently. That would be the time where we're negotiating the new measures and figuring out the expected performance levels. And then by the beginning of July we would hit the ground running. Ultimately that quarter would end September 30th, 2018, and the report would be due 45 days after that. So that's kind of the basics of how we see the timeline flowing.

So I'm just taking a look at some of the other questions that have come in. I think we're going to confer for just a minute, so I'm going to put you on hold so you don't have to listen to our chatter and we'll be back in just a minute. (Pause.)

Great. Thank you, everyone. Keep your comments coming. There's a lot of good thoughts coming in. There are some questions in here that kind of follow the line of thinking of how is DOL going to do this. For folks asking questions that are phrased that way, I would kind of put it back to you, how do you want us to answer that question?

Give us your thoughts on what the impact is, what you think might work, what you think might not work; pitfalls that we should watch out for. There's a lot of comments about access to data that will help in the measurement; timelines for transitioning from the current reporting structure to the new reporting structure, definitely all good thoughts and stuff that we will take into account and take to heart as we're drafting.

So at this point I don't see questions that I can answer, per se. Can we run through – there's a couple more slides. Actually, there is a question we can answer, which is, "What's the email address to send comments to?" This is on slide 22; it's the second-to-last slide but I'll go ahead and say it now. It's SCSEPtransition@dol.gov.

And we're asking that you submit comments to that address subsequent to the webinar if you have them. And to make sure that we're able to consider them in our drafting we're asking that you send those comments in by June 6th, which is three weeks from today.

So we left off on the crosswalk of SCSEP measures, and again, I won't make you listen to me describe each one of these again. But we thought it was good to roll all of these up into one chart and show you the previous measure versus the new measure, so that can be a good reference point at-a-glance.

The next slide, I kind of jumped ahead when folks were asking about the timeline, but again, this is what we expect; this is the timeline that we're hoping to follow. To some degree this could change, but this is what we're pushing for. And again, what we are pushing for is to publish an interim final rule by the end of the year. It would take effect at that point when it publishes.

Then there would be a gap leading up to the beginning of the program year where we're doing goal negotiation, we're giving you technical assistance and training and helping you get up to speed on everything that's going to change and making sure everyone's comfortable with it. And then that first quarter that runs July 1st through September 30th of 2018 would be the first quarter where you're reporting on the new measures.

So let's jump to the last – I think this is the last poll of the presentation.

MS. MCNEACE: The last poll. "What has your experience been with alignment and coordination between SCSEP and WIOA programs?" Our experience and partnerships have been very positive; it is challenging but moving in the right direction; we are trying to promote coordination but having difficulties; I do not see any coordination between SCSEP and WIOA program; or I don't have any experience with this at all.

Giving it a few minutes. Right now what seems to be leading is trying to promote coordination but having difficulties, followed up with it's been very positive. There's some for challenging but moving in the right direction. And from what we can see it seems to be trying to promote coordination but having some difficulties, followed up by it's been very positive.

MR. RIETZKE: OK. Thank you all for that input. It's encouraging to see so many of you headed in the right direction. And then quite a few of you who are trying to move in that direction and encountering some challenges – and I know we've talked about this on our grantee calls over the last however-many months. I think we definitely want to hear those challenges and understand how we can be helpful in helping to address those.

So the next slide, just asking for stakeholder input, and we've been getting your input. So keep it coming.

The slide after that – and this is just about a wrap – this is the email address I mentioned, SCSEPtransition@dol.gov. And again, we're looking for your input in three weeks from today. That's June 6th. Everything that you've typed into the chat box here on the webinar will be collated and archived for us to download and use in our analysis of – in our drafting process. So thank you again for everything you've typed here.

As I said before, if you still have thoughts after this webinar or you take the slides back to your teams and do a little brainstorming, definitely encourage you to do that and send your thoughts in by – to the email address on the slide.

So before we let you go I'm going to put you on mute one more time so we can put our heads together and just scroll through everything that's come in since the last break, and I'll be back in just a minute. (Pause.)

Hi, everybody. We're back. Thank you for all the good comments. There's just a couple things I want to address. One is we've continued to see a lot of comments and questions about the effectiveness in serving participants, employers, and host agencies measure. You know, I think we'd really like to hear what works; is it useful to you; how do you use it; what do you see being useful and what do you see being feasible in terms of the way to measure it? Give us your best creative thinking on that. We'd love to hear it.

There was another question I did want to address because it's actually in my talking points and I missed it because I jumped around in the slides. Back on slide 19, I don't know that the slide actually says it, but in the new law it describes the negotiations process over the course of the four-year cycle. Basically what it says is that the first two years and the last two years are negotiated separately.

So the program obviously is funded on an annual basis – you know, the appropriations come in in one-year increments, as y'all well know. But as you also know, the competitions run every four years; we're on sort of a four-year state planning cycle; so the negotiations that's laid out in the new law essentially describes the first two years will be negotiated, and then those levels that are agreed to shall be considered to be the expected levels of performance for the grantee for those two years, and then you do the same for the third and the fourth year. So I think that answers the question that somebody had about the negotiation timeframe.

So I think at this point we're going to leave the chat window open for additional thoughts that you might have, and we'll give it a few minutes to see if anyone has any burning questions that we might be able to answer. But if not, I think what we'll do is leave the window open for a little bit longer to let you continue putting your comments in.

But I'm going to put you all on mute for another few minutes and we'll see what comes in, and then I'll pop back in and wish everyone a good afternoon and thank you for your participation. So I'm going to go on mute for a minute and I'll come back shortly. (Pause.)

OK. We're back, everybody. Thank you for your continued comments. I don't see any burning questions that we're able to answer at this moment, but I want to really thank you for your participation today, for your attention and for your active thinking and contributions.

I encourage you to think about it some more, sleep on it, and if you have more thoughts do send them into SCSEPtransition@dol.gov by June 6. We're going to leave the chat window open for another few minutes. I think most of the typing has died down at this point, but we're going to give you just a few more minutes in case you have a few more thoughts that you can't wait to tell us, and then we'll be logging off.

But for the verbal presentation portion of today, I think I'm going to wish a good afternoon, and thank you again for your participation.

(END)