

Attendees: Work Group Members

Cariño Barragan, Paul Benz, Malou Chavez, Sam Cho, Bre Elsey, Alex Galarza, Antonio Ginatta, Julia Gorton, Victoria Mena, Sandra Rodarte, Kristin Kershaw Snapp, Rich Stolz

Commerce Staff

Tammy Deets, Marie Splaine, Rick Anderson, Tracy Schreiber, Steven Maheshwary

Governor's Office: Alejandro Sanchez, Special Assistant to the Governor

Sami Bailey, LA to Rep. Gregerson

Review & Update

Alejandro updated the group about a new \$40 million relief fund set up to assist undocumented workers must have lost income because of the pandemic and not have access to federal assistance, such as extra unemployment insurance or stimulus checks.

Report Schedule

Rick reviewed the legislative report schedule with the group.
Tammy asked people to save time on their calendar to review the draft report between the last week of October and the first week of November.

**2020
Legislative
Report's 3
Priorities
centered on
immigrant
populations****Small Business Recovery – Julia Gorton**

- Sam and Julia will get stories from small business owners who are immigrants and/or persons of color to demonstrate the challenges small businesses face-with.
- COVID has highlighted the cracks in our system, the stories will demonstrate the impacts:
 - Translation is a technical fix. Language consists of linguistic and cultural components.
 - Compliance: our society has chosen the punitive approach rather than the restorative justice.

Workforce Development – Cariño Barragan

- Needs new training programs to assist workers as many will be displaced by digitalization and COVID has accelerated the transformation.
- Kristin recommend Dan Maycock. Dmaycock@gmail.com and Steven M. of Commerce will follow up. <https://www.linkedin.com/public-profile/in/danmaycock>

Independent Contractors – Rich Stolz

- There's a disproportional large segment of populations who are immigrant or persons of colors that are independent contractors. They have different support needs.
- This group needs more members. Please join if you don't have a group or recommend a non-member who would may be a good fit.
- *(Rich & Victoria, please add to your section.)*

**Homework
for All 3
Groups:**

- Please use the template on page 6 as your group create the report.
- Problem statement loosely introduced by Rich Stolz:
There is an underlying shift in the economy and COVID has accelerated these trends....
- Identify the top 2-3 issues
- Data – continue to identify data source that can help the work of this group or resources that can help this group to find or refine the data we need.
- **Please share the broadband survey to identify gaps in high-speed internet service and areas of broadband infrastructure needs in order to advance the state’s goal to have universal broadband access in Washington by 2024.**
<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/news-releases/community-programs-facilities/state-broadband-officeneeds-you-to-help-identify-low-or-no-high-speed-internet-service-areas/>

**Small Group
Offline**

The three small groups had individual meetings prior to this meeting to discuss respective issues.

Discussions

- 1) **Small Business Recovery Support Group** – Julia Gorton, Keelcy Perez Woolley, Kristin Kershaw Snapp, Sam Cho, and Bre Elsey. Facilitator - Tammy Deets (COM)

Key Challenges?

- Lack of reliable data on ownership ethnicity
- Fatigue of CBOs and small business owners: they’ve been asked by too many government agencies for one thing or another. Those asks were mostly to help the programs to look good, seldom to address their real needs.
- Language barrier
- Layers of governmental regulatory requirements but with no support systems/networks: take the safe opening guidelines as an example, minimum of 3 pages, all in English!
- Access to financing

What do we want to communicate to the legislature about the topic to touch the heart, facts, and data?

Idea for a good story: When the PPP loan money runs out in October, small businesses will face with the hard choice of paying rents or laying off employees, or simply shutdown for

- Need data on the number of WA small businesses that received PPP funds.
- Need data and/or projections for the number of hospitality/retail/food service/travel and tourism jobs that will not exist post COVID regardless of improved economic conditions.
- ESD has all the data anyone could need. We may need to get some help in accessing it. Dan has offered to create a database from data pulled from ESD. He has done this for other groups in the Ag community.

What information/data is needed to communicate this to the legislature? If there a good story to be told to capture their hearts? What facts do we have?

- Sam & Julia will ask for stories.

Are there others who may be suitable and interested to join a sub-committee for a deeper dive into one of these three areas?

We should add some actual small business owners:

Mike Sotelo – President of Ethnic Chamber Commerce Coalition

Taylor Hoang – Board of Trustees, Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Owner of Pho Cycle Cafe

Laura Clise, founder and CEO Intentionalist

- 2) **Support to non-traditional “gig workers” or 1099 independent contractors LC including the self-employed who are not qualified for unemployment** - Rich Stolz and Victoria Mena. Facilitator - Tracy Schreiber (COM)

Are there others who may be suitable and interested to join a sub-committee for a deeper dive into one of these three areas?

- Cariño made some suggestions & Steven M. may be able to assist from time to time.

What do we want to communicate to the legislature about the topic to touch the heart, facts, and data?

- It’s not just 1099, there are LLCs too.
- You pay into a system that you can’t use because of status.

What information/data is needed to communicate this to the legislature? Is there a good story to be told to capture their hearts? Where is the data? What facts do we have?

- *Access to information*
- *Funding doesn’t trickle down to communities*
- *Very little to support essential workers*

What do we need to do for the next steps or action items before the next meeting to move on this topic? Who will do what by when?

Tracy can provide an overview of the data on independent contractors in the state.

- 3) **Workforce development strategies** - Cariño Barragan, Paul Benz, Karen Lewis, Sandra Rodarte, Eric Gonzalez, Malou Chavez. (Need a facilitator for this group)

- How workforce development strategies may or may not be responsive to the immigrant workforce, and what else needs to be in place?
 - What pathways -education, apprenticeships, trainings- exist within these sectors to help immigrant populations?
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Are there others who may be suitable and interested in joining the sub-committee for a deeper dive into one of these areas?

- Potential additions to group: Uriel (Lnl)
- Paul Benz: 2 Latino friends (Sunnyside grower) and retired elder in Pasco

What do we want to communicate to the legislature about this topic to touch the heart, facts, and data?

- We need a grant program similar to the USDA – transition from workers to owners
- Generational wealth and equality
- Provide holistic approach to workers and farm owners – provide dunsign and how to run a business
- Education and outreach on how to follow labor laws
- Adequately fund the programs once created
- Help workers not have brain drain

What information or data is needed to communicate this to the legislature? Is there a good story to be shared that captures their hearts? Where is the data? What facts do we have?

- Economic
- What programs exist out there that can be lifted?
- Better access to services for ELL learners and undocumented - how can state act
- Community organizations have the trust, can share info and resources
- Financial literacy education needed
- Access to resources must be distributed more equitably around the state

Collecting stories:

- Malou: Tukwila businesses (E. African)
- Paul: farm owners
- Karen: ag
- Sandra: South King Cnty businesses
- Cariño: construction
- Muslim business owners in SeaTac?

Potential sources for data:

Got Green, LELO, C.L., UFCW21 We Train WA, apprenticeships in Bldg trades (Laborers and Painters), Chambers of Commerce, Lnl, Wenatchee Valley College, Heritage College, Highline College, WA Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, WA State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

Projection on number of farmworkers currently employed who will need to be retrained in next five years as a result of robotics.

Other sources provided by Rich:

Seattle OIRA, Washington State ORIA, Seattle/King County Workforce Development Council, Migration Policy Institute, National Skills Coalition, Skilled Immigrant & Refugee Empowerment Network (SIREN)

Potential policies that can fill in gaps:

- ITIN filer bill
- Small Business Support bill

What do we need to do for next steps or action items before the next meeting to move on this topic? Who will do what by when?

- Collect stories – all by end of September
- Collect data
 - Sandra – WA Workforce T&E Coordinating Board thru LCF
 - Karen – colleges
 - Cariño - community groups, unions, community and tech colleges
 - ??? - Chambers of Commerce

Reports on workforce

Workforce board – workplan, strategic plan, have them present

Restaurant and hospitality industry – shrunk 40%

Airline industry shrinking

Train into different industries

E-verify

WSLC Workforce Development follow-up

Partner in Employment

Next Steps

Next meeting September 17, 2020

- Get filled out templates to Rick by September 4.
 - Rick will get the outline to the group by September 11.
 - We need one contact person per group for Rick to create the report. Rick will use these people to help!
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Group 2 – Independent Contractors Discussion using the Legislative Report Format:

Why important?

Describe why this issue is so important to Washington state and our communities.

A large and growing percentage of the Washington immigrant workforce are “independent contractors”, and in this context the term really refers to non-traditional workers that most likely use 1099s to verify their employment. Somewhere in between small businesses and part and full time employees, these workers fall into this category because they want the flexibility, because their industry is shifting away from employees, because they don’t have a choice as a result of their immigration status, etc.

3-5 Key Issues

What are the 3-5 key issues?

Shifting to “independent contractor” is an important and viable step to small business ownership for immigrants, particularly those without legal status, but there is little support for individuals seeking self-employment.

Mis-classification of independent contractors, a persistent issue, denies workers in industries dominated by immigrants and refugees a range of employer and state-provided benefits, ranging from paid sick leave to health care.

There is little reliable data – or even an agreed-upon definition – of what an “independent contractor” is, which undercuts opportunities to provide services, design policies for this growing segment of the workforce in Washington State.

Key Challenges

Describe the key challenges

Opportunities

Describe key opportunities

Washington State, perhaps as an extension to the services it provides to small business owners, can ensure greater access to information and support to individuals (including immigrants who are facing language and immigration status challenges) who qualify as independent contractors and/or are self-employed.

Policy proposals are floating – portable benefits, expansion of unemployment insurance to excluded workers, federal stimulus and COVID-relief funding – that can bring some stability to the often precarious economic positions of independent contracts, non-traditional workers and the self-employed.

Next Steps

What concrete next steps will move the needle on this topic?

A more robust discussion about this category of worker is necessary, including clarity on terms, in order to ensure that Washington state has an adequate policy and regulatory structure to secure economic stability, upward mobility and workforce attachment for these workers.

Problem Statement

Use your work above to distill and define the problem into one sentence. Even before the COVID recession, there was significant participation in the immigrant workforce as independent contractors (non-traditional workers, self-employed) due to changing industry dynamics, but Washington State lacks a strategy or regulatory/legal/services framework by which to enable, support or protect these workers.

Data Available

Is there data available we can use to support the issue? If yes, please describe how to access.

This is a problem, but there is a growing body of research on this topic.

What is being done now to move the needle on this topic?

Are there other groups or activities being done to move the needle on the issue?

(More research to be done)

Story we can share in report?

Is there a person or group we can highlight to share a story to support the issue. We want to connect the report to the heart  and this is the best way!

(More research to be done)

Instructions

Please fill out the following template to help us start writing the 2020 legislative report. Our report should be 5-8 pages with an introduction and we chose to focus on three key areas for the first report. If you have any questions please let Tammy, Rick or Marie know.

Topic

Topic name.

Problem Statement

Briefly describe your topic in less than three sentences.

Why is this Important?

Describe why this issue is so important to Washington state and our communities.

3-5 Key Issues

What are the 3-5 key issues?

Key Challenges?

Describe the key challenges

Data Available

Is there data available we can use to support the issue?

What is being done now to move the needle on this topic?

Are there other groups or activities being done to move the needle on the issue?

Story we can share in report?

Is there a person or group we can highlight to share a story to support the issue. We want to connect the report to the heart ♥ and this is the best way!

What is needed/ next steps

What do we need to move the needle on this topic and what are the next steps?