



# **U.S. Department of Labor's Efforts to Advance Racial & Social Equity in Employment for People with Disabilities National Online Dialogue**

---

**April 12 –May 3, 2021  
Summary Report**



## Table of Contents

---

Introduction.....	3
Background.....	3
Online Dialogue Topics.....	4
Outreach Efforts.....	5
ePolicyWorks Email and Social Media Outreach.....	5
Independent Online Dialogue Promotion.....	6
Online Dialogue Participant Summary.....	8
Contributions to the Online Dialogue.....	8
Idea Views in the Online Dialogue.....	11
Visitors, Registrants and Participants in the Online Dialogue.....	12
Visitors to the Online Dialogue.....	13
Map of Dialogue Visitors.....	14
Review and Analysis of Online Dialogue Contributions.....	15
Key Themes and Takeaways.....	15
Top Ideas by Vote.....	17
Trending Ideas.....	23
Most Active Ideas.....	24
Most Popular Ideas.....	25
Appendix A: Resources Shared During the Online Dialogue.....	29
Examples of Racial & Social Equity in Employment.....	29
Racial & Social Equity in Employment: Challenges and Solutions.....	29
Reaching Jobseekers and Employees with Disabilities in Underserved Communities.....	30
Providing Assistance to Employers, Workers and Other Stakeholders.....	31

## Introduction

---

### **Background**

From April 12 to May 3, 2021, the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) hosted the *USDOL's Efforts to Advance Racial & Social Equity in Employment for People with Disabilities National Online Dialogue* in support of the government-wide effort to advance racial equity and support for underserved communities. The results of the *dialogue* will be used to help different agencies within USDOL develop and enhance resources that address racial and social inequality, as well as determine how to increase support for workers from underserved communities with disabilities.

Three agencies within USDOL collaborated to develop and support this important national discussion. These included the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) and the Women's Bureau (WB). Representatives from each agency promoted the dialogue to their constituents and served as moderators by reviewing and responding to participant ideas and comments.

This national online dialogue provided an innovative opportunity for USDOL stakeholders, such as advocacy groups, researchers, employers and business organizations, employees and employee groups, state and local government officials, and other stakeholders and subject matter experts, to play a key role in informing USDOL's efforts to promote equity in employment policies and programs for people with disabilities from historically underserved communities, people with mental health conditions, those recovering from long-term effects of COVID-19, and job seekers and workers with disabilities.

During the three-week national online dialogue, 802 stakeholders shared ideas on the following topics: (1) Challenges faced by workers and job seekers with disabilities; (2) Ways to reach job seekers and employees with disabilities in underserved communities; (3) Examples of programs or policies that advance racial and social equity in employment; and (4) Methods for providing assistance to employers, workers and other stakeholders.

## **Online Dialogue Topics**

The *USDOL's Efforts to Advance Racial & Social Equity in Employment for People with Disabilities National Online Dialogue* featured four different campaigns. Each campaign was associated with a unique topic being explored through the online dialogue.

### **1. Examples of Racial & Social Equity in Employment**

Under this campaign, the dialogue asked visitors to provide examples from their community of programs or policies that address equity in the employment of individuals with disabilities. The campaign also asked participants to share their knowledge of ways people with disabilities in underserved communities are currently obtaining the employment supports and resources they need to succeed.

### **2. Racial & Social Equity in Employment: Challenges and Solutions**

Under this campaign stakeholders were asked to share their thoughts on the current employment challenges faced by people with disabilities in historically underserved communities. Along with identifying challenges, participants were also asked about possible solutions to overcome these challenges. Specifically, the dialogue asked for ideas on ways USDOL could provide support in developing these solutions.

### **3. Reaching Jobseekers and Employees with Disabilities in Underserved Communities**

Under this campaign, the dialogue asked participants to share their ideas and comments on the most effective ways to reach individuals with disabilities in underserved communities, including specific messaging and communication channels that will help USDOL disseminate employment information to, and gather feedback from, individuals and organizations in these communities.

### **4. Providing Assistance to Employers, Workers and Other Stakeholders**

Under this campaign, USDOL asked stakeholders for ideas on how the department could better support employers, workers, business organizations, advocacy groups, service providers and other key stakeholders in implementing equity and support for underserved communities in employment. Specially, USDOL asked about the type of resources participants would find valuable.

## **Outreach Efforts**

---

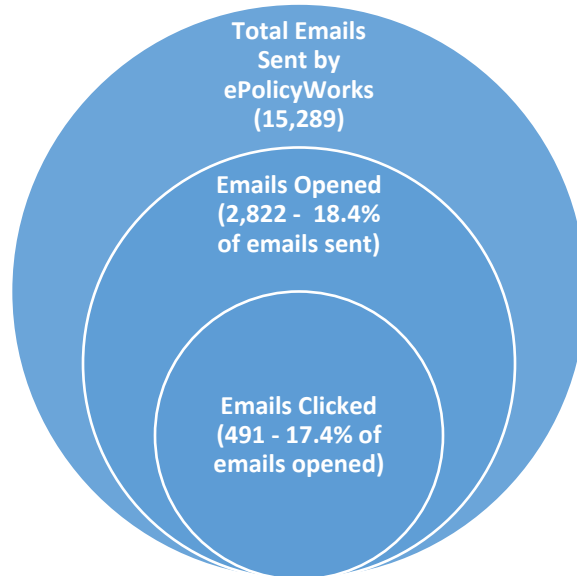
The *USDOL's Efforts to Advance Racial & Social Equity in Employment for People with Disabilities National Online Dialogue* asked employers, workers, state and local government officials, advocacy groups and other stakeholders to share their ideas and take part in the important discussion on efforts to improve racial and social equity in the employment of people with disabilities. To ensure a wide range of participants, ePolicyWorks conducted numerous strategic outreach efforts, including distributing targeted eblasts, and posting news about the dialogue on social media. ePolicyWorks sent emails to the registrants of previous ePolicyWorks online dialogues, as well as advocacy organizations, diversity subject matter experts, university diversity scholars, labor trafficking advocacy groups, faith-based organizations, organizations that represent employers and workers, state and local government officials, and other key stakeholders, including members of the disability community.

### **ePolicyWorks Email and Social Media Outreach**

ePolicyWorks conducted six distinct email campaigns over the course of the dialogue. The emails included the following:

1. General dialogue launch announcement emails
2. General dialogue last week/last chance emails
3. Targeted reminder emails to dialogue registrants
4. Targeted invitation to diversity subject matter experts
5. General dialogue extended emails
6. General dialogue last day emails

- Total Emails Delivered: 15,289
- Total Emails Opened: 2,822
- Total number of clicks on links in emails (excluding multiple clicks of the same link): 491



In addition to the email campaigns, ePolicyWorks posted tweets on @ePolicyWorks throughout the dialogue.

- Number of @ePolicyWorks impressions of online dialogue promotions: 4,443 (from eight online dialogue promotion tweets)

**Independent Online Dialogue Promotion**

Over the course of the online dialogue, in addition to the U.S. Department of Labor and the host agencies, many other public and private organizations promoted the online dialogue through Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, emails, blogs, newsletters and action alerts. Below is a sampling of the organizations and publications that disseminated details regarding the online dialogue:

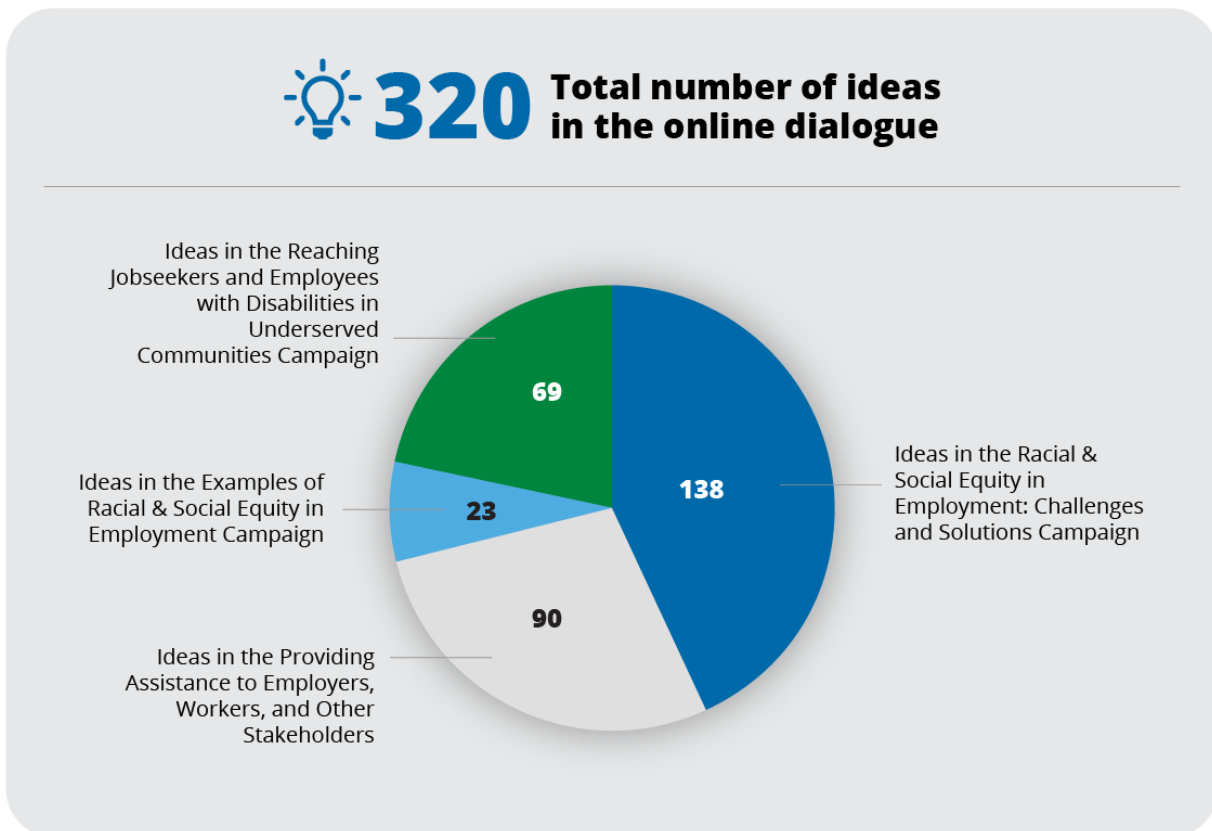
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • The Administration for Community Living  | • Disability Employment Policy Team at The Council of State Governments (CSG) |
| • American Association for Access, Equity & Diversity                                  | • Disability Employment TA Center   |
| • The American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR)                      | • Disability Rights California  |
| • The Council for Exceptional Children's Division on Career Development and Transition | • Disability Rights Iowa  |
| • Digital Accessibility Digest   | • Disability Rights NY  |
|  | • Disability:IN   |
|  | • Georgia Client Assistance Program   |
|  | • Greater Nashville Regional Council  |

- Hawaii Employers Council
- Institute for Career Development - ICD NYC
- Iowa Compass
- Job Accommodation Network (JAN)
- Kessler Foundation
- National Council on Disability (NCD)
- The National Law Review
- National Rehabilitation Information Center
- Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council
- Pathway Enterprises Oregon
- RespectAbility
- RETAIN Kentucky
- Southeast ADA Center
- University of California
- University of Connecticut
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability at Cornell University

## Online Dialogue Participant Summary

The *USDOL's Efforts to Advance Racial & Social Equity in Employment for People with Disabilities National Online Dialogue* opened on April 12, 2021 and closed at the end-of-day on May 3, 2021. Detailed below is the information on the contributions to the dialogue – ideas, comments and votes, along with the number of online dialogue views, registrants, participation rates and geographical location of dialogue visitors.


### Contributions to the Online Dialogue

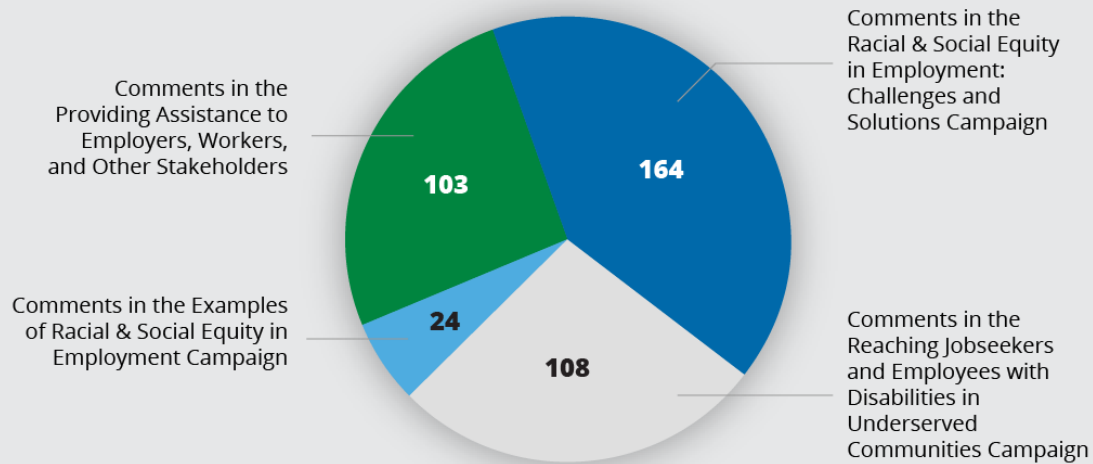


#### Total number of ideas in the online dialogue: 320

- Ideas in the *Racial & Social Equity in Employment: Challenges and Solutions Campaign*: 138
- Ideas in the *Reaching Jobseekers and Employees with Disabilities in Underserved Communities Campaign*: 90
- Ideas in the *Examples of Racial & Social Equity in Employment Campaign*: 23
- Ideas in the *Providing Assistance to Employers, Workers, and Other Stakeholders*: 69



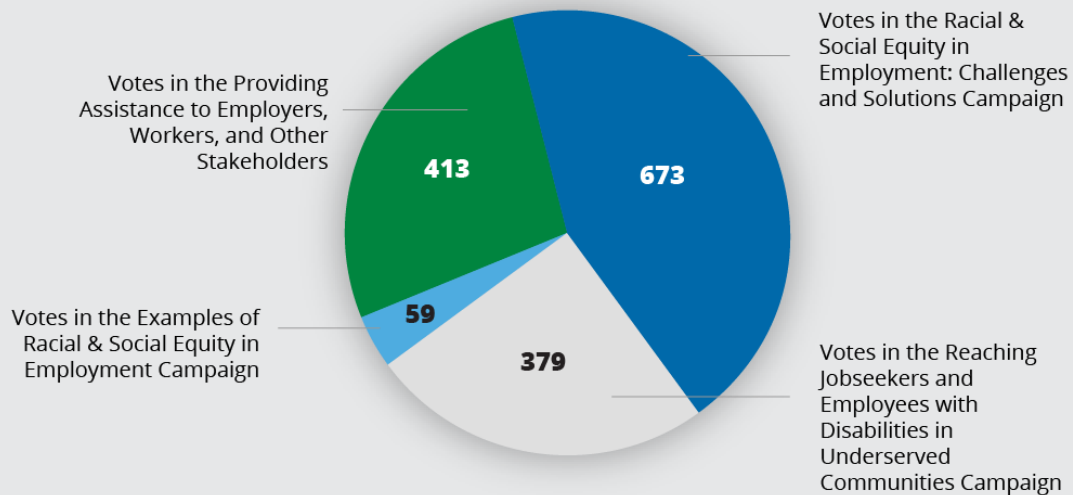
 **399** Total number of comments in the online dialogue



**Total number of comments in the online dialogue: 399**

- Comments in the *Racial & Social Equity in Employment: Challenges and Solutions Campaign*: 164
- Comments in the *Reaching Jobseekers and Employees with Disabilities in Underserved Communities Campaign*: 108
- Comments in the *Examples of Racial & Social Equity in Employment Campaign*: 24
- Comments in the *Providing Assistance to Employers, Workers, and Other Stakeholders*: 103

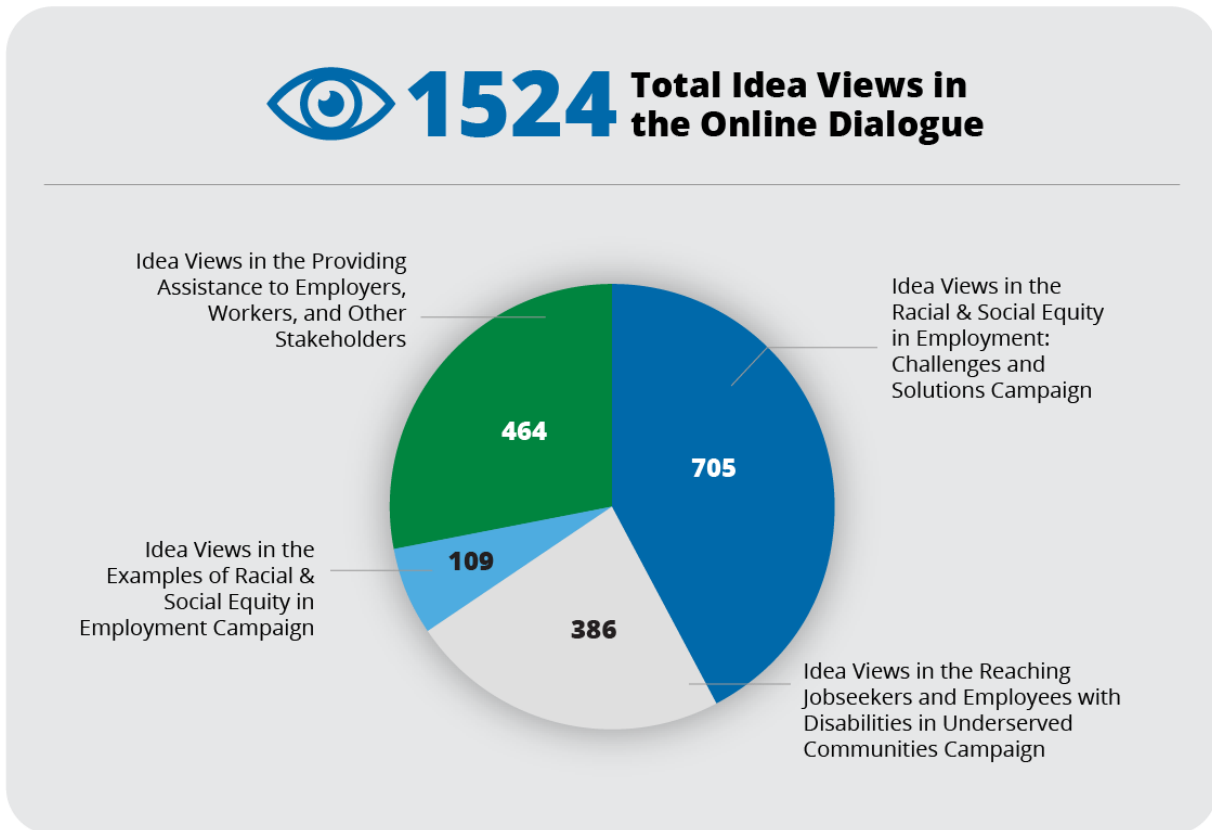
## **1524** Total number of votes in the online dialogue



### **Total number of votes in the online dialogue: 1,524**

- Votes in the *Racial & Social Equity in Employment: Challenges and Solutions Campaign*: 673
- Votes in the *Reaching Jobseekers and Employees with Disabilities in Underserved Communities Campaign*: 379
- Votes in the *Examples of Racial & Social Equity in Employment Campaign*: 59
- Votes in the *Providing Assistance to Employers, Workers, and Other Stakeholders*: 413

## Idea Views in the Online Dialogue



**Total number of idea views\* in the online dialogue: 1,664**

- Idea Views in the *Racial & Social Equity in Employment: Challenges and Solutions Campaign*: 705
- Idea Views in the *Reaching Jobseekers and Employees with Disabilities in Underserved Communities Campaign*: 386
- Idea Views in the *Examples of Racial & Social Equity in Employment Campaign*: 109
- Idea Views in the *Providing Assistance to Employers, Workers, and Other Stakeholders*: 464

*\*Idea Views include the number of times a verified registered member of the dialogue opened the idea detail page to view the full description of an idea.*

## **Visitors, Registrants and Participants in the Online Dialogue**

From April 12 to May 3, 2021, the *USDOL's Efforts to Advance Racial & Social Equity in Employment for People with Disabilities National Online Dialogue* could be viewed by any individual with the URL [RacialEquity.IdeaScale.com](http://RacialEquity.IdeaScale.com). Visitors to the URL could access all the links and ideas, comments and votes in the online dialogue.

In order to participate in the dialogue – i.e., add an idea, comment or vote – individuals must have completed the registration process. The registration process entails completing an online form and verifying their email address. Once an individual is verified, they can create a password, log in and add ideas, as well as comment and vote on ideas submitted by others.

For the following metrics, “visitors” are defined as all individuals who visited the URL of the dialogue, whether or not they choose to register. “Registrants” are those who successfully verified their email and created a password. “Participants” include anyone who submitted an idea or commented or voted on an idea submitted by another.

- Total number of visitors to the online dialogue: 2,723 individuals
- Total number of visits to the online dialogue: 5,939
- Total number of page views: 19,711 pages
- Average number of times visitors came to the online dialogue: 2.18
- Average length of time they spent visiting the online dialogue: 5.32 minutes
- Average pages they viewed during a visit to the online dialogue: 3.32 pages
- Total number of registrants in the dialogue: 802 individuals
- Total number of registrants who participated by contributing an idea, comment or vote: 419 (52% of registrants)
- Total number of registrants who contributed ideas: 223
- Total number of registrants who contributed comments: 96
- Total number of registrants who contributed votes: 407
- Total number of states represented: 43 (83%)



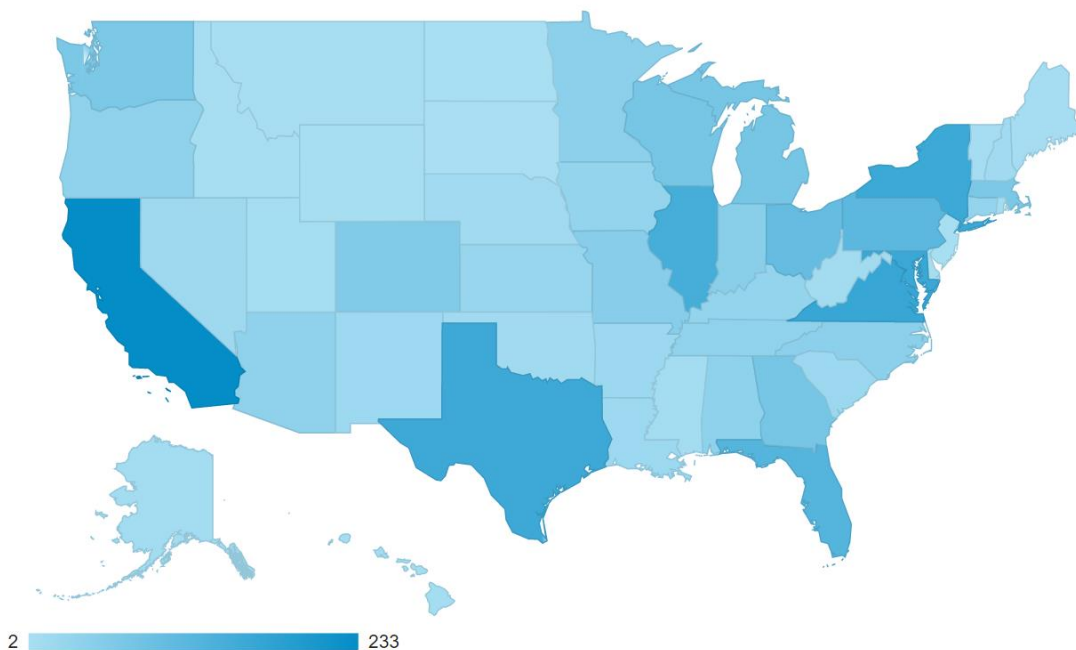
## **Visitors to the Online Dialogue**

In total 2,723 individuals visited the *USDOL's Efforts to Advance Racial & Social Equity in Employment for People with Disabilities National Online Dialogue* during the three weeks it was open for participation. Below is the state affiliation of the visitors to the dialogue.

<b><u>State</u></b>	<b><u>Total Number of Registrants</u></b>	<b><u>Percentage of Total</u></b>
California	233	8.56%
District of Columbia	203	7.46%
Virginia	161	5.91%
Maryland	157	5.77%
New York	155	5.69%
Texas	153	5.62%
Illinois	140	5.14%
Florida	119	4.37%
Pennsylvania	111	4.08%
Ohio	97	3.56%
Wisconsin	73	2.68%
Georgia	72	2.64%
Michigan	72	2.64%
New Jersey	68	2.50%
Massachusetts	66	2.42%
Washington	66	2.42%
Colorado	60	2.20%
Missouri	49	1.80%
Indiana	48	1.76%
Minnesota	44	1.62%
North Carolina	44	1.62%
Alabama	40	1.47%
Arizona	38	1.40%
Oregon	38	1.40%
Tennessee	37	1.36%
Iowa	33	1.21%
Connecticut	32	1.18%
Kentucky	32	1.18%
Kansas	27	0.99%
Arkansas	22	0.81%
South Carolina	21	0.77%
Louisiana	20	0.73%
New Mexico	20	0.73%
Nevada	18	0.66%
Nebraska	15	0.55%

<b>State</b>	<b>Total Number of Registrants</b>	<b>Percentage of Total</b>
New Hampshire	15	0.55%
Oklahoma	13	0.48%
West Virginia	12	0.44%
Alaska	11	0.40%
Rhode Island	11	0.40%
Mississippi	10	0.37%
Hawaii	9	0.33%
Utah	9	0.33%
Maine	8	0.29%
Vermont	8	0.29%
Idaho	6	0.22%
Wyoming	6	0.22%
Delaware	5	0.18%
Montana	5	0.18%
North Dakota	3	0.11%
South Dakota	2	0.07%
Other/Unidentified	6	0.22%

### **Map of Dialogue Visitors**



*\* Map depicts Google Analytics State Affiliation of Online Dialogue Visitors as reported in the table in the section above.*

## **Review and Analysis of Online Dialogue Contributions**

---

Over the course of the *USDOL's Efforts to Advance Racial & Social Equity in Employment for People with Disabilities National Online Dialogue*, participants from across the U.S. shared thought-provoking and innovative ideas and recommendations on ways the USDOL can identify solutions for overcoming barriers to employment for people with disabilities from underserved populations. The range and depth of the ideas submitted and discussed during the online dialogue demonstrates the immense value of engaging citizens in collaboration efforts. Advocates, employers, workers, organizations, and state and local government representatives jointly contributed 802 ideas, 399 comments and 1,524 votes to the dialogue. Based on these contributions, several themes emerged as key ideas among the stakeholders.

### **Key Themes and Takeaways**

Based on a preliminary analysis of the ideas posted to the dialogue, several key themes and takeaways emerged, including the following:

- **Make Accessibility a Priority.**  
One commenter suggested the White House appoint a Chief Accessibility Officer of the United States. This person would be tasked with ensuring all Federal Government departments and agencies prioritize disability inclusion and accessibility across the government. Another person recommended offering reasonable accommodations and ensuring Universal Design of online hiring portals to ensure all people with disabilities can access job applications, screenings and interviews, including those from underserved communities.
- **Create Incentive Programs.**  
Several dialogue participants recommended offering incentive programs for employers to encourage the hiring of people with disabilities from underserved communities. One participant suggested expanding the Work Opportunity Tax Credit to include people with disabilities beyond those receiving Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. Another suggestion included offering trial work experience programs for individuals with disabilities to all employers who hire workers with disabilities and making it a federal program for consistency across states.
- **Educate Employers and Others.**  
Several posts suggested educating employers and employees about disability etiquette and inclusion. One post recommended creating a speakers' bureau of trainers and presenters with disabilities who represent diverse backgrounds to help educate others on their lived experiences. Another participant added an idea about implementing a peer coaching platform for employees and teams. This would allow individuals with disabilities

that represent different communities to educate and mentor others and share their experiences.

- **Support Students Transitioning to the Workplace from Underserved Communities with Work Readiness Programs and other Employment Support Services.**

Many students face barriers to beginning their job search and may not have the skills or resources to successfully apply for jobs. One participant recommended the department invest in skills training programs for historically underserved communities to help them with the job application process, such as learning to write resumes and cover letters, dress for interviews and access transportation. Similarly, one comment suggested allocating funds for vocational and technical training in high school for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Another commenter brought up the need for more support around helping youth transitioning from juvenile detention facilities or other institutional settings to employment and ensuring that resources go to people with disabilities from underserved communities who are most vulnerable in order to allow everyone to have a chance at successful employment outcomes, not just those who are easiest to reach.

- **Include Those with Mental Illness and Invisible Disabilities.**

Several ideas in the dialogue discussed the extra challenges in employment faced by individuals with mental illnesses and other hidden disabilities. For example, one participant acknowledged that traditional job screening methods, such as cover letters, often pose barriers to those with mental health conditions and other invisible disabilities like ADHD and dyslexia. The commenter recommended providing alternative screening methods to these groups. Another commenter suggested employers offer mental health programs, such as mental health day allotment, referral service to qualified mental health professionals, and services to coordinate between a company's health and wellness offerings and the employees' health insurance, in order to foster an environment of early intervention and lay the groundwork for long-term treatment and healing.

- **Hold Large Employers Accountable in Hiring and Supporting the Employment of People with Disabilities.**

One recommendation for supporting employees with disabilities involved educating employers on the benefits of including people with disabilities in their workforce, as well as how to retain them with a welcoming, respectful and tolerant work culture. Another participant recommended employers conduct corporate training around disability and diversity inclusion. Another suggested offering flexible work schedules for those with disabilities. In order to help hold employers accountable, one person suggested eliminating financial obstacles for EEO complaints.

- **Collect Data and Metrics on BIPOC and the Employment of People with Disabilities.**

Many discussed the need to gather data about the employment of people with



disabilities from underserved communities. For example, one idea was to require Federal Government contractors to collect, analyze and report compensation, promotion and hiring data based on disability status, similar to how data is collected for race and gender.

- **Utilize Resources and Programs to Retain Individuals with Disabilities in Jobs.**

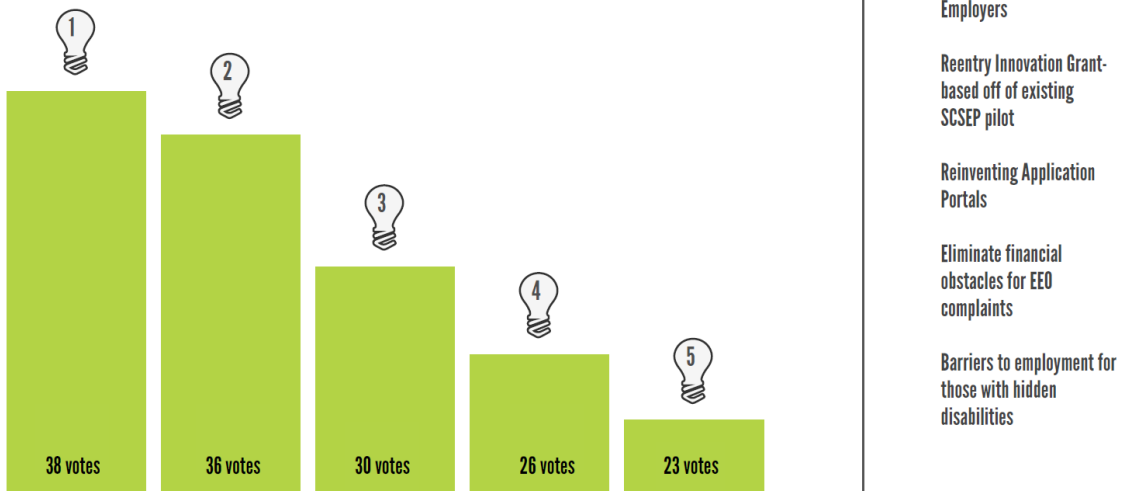
People with disabilities, particularly those who have been injured or become ill on the job, may have challenges remaining at work. The online dialogue included a number of ideas focused on retaining employees with disabilities, such as mentoring programs and other employee support programs. For example, one commenter suggested employers offer or encourage peer support programs to identify workplace challenges and implement effective solutions to better retain employees with disabilities from historically underserved communities.

### **Top Ideas by Vote**

Below are the five top ideas by vote from the *USDOL's Efforts to Advance Racial & Social Equity in Employment for People with Disabilities National Online Dialogue*.

The ideas listed in the following section include minor typographical corrections, which have in no way impacted the substance or the intention of the revised posts.

#### TOP IDEAS BY VOTE



## **Standardize & Expand Trial Work Period Incentives for Employers**

Topic: Racial & Social Equity in Employment: Challenges and Solutions

39 Up Votes | 1 Down Votes | 38 Net Votes

Comments: 0

Followers: 2

*Over 41 million members of the U.S. population live with a disability. The unemployment rate of people with disabilities in the United States as of March 2021 is 11.2% compared to 6.1% for persons without a disability. That's a big gap and a lot of disabled citizens of working age who are unemployed.*

*Counter bias and stigma by expanding current incentive programs to incentivize employers to hire individuals with disabilities.*

*Expand the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) to include workers with disabilities beyond those currently receiving vocational rehabilitation (VR) services. There is a significant number of workers with disabilities who are not in VR services who struggle to gain employment.*

*Offer the current Trial Work Experience programs for individuals with disabilities to all employers who hire workers with disabilities. Consider making this a federal program for consistency across all states, where employers get reimbursement for wages paid during the initial trial period of 90 days. These programs are great ways to encourage employers to hire, explore the fit, and overcome any concerns. Sometimes, employers just need a nudge and some actual experience working with a person with a disability on the job to realize the match can actually work, repeatedly. Consider providing a safe harbor period for employers such that if they hire and it does not work, that there will be no adverse impact on the company's unemployment insurance record. Expand the benefits so employers can receive reimbursement for job accommodations up to a certain amount.*

*While these initiatives may cost more federal dollars, the upside potential of being able to wean unemployed individuals with disabilities from disability benefit programs, and the greater impact of getting a substantial segment of our workforce to become gainfully employed, far outweigh the costs.*

*With remote work becoming the new norm and more readily available, this also opens up more opportunity for people with disabilities to be employed. Challenges that used to exist, such as transportation to work, may no longer be a barrier to employment. Remote work has also transformed outreach and recruitment by expanding the potential geographic area that employers can recruit from beyond a particular physical location, which increases opportunities for people with disabilities across the country and increases the size of the diverse talent pool of qualified candidates companies can recruit from.*

## **Reentry Innovation Grant – based off of existing SCSEP pilot**

Topic: Racial & Social Equity in Employment: Challenges and Solutions

37 Up Votes | 1 Down Votes | 36 Net Votes

Comments: 3

Followers: 4

*Data shows that individuals who are incarcerated are disproportionately from the Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and disability communities. Additionally, we know that having a criminal background makes it more difficult to find employment. To address this problem, the Department of Labor (DOL) added the category of "incarcerated within the last 5 years" to its list of Most in Need barriers performance measure for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) in the 2020 revision of the Older Americans Act (OAA).*

*By implementing this measure, DOL is acknowledging that incarceration is a barrier to employment, meaning individuals need more support and services when exiting the criminal justice system to increase their employment opportunities. SCSEP provides job training with a holistic and person-centered approach. When an individual reenters society, they often face many barriers. For example, many times these individuals do not have what they need to gain employment such as the appropriate documentation for employment applications (license, social security card, resume, etc.), interview clothing, money for food or transit, housing, safety, emotional or natural support. All this to say that individuals could use a better system of support when exiting the criminal justice system. This is especially true if that individual has a disability.*

*Over the course of the pandemic, the SCSEP program continued service delivery but instead provided the stipend job training program remotely. It kept seniors safe in their homes, but also kept them continuing their progress and training. We are proposing the same approach, a job skills training program for the re-entry community that also comes with case management for the participants. In this case, the participants could participate from their facility. They train 18-20 hours a week on job readiness training skills, building their understanding of their own skills, preferences, knowledge, and experience. This preparation would provide them opportunities to train and get exposure to employers, opportunities in their community, and careers in areas of their interest and capabilities, as allowable under the guidance provided by the Department of Labor. The training could happen in a variety of ways: paper and pencil, computers if available, over the phone, and even sometimes face-to-face. Instead of seniors (age 55+) the program would support all age groups of individuals with disabilities who are exiting the justice system. Participants would start the program 6 months before exiting and continue to participate until they become employed. Once employed, participants will have monthly check-ins and support for their first year of employment. To be most successful, the program would need to operate with a 4-year grant cycle, which is similar to what already exists with the SCSEP grant.*

*Currently Vantage Aging in Ohio is leading the charge with their Department of Corrections (DOC) partners, and Iowa is looking to follow in their footsteps by developing these same*

*innovative partnerships and practices. Currently SCSEP could enroll participants who are 55 and older who are incarcerated, while partnering with the DOC doing remote programming before exiting. This was not the original intention of SCSEP, but this innovation occurred to address this high need population. The need for this service and project is profound and urgent. I am advocating that the Department of Labor facilitate the creation of a new program for states with a similar process to SCSEP's stipend remote and intensive case management style programming for any age of individual with disability reentering the community in the next 6 months. Funding could be allocated to state aging, disability, or workforce agencies or national recognized non-profits. Advising that there be pilots that were administered through experienced and innovative awardees with collaborative partnerships and supportive governors to assist them in overcoming existing systematic process barriers*

### **Reinventing Application Portals**

Topic: Racial & Social Equity in Employment: Challenges and Solutions

30 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 30 Net Votes

Comments: 5

Followers: 3

*The entry-gate to employment opportunities is often barriered in the on-line application process for individuals with disabilities. Often, individuals with developmental disabilities, brain injuries, social/emotional disabilities are not able to negotiate the processes of on-line applications. To many, it appears that they are being screened out instead of having the ability to present their skills, passions and interests face-to-face, as they cannot get to the interview stage. We need to have reasonable accommodations to on-line interview questionnaires that utilize Universal Design for Learning.*

### **Eliminate financial obstacles for EEO complaints**

Topic: Providing Assistance to Employers, Workers and Other Stakeholders

26 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 26 Net Votes

Comments: 4

Followers: 6

*Disabled employees who experience discrimination in the workplace (e.g., denial of reasonable accommodations) generally need to hire an attorney in order to pursue an EEO complaint. An employee's ability to pay for an attorney can therefore determine whether they are able to successfully file and win a discrimination case. Making any part of the EEO process accessible only to those with sufficient financial means promotes economic discrimination (providing different opportunities to someone based on their material resources). Economic discrimination within the EEO process means the lowest paid and most vulnerable members of the workforce—*

*the ones most likely to be abused—are least likely to have access to justice and employment. Additionally, employees who cannot fight back are likely to be repeat victims, and employers who get away with discrimination are likely to be repeat offenders. To create equal opportunity and deter discrimination, all disabled individuals need the opportunity to pursue an EEO complaint without having to endure personal financial costs.*

### **Barriers to employment for those with hidden disabilities**

Topic: Racial & Social Equity in Employment: Challenges and Solutions

23 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 23 Net Votes

Comments: 6

Followers: 2

*We need alternative methods for screening and hiring highly qualified job applicants. Disabled peoples are disproportionately under and unemployed, particularly those with so-called hidden disabilities, and even more so when considering developmental disabilities such as autism spectrum disorder, dyslexia, ADHD, and OCD. It has been repeatedly identified that traditional job screening methods such as cover letters and resumes pose barriers to applicants from this group. Should those applicants get passed that first barrier, the traditional one-on-one interview and group interviews are also identified as biased against populations with communication differences such as those with developmental disabilities. Lastly, social cues and protocols that are part of professional decorum are not accessible to people with developmental disabilities, as well as being less accessible to those who grew up in poverty. All of these factors result in a stubbornly persistent and high unemployment rate of 80-85% for this population.*

*The consequences of not having alternative methods for screening highly qualified job applicants can be seen in the housing crisis, where people with developmental disabilities are over-represented. It can be seen in the penal system, in which some estimate one in three may have a developmental disability. And it can be seen in our disproportionately high suicide rate which pushes down our overall life expectancy to 55 years of age.*

*Decreasing barriers to employment for those with developmental disabilities will help LGBTQ and BIPOC communities, the above barriers are not uniform within the disabled population. These barriers are worse for those from BIPOC communities, and the LGBTQ community. This is particularly important because developmental disabilities exist at similar rates within all populations and within the developmental disabilities community, there is greater proportion of LGBTQ people relative to the general population.*

*The consequences of not having an alternative method for screening and hiring highly qualified job applicants, is that the communities from which the people with these disabilities reside bear that burden. This is disproportionately so in oppressed communities who lack the resources of wealthy communities and for which the cost of that burden is proportionately much larger. This*

*is why disability justice is BIPOC and LGBTQ justice; those who have the least means to support people with disabilities disproportionately bear that burden.*

*The ongoing consequence of not doing anything about the burden of artificial barriers to employment being disproportionately carried by the LGBTQ and BIPOC communities is a draining of resources resulting in generational poverty and trauma.*

*We need to call for an end to the discriminatory nature of professionalism within the workplace and the way to start is by finding alternative methods for screening highly qualified job applicants that is not inherently discriminatory against those with developmental disabilities.*

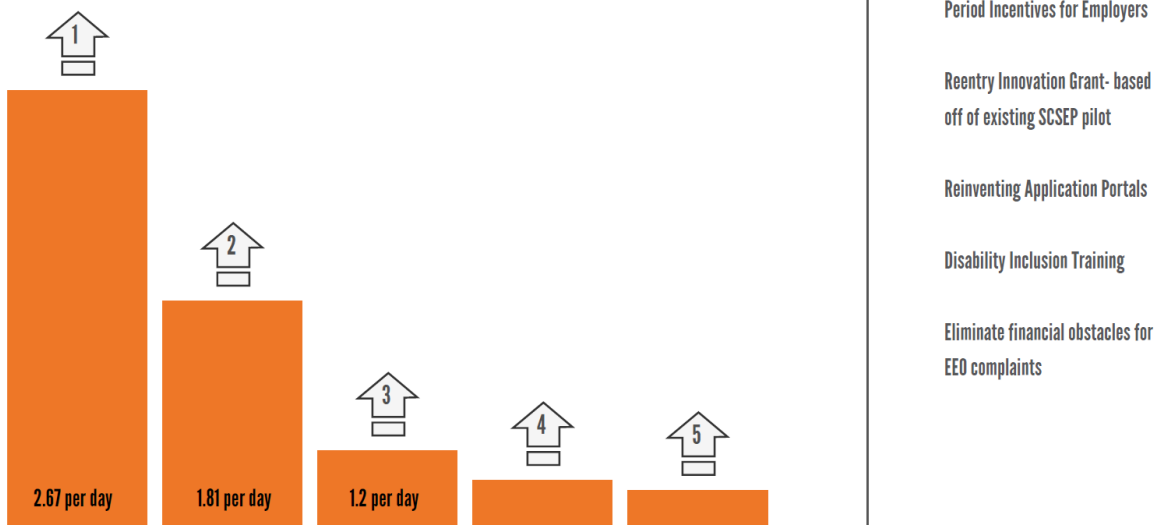
## **Trending Ideas**

Below are the top trending ideas over the course of the *USDOL's Efforts to Advance Racial & Social Equity in Employment for People with Disabilities National Online Dialogue*. Trending is determined based on the idea's percent growth in number of views, comments, votes and followers.

The top trending idea, **Standardize & Expand Trial Work Period Incentives for Employers**, was also the top idea by vote. In addition, **Reentry Innovation Grant - based off of existing SCSEP pilot**, **Reinventing Application Portals** and **Eliminate financial obstacles for EEO complaints** were also included in the top ideas by vote. See the Top Ideas by Vote section for full idea descriptions. Below is the other top trending idea.

The ideas listed in the following section include minor typographical corrections, which have in no way impacted the substance or the intention of the revised posts.

### **TRENDING IDEAS** APRIL-2021 TO MAY-2021



## **Disability Inclusion Training**

Topic: Providing Assistance to Employers, Workers and Other Stakeholders

24 Up Votes | 4 Down Votes | 19 Net Votes

Comments: 7

Followers: 5

*An instructor-led disability inclusion training is an effective way to encourage employer support, and it will help educate and increase their awareness around race and disability discrimination. Our nonprofit 501(c)3 organization specializes in this area, providing disability inclusion training and consulting to employers.*

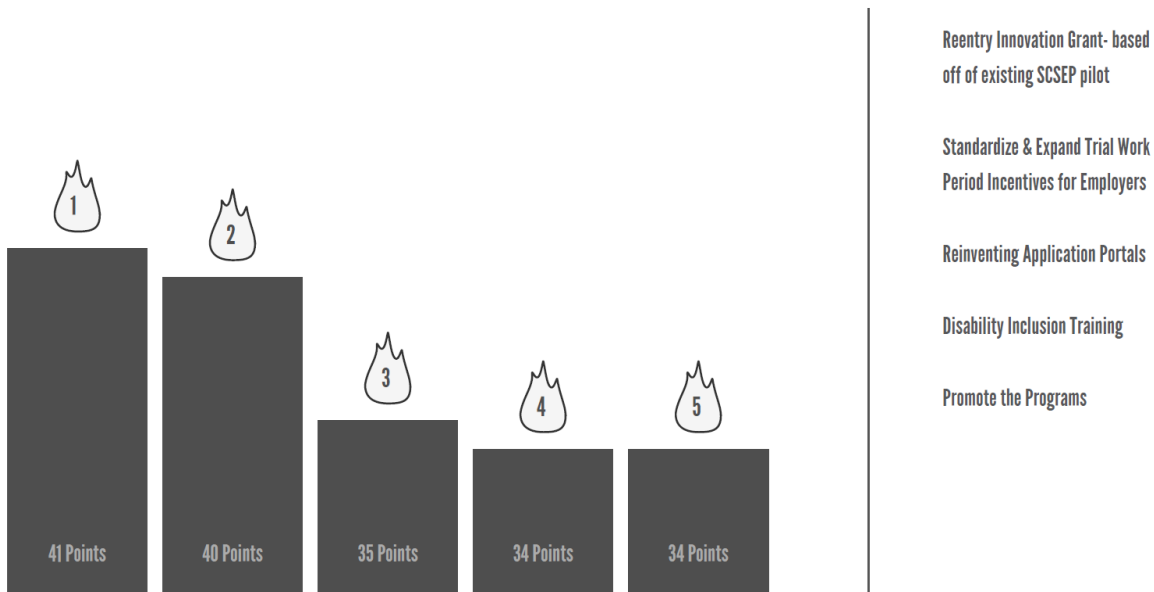
## **Most Active Ideas**

Below are the most active ideas from the *USDOL's Effort to End Labor Trafficking National Online Dialogue*. Most active is determined based on the idea's total number of views, comments, votes and followers over the course of the dialogue.

Three of the most active ideas, **Reentry Innovation Grant - based off of existing SCSEP pilot**, **Standardize & Expand Trial Work Period Incentives for Employers** and **Reinventing Application Portals** were also the top ideas by vote. One of the most active ideas, **Disability Inclusion Training** was also one of the trending ideas. See the Top Ideas by Vote and Trending Ideas sections for full descriptions of the ideas. Below is the other most active idea.

The ideas listed in the following section include minor typographical corrections, which have in no way impacted the substance or the intention of the revised posts.

### **MOST ACTIVE IDEAS** APRIL-2021 TO MAY-2021



## **Promote the Programs**

Topic: Providing Assistance to Employers, Workers and Other Stakeholders

22 Up Votes | 1 Down Votes | 21 Net Votes

Comments: 11

Followers: 5

*From what I've noticed when trying reach employers in my community about the vocational rehabilitation programs we offer, there seems to be some hesitancy. I believe some of this is due to low visibility of the program. I feel if there was some official literature directed at employers this may ease their minds and make them more receptive to work with us. That way they would have something to refer to and not be reliant on my word only.*



## **Most Popular Ideas**

Below are the two most popular ideas from each of the *USDOL's Efforts to Advance Racial & Social Equity in Employment for People with Disabilities National Online Dialogue* four topic areas. Most popular is determined based on the idea's total number of up votes, comments and followers at the conclusion of the dialogue.

The ideas listed in the following section include minor typographical corrections, which have in no way impacted the substance or the intention of the revised posts.

## **Most Popular Ideas from the Examples of Racial & Social Equity in Employment Campaign**

### **1. Chief Accessibility Officer of the United States**

18 Up Votes | 1 Down Votes | 17 Net Votes

Comments: 3

Followers: 5

*As the former OFCCP Director, I worked with OFCCP and ODEP to put together a list of best practices for Section 503 compliance by federal contractors. OFCCP continues to support those best practices, which are on their website ([www.dol.gov/agencies/ofccp/compliance-assistance/outreach/resources/section-503-vevraa/503](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/ofccp/compliance-assistance/outreach/resources/section-503-vevraa/503)). One of those best practices is appointment of a Chief Accessibility Officer who reports to the CEO. This helps ensure the contractor prioritizes disability inclusion and accessibility. It would be amazing if the White House appointed a Chief Accessibility Officer of the United States. This would truly be leading by example and would make a tremendous impact. This official could ensure all departments and agencies are prioritizing disability inclusion and accessibility across the United States government. Each department and agency would provide a monthly report of their progress. There could also be a council of representatives from the major enforcement and disability inclusion agencies (such as EEOC, DOL/OFCCP, DOL/ODEP, DOJ/Civil Rights, OPM, NCD, USCCR, and others) that would be led by the Chief Accessibility Officer. Having served as an agency head in the Federal Government, I can't emphasize enough how helpful it would be to have a lead official like this in the White House coordinating accessibility and disability inclusion in the federal workforce and among federal enforcement agencies. Thanks for your consideration of my idea.*

### **2. More outreach and recruitment at HBCUs and other MSIs**

11 Up Votes | 2 Down Votes | 9 Net Votes

Comments: 4

Followers: 3

*It is critical for the U.S. Department of Labor to take the lead in strongly encouraging companies throughout the United States, and certainly all federal contractors under OFCCP's jurisdiction, to conduct active outreach and recruitment for potential employees at Minority Serving Institutions, including HBCUs, TCUs, HSIs, AANAPISIs, PBIs, NASNTIs, and ANNHs. For example, there are over 100 HBCUs throughout the United States. I had the opportunity as the former OFCCP Director to directly engage with a number of these outstanding colleges and universities, and was the co-chair of the Department's HBCU Committee. Every federal contractor should be recruiting and hosting job fairs at HBCUs, and should also make clear efforts to recruit students with disabilities at HBCUs. The same approach should be taken for all MSIs. This would make a positive impact in enhancing racial & social equity in employment for individuals with disabilities, in addition to helping the companies find highly qualified employees. Here is a link to OFCCP's current MSI initiative: [www.dol.gov/agencies/ofccp/compliance-assistance/outreach/hbcu-initiative](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/ofccp/compliance-assistance/outreach/hbcu-initiative)*

*I'm hopeful the department will devote resources to expanding this important initiative, and will seek to have federal contractors incorporate outreach and recruitment to MSIs into affirmative action programs generally.*

*<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ofccp/compliance-assistance/outreach/hbcu-initiative>  
Minority Education Initiatives | U.S. Department of Labor*

### **Most Popular Ideas from the Racial & Social Equity in Employment: Challenges and Solutions Campaign**

- 1. Standardize & Expand Trial Work Period Incentives for Employers** *(the full description of this idea can be found under **Top Ideas by Vote**)*  
39 Up Votes | 1 Down Votes | 38 Net Votes  
Comments: 0  
Followers: 2
- 2. Reentry Innovation Grant - based off of existing SCSEP pilot** *(the full description of this idea can be found under **Top Ideas by Vote**)*  
37 Up Votes | 1 Down Votes | 36 Net Votes  
Comments: 3  
Followers: 4

## **Most Popular Ideas from the Reaching Jobseekers and Employees with Disabilities in Underserved Communities Campaign**

### **1. HS specialist**

22 Up Votes | 2 Down Votes | 20 Net Votes

Comments: 6

Followers: 3

*I think HS students need to be taught more about ADA on a general basis. Nondisabled students will learn about the acceptance of diversity. Disabled students will learn about their rights. Most students learn about IEPs, then the 504 Act, for college students but nothing about how to get accommodations in the workforce. The employee must know how to seek out accommodations.*

### **2. Understanding All Kind of Disabilities - Diagnosed or Not!**

18 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 18 Net Votes

Comments: 2

Followers: 1

*Many Americans face a series of undiagnosed impairments and disabilities of various types. They are undiagnosed and affect their everyday life because they do not have a voice. IdeaScale should have a platform where people suffering from undocumented and undiagnosed disabilities because they lack elite access to health care systems to have their conditions documented.*

*I am a professional with diabetes. Most of the time when applying for jobs, I would be hesitant in saying that I have disability for fear of being screened out. Those with undiagnosed disabilities need a voice as those with no insurance and or pre-existing health conditions.*

*Thank you!*

**Most Popular for the Providing Assistance to Employers, Workers and Other Stakeholders Campaign**

- 1. Eliminate financial obstacles for EEO complaints** *(the full description of this idea can be found under **Top Ideas by Vote**)*

26 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 26 Net Votes

Comments: 4

Followers: 6

- 2. Promote the Programs** *(the full description of this idea can be found under **Top Ideas by Vote**)*

22 Up Votes | 1 Down Votes | 21 Net Votes

Comments: 11

Followers: 5

## **Appendix A: Resources Shared During the Online Dialogue**

---

### **Examples of Racial & Social Equity in Employment**

- [U. S. Department of Labor Evaluating the Accessibility of American Job Centers for People with Disabilities Final Report](#)
- [Why Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Matter for Nonprofits](#) by National Council of Nonprofits
- [Synergies Work](#)
- [LISC Raises \\$400 Million in Early Capital for Project 10X, Rolls Out First Investments in Racial Equity](#) by LISC
- [Minority Education Initiatives](#) by Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs
- [Section 503 Best Practices for Federal Contractors](#) by Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs

### **Racial & Social Equity in Employment: Challenges and Solutions**

- [Subminimum Wages Report](#) by U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
- [Annual Disability Statistics Compendium](#) (2020)
- [RespectAbility IDEA Scale Slides](#)
- [Covid-19 and the Digital Divide in Virtual Learning](#) (Fall 2020)
- [Annual Disability Statistics Compendium](#) (2020 Annual Disability Statistics Supplement)
- [National Core Indicators - Data Brief](#) (Fall 2021)
- [American Society on Aging](#)
- [Policy, Data, Oversight - Disability Employment](#) (OPM.gov)
- [Employment and Economic Outcomes by Race, Ethnicity, and Gender for Individuals With and Without Disabilities](#) by Institute for Community Inclusion University of Massachusetts Boston (June 2020)
- [Gender Disparities in Workforce Participation](#)
- [Disparities in Workforce Participation between White and Black Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disability](#)
- [Monetary Relief Q12021](#) by Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs
- [JFM Consulting](#)
- [Worldwide Juneteenth](#) (2021)
- [Nurses with disabilities: Know their rights](#) (December 2016)

- [Occupation and Industry: Accommodating Nurses with Disabilities](#) by the Job Accommodation Network
- [Disaggregating Minority Groups for AAP Placement Goals](#) by Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs
- [Workforce Recruitment Program](#) by Office of Disability Employment Policy
- [Pay Transparency Regulations Frequently Asked Questions](#) by Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs

### **Reaching Jobseekers and Employees with Disabilities in Underserved Communities**

- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: People Who Use Wheelchairs](#) by RespectAbility
- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: People with Developmental Disabilities](#) by RespectAbility
- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: Women with Disabilities](#) by RespectAbility
- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: Jews with Disabilities](#) by RespectAbility
- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: Californians with Disabilities](#) by RespectAbility
- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: Millennials and Gen Z-ers with Disabilities and their Allies](#) by RespectAbility
- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: Low-Vision and Blind Individuals](#) by RespectAbility
- [Long Beach Disability Community Resource Guide](#) by RespectAbility
- [Finding a Job as a Person with a Disability in Los Angeles](#) by RespectAbility
- [Virtual Education & Students with Disabilities Resource Guide](#) by RespectAbility
- [People with Disabilities at Work - Resource Guide](#) by RespectAbility
- [Recursos En Español](#) by RespectAbility
- [LGBTQ+ People with Disabilities](#) by RespectAbility
- [Hispanic and Latinx People with Disabilities](#) by RespectAbility
- [Reading Materials for New Fellows](#) by RespectAbility
- [JAN - Job Accommodation Network](#)
- [EARN - Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion](#)
- [USA Jobs](#)

## **Providing Assistance to Employers, Workers and Other Stakeholders**

- [Including People with Disabilities in Nonprofits and Foundations: Accessibility & Equity Webinar Series](#) by RespectAbility
- [Justice and Equity Resources](#) by the CNE
- [Computer / Electronic Accommodations Program](#)
- [Employment Resource Referral Directory](#) by Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs
- [How to File a Complaint](#) by Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs
- [Website Accessibility Under Title II of the ADA](#) by ADA Best Practices Tool Kit for State and Local Governments