Department of Labor
Appropriations Committee Conservation & Development Subcommittee
Work Session
Follow-Up Questions
March 8, 2021 (Revised)

Question 1: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)/Workforce Development Boards (WDB)

- **How will the $500,000 of WIOA funding that is now going to the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) affect the WDBs?**
    - For the three federal program years prior to Program Year 2019 (PY19 = SFY20), $500,000 of the WIOA 15% Governor's Reserve funds was made available to the WDBs for Pilot/Demonstration programming. In PY20/SFY21, $500,000 was made available to OWS. CTDOL cannot speak to the impact this reduction in funding will, or will not, have on the WDBs. CTDOL has not partaken in any conversations regarding future adjustments to this funding within the Governor's Reserve budget.
- **Are there other WIOA dollars that previously had been going to the WDBs that are now supporting other functions (e.g., OWS)?**
    - No
- **Breakdown/comparison of WIOA funding to WDBs before and after establishment of OWS.**
  The Local WDB Formula Funds have remained the same with adjustments only due to the overall decreases in the annual grant amount. PY20/SFY21 is the first year that OWS has been provided $500,000 of the WIOA 15% Governor's Reserve. The Governor's Budget assumes that $500,000 in WIOA funds are earmarked for the Office of Workforce Strategy in each year consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding.

Question 2: Connecticut Department of Labor Coronavirus Funding Allocation (State and Federal):
See attached spreadsheet, Tab 1 "CARES Act Funding"

Question 3: What are the programmatic effects/agency impacts of transferring Human Resources and Labor Relations functions into DAS and OPM, respectively?

The centralization of HR functions from CTDOL to the Department of Administration Services (DAS) and the Office of Labor Relations (OLR) has involved a substantial learning curve for our Department. Many functions have been centralized, such as leave (primarily FMLA) and retirement requests, and staff have adapted accordingly.

The clear division of duties for our HR staff based upon their agency of hire is the biggest change. For instance, one staff person is now an employee of OPM's OLR division, working on Labor Relations duties full-time, as opposed to working on both labor relations and other HR duties such as processing and recruitment.

Question 4: Provide descriptive information and program measures on the following:

Jobs First Employment Services

Connecticut's Jobs First Employment Services (JFES) program helps parents gain the skills needed to obtain meaningful employment and become independent of cash assistance. CTDOL administers this program in partnership with the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the five Regional Workforce Development Boards (WDBs). JFES provides a host of employment-related services, such as job search assistance and skills training to time-limited recipients of Temporary Family Assistance (TFA), Connecticut's federally funded cash assistance program for low-income families. These families are referred to the JFES program by DSS. The WDBs operate as intermediaries that subcontract with other organizations to provide direct services to JFES participants in American Job Centers (AJCs) around the state.

About 85% of our JFES participants are women who are pregnant or have children. The majority are basic skills deficient (approximately 90% in math and 45% in reading) and 24% have no high school diploma or GED. Transportation, childcare, and food insecurity are the top three barriers of JFES participants and 85% have multiple barriers to employment. About 40% are working and their average entered employment wage is $12.68 per hour.

On March 14, 2020, Governor Lamont issued COVID-19 Executive Order 7B that included the temporary waiving of all in-person TFA interviews required by DSS. This resulted in a suspension of new referrals from DSS to the JFES program, although JFES participants could volunteer to participate virtually in the program. In addition, the individuals who were already enrolled in the program at this time were no longer required to participate. There were approximately 4,000 clients participating in the JFES program as of March 2020. As of February 2021, there are approximately 2,000 TFA recipients waiting to be referred to the JFES program once the Governor's Executive order is lifted and will again be required to participate in the 35 hours per week of Employment Services activities.

Since the pandemic began, JFES case managers have been contacting all TFA recipients to encourage voluntary participation. As a result, approximately 165 additional became involved. Also, approximately 46% of the 4,000 pre-pandemic participants continued to maintain some level of contact with their JFES case manager during the pandemic through virtual services.

Providing virtual services initiated some program adjustments, including:

- Holding all case management appointments/communication by email, phone, and/or video conferencing
- Assisting participants with on-line career guidance and resume creation efforts
- Helping participants identify local resources to assist families that may be in crisis due to COVID-19.

CTDOL also worked with DSS and the Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies (CCFSA) to coordinate additional outreach efforts to the 2,000 clients waiting to be referred to JFES. We have developed an outreach plan in partnership with DSS and CCFSA to ensure that clients are aware of the barrier intervention and safety net services available through CCFSA to help them deal with the multitude of challenges that they may be facing. The availability of these CCFSA support services was communicated to

the clients when they first applied for TFA at DSS as well as in the subsequent weeks by JFES and CCFSA staff.

JFES programmatic and funding considerations:

During SFY22 the JFES program is anticipated to serve the 4,000 clients that were connected to a JFES case manager pre-pandemic, the additional 2,000 TFA clients that have applied for TFA benefits between March 2020 and the date on which the Governor's Executive order is lifted, as well as an estimated 160 new clients per month.

Opportunities for the Long-Term Unemployed ("Platform to Employment")

Since its inception in 2010, the Platform to Employment (P2E) program has been assisting individuals re-enter the workforce who have experienced a period of long-term unemployment (more than 26 weeks) as well as individuals with limited or poor work histories.

The P2E program model provides targeted job-readiness activities combined with services to address the participants' financial challenges and support their needs. The program's operating principles include:

- Increasing worker skills and placing participants in jobs for which they are qualified
- Creating partnerships that are relational and engaging
- Operating outside traditional ways and means to implement a full array of solutions
- Emphasizing a long-term view toward improving outcomes for individuals, businesses, and the workforce system
- Engaging a diverse set of community stakeholders, including government agencies
- Subsidized employment - work experience

Thus far in SFY21, a total of 150 people have been served through the P2E program. Expenditures and metrics between July 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020 highlight the program's success:

- Approximately $900,000 in expenditures
- 57 participants entered work experience
- 52 of the participants who entered work experience obtained permanent employment
- The number served and entering employment for SFY21 are comparable to these same metrics in SFY20.

CT Youth Employment Program (CYEP)

The goal of the CYEP program is to introduce eligible youth between the ages of 14 and 21 to the world of work through paid summer and/or year-round employment or work experience and supportive services. Any unexpended funds remaining at the end of the summer period may be used to extend the program into a year-round component for youth participants.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, services have been extended to include virtual capabilities for career awareness and exploration. The intent is to encourage "wage expenditures" on virtual career awareness, exploration, mentoring and peer mentoring including activities to develop career pathways, job shadowing, leadership development, entrepreneurial skills training, activities which encourage post-secondary education and transition, pre-apprenticeships and classroom training.

For SFY21, approximately $4.5 million was available for distribution amongst the state's 5 Regional Workforce Development Boards (WDBs). Through December of 2020, a total of 1,885 youth have been served and provided with wages and stipends totaling approximately $3.4 million. These youth were provided employment opportunities and virtual career path experiences and training in areas such as:

- Camp Counselor
- Mentoring - Educational
- Maintenance
- Pathfinder
- Stock Clerk
- Splash pad guard
- Online Certifications
- Community Outreach
- Student
- Administrative Assistant
- Camp Assistant
- Gardener

The WDBs were provided flexibility in the use of funds for other programmatic items and participant supports such as the acquisition of technology for virtual work experience, transportation assistance and food.

USDOL recently requested that we present to our region's states on the work CTDOL and the WDBs completed in regard to mental health training and supports, the use of technology in providing virtual work experiences, youth mentoring conducted by successful program participants, and support services including addressing food insecurity.

The staffing projection remains level and will be significantly improved with the return of 3 FTEs from UI assistance and the refill of 1 retired Fiscal Monitor. The monitoring function, both programmatically and fiscally, will see the most improvement from this restoration and refill process.

Question 5: Provide a comparison of funding, staffing, and function before and after establishment of OWS

Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC) comparison to Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS)

OWC within CTDOL SFY20:

- OWC Unit = 1 Director and 4 OWC staff
- Funded by a combination of CETC, WIOA, RETAIN, and multiple state General Fund grants
- CETC funded 4 FTE (6 people - OWC and Exec staff)

Post OWS creation and CETC funding transfer SFY21:

- OWC Unit = 1 Director and 1 OWC staff
- Funded by a combination of CETC and RETAIN
- Moved to WIOA Admin Unit = 3 staff
    - 2 funded by CETC and state General Fund and Federal grants
    - 1 staff in UI Consumer Contact Center and funded currently by UI
- CETC funds 2.25 FTE in CTDOL (5 people – OWC, WIOA Admin and Exec Staff)

CETC funding and staffing:

- CETC SFY20 Budget $572,743
- CETC SFY21 Budget $576,979
    - CETC from CTDOL to DECD $305,906 ($131,414 SFY20 carryforward + $174,493 SFY21)
    - CETC kept within CTDOL $365,087
- CETC funding within CTDOL SFY22 and SFY23 budgets is expected to support 2.5 FTE and 3.0 FTE respectively.

Post-creation of OWS - work to remaining in CTDOL:

A brief and high-level description of typical State Board functions (20 CFR 679.130)

- MOUs
- Cost Sharing agreements
- AJC certifications
- One Stop System Monitoring
- One Stop Operator procurement
- State system Career Pathways policy and strategy assistance to OWS
- WIOA Local plan guidance and technical assistance to OWS

Distribution of work within CTDOL:

- OWC Unit Director
    - Assist the OWS with:
        - WIOA Statewide Strategic Plan
        - WIOA career Pathway Policy creation
        - WDB Local Plans per WIOA
    - Within CTDOL take over:
        - Oversee RETAIN and state General Fund Grants

- Durational Project Manager
    - RETAIN Grant
- Manager of Community Advocacy - Transferred to WIOA Admin Unit
    - Monitor compliance of the policy for WDB MOUs, Cost Sharing Agreements, AJC Certifications, One Stop System Monitoring, One Stop Operator Procurement
    - Eastern Workforce Investment Board
    - Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board
    - COVID-19 Dislocated Worder Grant
- Manager of Community Advocacy - Transferred to WIOA Admin Unit
    - Monitor compliance of the policy for WDB MOUs, Cost Sharing Agreements, AJC Certifications, One Stop System Monitoring, One Stop Operator Procurement
    - The WorkPlace
    - Workforce Alliance
    - Capital Workforce Partners
- Programs and Services Coordinator – Transferred to WIOA Admin
    - Assigned to Consumer Contact Center until further notice

Question 6: Please provide comprehensive information on Unemployment Insurance (UI) fraud and efforts to combat it

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in historic levels of unemployment insurance applications throughout the country. The Cares Act benefit programs passed by Congress as a means of spurring economic recovery via the UI program, quickly became an easy target for criminals looking to exploit a UI system that, nationwide, was vulnerable to attack due to antiquated systems, lack of funding or staff and a lack of experience in combating large scale ID theft claim attempts. All states quickly realized their systems were being attacked at unprecedented numbers of incoming claims for fraud detection purposes.

CTDOL staff immediately acted upon this phenomenon and began using manual processes to identify new criminal patterns and shut down fraudulent claims. On a parallel track, knowing that these manual processes were not sufficient to keep up with the unprecedented volume, CTDOL began working with both internal and external resources to develop additional concepts, especially automation, that would fortify its ability to proactively detect these criminal attacks and stop them at the front door.

CTDOL remains in a continuous improvement mode, prioritizing the effort to safeguard the integrity of the UI system from these egregious attacks. To that end, CTDOL has implemented many concepts and is in the process of developing additional strategies. Based on integrity standards and law enforcement best practices, CTDOL declines to disclose integrity concepts that are under development so as not to tip off criminals. The below is a list of the methods currently in use in CTDOL to combat fraud.

Fraud Management Efforts:

- Running dozens of queries designed to analyze UI data to detect and stop fraudulent claims.
- Blocking email domains that are known to be fraudulent from creating accounts in UI application system.
- Continuous monitoring of bank routing numbers to detect those being used at a high rate by fraudsters.
- Running reCAPTCHA on the logins for all UI claims systems which detects and stops automated "bots" from filing claims en masse.
- Running Multi Factor Authentication, which helps combat against stolen identities and 'UI account / bank account' take-overs.
- Running various computer crossmatch programs to detect fraudulent scenarios, including working while collecting and collecting while incarcerated.
- Running daily analysis of all incoming claims multiple times a day to stop those that meet fraud criteria from being processed.
- Collaborating with CTDOL's banking partners on a daily basis on fraud detection activities.
- Collaborating on fraud identification, investigation and prosecution efforts with law enforcement entities, including Office of the Inspector General (OIG), state police, Secret Service and FBI.
- Working closely with the Integrity Center arm of the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) and actively using every tool it offers states for combating fraud, including its identity verification tool which CTDOL volunteered to pilot prior to its implementation in July 2020.
- Collaborating on a regular basis with other states on best practices.
- Submitting claims data to NASWA's Identity Data Hub which crossmatches our claims against data in other states to detect multi state filing or identify claim characteristics in CT that match fraud schemes in other states.
- Submitting CT's "suspicious actor" data to NASWA's Identity Data Hub which allows other states to detect fraud schemes on their claim systems that share characteristics with CT's detected fraud schemes.
- Enhanced our agency integrity software data warehouse to greatly expand available data for fraud cross matching purposes.
- Adding both permanent and temporary staff to the UI Integrity Division.

Question 7: Projection of staffing and funding needed to be fully staffed and operational

CTDOL has 585 permanent staff and 4 vacancies for a total of 589 FTEs. Given the unprecedented demands of the pandemic, we brought back 21 retirees under the 120-day recall policy, hired 224 temporary staff, and are engaged in the recruitment process for an additional 46 staff.

The Consumer Contact Center, which launched in July 2020 to serve our unemployment customers in the absence of in-person service at the American Job Enters (AJCs), is staffed with a combination of 15 permanent employees and 120 temporary staff.

Because some of our demand is shorter term than other, we have supplemented CTDOL permanent and temporary staff with vendor staff for time-limited projects. We have 54 vendor staff supporting the Contact Center's PUA claimants and another 90 vendor staff joined CTDOL staff to enhance our support of the UI, EB, PEUC, and MEUC claimants through the expected influx of 150,000+ new applications from mid-March through April, and while demand remains high due to the pandemic. We also have 5 vendor staff supporting the Adjudications staff as we move this second round of applications through claims processing.

In addition, we engaged 30 vendor staff to increase CTDOL's capacity to grow the Shared Work Program and prevent layoffs, 70 vendor staff to support the Integrity unit, and 42 vendor staff assigned to Information Technology as they design, develop and put into production the constantly growing and changing federal CARES Act programs.

Lastly, we have 48 vendor staff working along CTDOL staff to build ReEmployCT for the Unemployment Insurance Modernization (UIM) Program which we hope to launch in June of 2022.

Question 8: Please provide a summary of staffing, funding, and efforts relating to: wage enforcement, paid family leave, workforce development, UI modernization

Wage Enforcement:

The Wage and Workplace Standards Division (WWSD) of the CTDOL currently employs 32 FTE's with an operating budget of $3,300,000.

The loss of several positions over the last 5-7 years through attrition that has limited capacity to effectively enforce prevailing wage and child labor laws through routine compliance checks and proactive efforts. The ability of the WWSD to deliver education to the public, employers, employees, and interested groups on prevailing wage and child labor laws, regulations, policies, procedures, and guidelines would also be greatly enhanced with the funding of these positions.

PFML/FMLA: See the second tab of the attached Excel Spreadsheet.

The Legal Division is mentioned in Section 2 on lines 14-15 under PFMLA and lines 29-33 under FMLA. The Board of Review is responsible for the remainder of the line items. PFML funding must come from the Authority. FMLA funding must come from the general fund.

WIOA:

The WIOA Administration unit is supported by 1 Unit Director and 26 staff. They are responsible for substantial functions related to state and federal workforce development programming across the state. These functions include, but are not limited to, the development and administration of contracts, policy and procedures, reporting, data validation, monitoring both programmatic and fiscal. Fiscal monitors perform this function for a significant number of agency programs outside of the WIOA Administration Unit's programming, including the federal Trade Assistance Act and state General Fund grants.

Budget:

- WIOA - $1,792,092
    - PY20 Budget – Approx. 10.5 FTES
    - PY20 Actual – Approx. 8.3 FTES (2 FTE on loan to UI/ 1 retiree)
- WIOA Rapid Response - $601,649
    - PY20 Budget & Actual – Approx. 3.4
- TAA - $ $1,445,766
    - 10 FTEs
- WIOA State Board functions – CETC Workforce funding - $254,867
    - 3 FTEs – 1 currently on loan to UI full time
- Programs below consume staff time, but less than 1 FTE is charged to each grant
    - CT Youth Employment Program – $90,002
    - STRIVE - $3,803
    - Long-Term Unemployment - $151,853
    - Mortgage Crisis -$47,500
    - Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative - $52,787
    - Second Chance Initiative - $15,580

UI Modernization

CTDOL's UI Modernization initiative will result in the replacement of its Unemployment Insurance (UI) Benefits and Tax computer systems. To expedite the initiative, CTDOL elected to join the ReEmployUSA Consortium.

Goal of Project

- Replace 40-year-old computer systems that utilize obsolete and unsupported technology
- Reduce costly manual processes and provide greater self-service capabilities for claimants and employers
- Reduce the cost to implement, use and manage the new system
- Improve CTDOL's ability to weather the Silver Tsunami and respond to future economic downturns

Timeline

Original Date: May 2021

Rebaseline Date: June 2022 (52% complete overall)

- Experienced a 13 month delay due to the CARES Act and a historically higher number of UI claims
- Benefits system development - approx. 65% complete
- Tax system development – approx. 62% complete
- Data migration – approx. 52% complete
- Organizational Change Management (OCM) activities are underway to prepare agency staff and business functions for cutover to the new system

Staffing and Cost

- UIM operation budget of $3.2M covers 16 project FTEs
- Additional $6,122,432.30 (33.85 FTEs) is required to achieve maximum level of production and complete UI Modernization
    - Appeals SMEs (1.25) - $277,581.00
    - Benefits SMEs (11.25) - $1,782,910.00
    - IT SMEs (4.51) - $915,595.93
    - OCM SMEs (4.67) - $935,591.68
    - Tax SMEs (12.17) - $2,210,753.44

Question 9: CTDOL technological improvements and associated costs

CTDOL Information Technology Initiatives, Implemented March 2020 to March 2021

- Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation Program Deployment - Implemented all required programing to extend UI program is Support on Cares Act 1 and 2
- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation Program - Implemented all required programing to extend UI program is Support on Cares Acts 1 and 2
- Extended Benefits Program Deployment – Implemented all required programing to extend UI program is Support on Cares Act 1 and 2
- High Extended Benefits Program Deployment – Implemented all required programing to extend UI program is Support on Cares Act 1 and 2
- Lost Wage Assistance Program - Implemented all required programming to the UI program
- Lost Wage Assistance Program <100 – Implemented all required programming to the UI program
- Missed Week Automation – IT automated the claimant's email submission to prioritize the request.
- Exela – Working with the vendor to streamline the printing and mailing of many notices to the claimants.
- PUA Environment – Established an AWS environment for the PUA claim management system and designed and implemented an automated interface file to the new PUA System.
- Cares Act 2 implementation – Implemented all required programing to extend UI program is Support on Cares Act 2
- Shared Work Automation – Design selected and implemented an OCR/ICR solution to automate the entry of employer-submitted shared work data into the existing mainframe process.
- Benefits Overpayment Tracking System (BOTS) Upgrade – Application coding changes to establish PEUC and FPUC overpayments on the distributive environment and make changes to the mainframe programs to Establish PEUC and FPUC overpayments and collection.
- Fire Wall Upgrade – The upgrade was required to maintain Support for the software's current version.
- Build a Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) Environment – DOL contracted vendors utilize this environment to connect to the DOL infrastructure in assisting the Business Units in the heavy workload.

- Claim Management System IP Tracing – Ability to track claimants' IP addresses in the claim management system. This functionality will assist the Integrity Unit in researching fraud
- Mainframe Capacity and Performance Management – Allocated additional disk storage, ongoing review of all database allocations, and expand as required, review performance and long-running quires and database functions and tone as needed.
- Application and Data Architecture - Expand field sizes to accommodate Cares Act requirements and modify all required programs.
- DocuSign - Implemented an IT infrastructure and services to support the newly streamlined, electronic, and automated technology for the RESEA program.
- UPS Move – Plan and execute a shutdown of all equipment in the DOL computer room to accommodate the Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) move.
- UI Sun Server Hardware Upgrade – The U.S. Department of Labor Employment & Training Administration requested DOL IT to upgrade the Sun Server upgrade as it reached the end of life and end of Support.
- DOL Contact Center - Implemented an IT infrastructure and services to support the newly implemented UI and PUA Contact Center
    - DOL *Contact Center* phased in on July 8, 2020
    - Cornerstone in the Agency's customer service delivery system
    - Relies on technology to provide a convenient and efficient system for filing an unemployment claim

<u>Accessing the DOL *Contact Center*</u>

- Web site developed: www.filectui.com with continuous enhancements occurring
- Telephone: three (3) dedicated lines
- TTY line created using (*RelayCT* technology) to assist customers who are Hard of Hearing

<u>Enhancements/Added Functionality:</u>

- *Maximus* Collaboration:
    - *Maximus* staff trained by CTDOL in UI basics to provide front-line customer service
    - *Maximus* staff respond to the very basic program inquiries
    - Issues not resolved are transferred to the CTDOL Contact Center for further technical assistance
    - The effort has had a positive impact at serving the on-going customer demand
- *Chatbot* (*Tina*):
    - Two Tina's: English and Spanish
    - *Chatbot* is available through www.filectui.com and is designed to answer Claimant questions
    - *Tina* can provide responses to complex issues (capability being added on a daily/weekly basis which improves the application's program knowledge)
    - If *Tina* cannot answer a Claimant question, a *Contact Center* agent will provide support.

- Virtual Hold Technology (VHT):
    - Available through www.filectui.com technology that allows a caller to reserve their spot in a wait queue and then hang up. When all the preceding callers in the queue are attended to, they will receive a callback.
    - Option alleviates the need for the customer to remain on Hold to wait for an agent. Customers can also make an appointment through a menu-driven variety of options available via telephone

Short Message Service (SMS) from within *Salesforce* – this feature enables a *Contact Center* agent to communicate directly with a customer via a text message. Customers can reply via a text message as well and the entire communication remains with the case.

Salesforce – platform provides UI Claimant case history for *Contact Center* staff to reference (case management system for unemployment insurance)

Amazon Connect - application enables the Contact Center administrators to monitor the Contact Center production including agent activity

Planned and in-process upgrades in CTHires:

The Eligibility Explorer will allow our customers to complete a registration in CTHires and, once completed, advise the customer of the different Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs they may be eligible to participate in. The Eligibility Explorer is a free upgrade and is currently being tested by program staff. (No cost)

CTDOL has recently purchased the Apprenticeship Module from the CTHires vendor Geographic Solutions. This new module will capture all data required for the Federal Apprenticeship program and ensure it is able to meet all Federal reporting requirements. The Apprenticeship module is currently being tested and is expected to go live March 19, 2021. ($198,300 = $95,000 implementation, $103,000 annual license)

CTDOL is working with the Department of Corrections to incorporate the Geographic Solutions Re-entry Module into CTHires. The Re-entry Module will allow incarcerated individuals to create a profile in CTHires, create a resume, identify skills, and begin a job search. When the individual is released, their profile will be available to staff at the American Job Centers, or the individual can access it from any personal computer to continue their job search. (No cost to CTDOL, vendor contract is with DOC)

Planned upgrades in the Trade Adjustment Act Program:

The Trade Adjustment Act program will be pursuing system upgrades beginning in 2021. These upgrades will include automating more of the case management process, for example, training plans, job search and relocation payments, automated letters, and an interface with CoreCT. The upgrades will minimize the use of multiple systems for data entry, giving case managers more time to work with customers and increase the efficiency and accuracy of Federal reporting. (No cost estimate yet, researching business requirements and cost)

Planned upgrades in the Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program (WOTC):

The DSS and UI interfaces have been developed and work has begun on the Vocational Rehabilitation/Bureau of Rehabilitation Services interface (part of the Connecticut Department of Aging and Disability Services). The interfaces will allow for automated verification of information regarding qualified groups to help determine certification of requested tax credits ($63,250 = $13,250 for Vocational Rehabilitation/Bureau of Rehabilitation Services interface + approx. $50,000 for the UI interface. Funded with USDOL grant).

Planned and completed upgrades in the American Jobs Centers:

DocuSign for the Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment Program (UI RESEA)

- Allows for automated electronic forms to be sent to claimants with the capability to obtain electronic signatures. These forms request required information for the federally mandated program as well as the ability to send an Individualized signed Plan from staff to the claimant for their signature ($119,593 = $65,593 for initial development, support, training, etc. + $54,000 annually for support, etc.).

Microsoft Teams audio bridge for those customers that utilize phone only for services. Teams Meeting invites sent to customers include both a web link and a phone number (no cost until September 2022).

Zoom Webinar procured to provide mandatory workshops statewide to claimants required to partake in a workshop for mandatory federal programs, as well as all other customers. This tool provides a tracking component to meet federal reporting requirements ($6,599 annually).

Online Employment Services Request form developed for customers to request services by phone, email or video conferencing for Job Search Assistance, Résumé/Cover Letter Assistance, Interviewing Skills Assistance, Career Counseling and Recruitment Assistance for Employers ($3,318 annually).

5 American Job Centers reconfigured a fraction of desktops within the centers with cameras and microphones for socially distanced Teams video assistance for customers ($2,400).

5 American Job Centers will soon reconfigure a fraction of desktops within the career centers with telephones and Quick Assist to allow staff to, while socially distanced, take over a computer when a customer is using it for self-service and may need troubleshooting (no additional cost).

Planned upgrades in the CT Jobs First Employment Services Program (JFES):

We anticipate developing new reports within the CTHires system. Our initial Go-Live requirements for reporting were developed in 2015 and since that time CTDOL, the Workforce Development Boards, and JFES Contractor staff all have developed a better understanding of what the data mean and how the systems work. We initially developed around 20 unique JFES reports, but only a handful of those include TFA interface data from ImpaCT. Proposed new reports would save staff time from exporting and blending

various reports in Excel or developing unique SQL queries for varied contractor needs. We anticipate the total cost of these system changes to be approximately $30k and would include some of the following specific program reporting enhancements.

- The ability to download monthly trends on TFA status changes as they relate to:
    - event attendance, such as JFES orientation
    - head of household and demographic information (race, ethnicity, age, etc.)
    - caseload “exiters” to show who has been closed/denied TFA month to month
- The ability to generate more comprehensive quality assurance reports such as:
    - activity reports that include TFA status (Approved, Pending, etc.) to verify Approved customers are enrolled in funded activities
    - date filters on all existing TFA-inclusive reports around the DSS interface to eliminate the need to filter externally in the event the interface experiences a delay due to technical issues within the DSS system