

United States Senate

9/19/2024

Senator Bernard Sanders
Chairman
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Sanders,

I write today to request that Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Commissioner, Erika McEntarfer, testify before the committee. On August 21, 2024, the BLS released its annual benchmark revisions, which showed the bureau overestimated the number of jobs in America by over 800,000.¹ This drastic downward revision of jobs is unacceptable and the BLS must answer for this error.

The job market reports are a tool used by economists, policymakers, and business owners to help navigate shifting economic conditions and signal future economic health. Especially in an election year, the jobs report is a key indicator for the electorate of how the Administration's policies are supporting or harming the workforce. Previous reporting from news outlets² showed a stronger job market using the BLS's initial estimates, which gave a false impression to voters of the United States' economic health. With only two months until the election, voters must have confidence in the agency tasked with reporting economic conditions. The recent revision of jobs has forced me to question the accuracy of the agencies tools and the decisions which led to publishing such inaccurate statistics. My constituents surely share these concerns.

Given the Committee's jurisdiction over labor statistics,³ and Commissioner McEntarfer's favorable reporting from the HELP Committee and confirmation by the Senate earlier this year, a visit from the BLS is imperative. The Committee must have the opportunity to question Commissioner McEntarfer directly as to why such a key indicator of the job market has been inaccurately reported over the past year, in addition to the actions she and the Bureau are pursuing to rectify this situation moving forward. More importantly, Commissioner McEntarfer's

¹ 2024 Preliminary Benchmark Revision § (2024). <https://www.bls.gov/ces/notices/2024/2024-preliminary-benchmark-revision.htm>.

² Horsley, Scott. "Amazingly, the U.S. Job Market Continues to Roar. Here Are the 5 Things to Know." NPR, June 3, 2023. <https://www.npr.org/2023/06/03/1179652353/jobs-labor-market-unemployment-economy-workers>.

³ Standing Rules of the Senate Rule XXV

appearance before the committee will provide a public opportunity for her to clarify the actual state of the job market going into November.

I look forward to working together in overseeing and correcting the errors of the BLS and preventing inaccurate statistics being published in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger W. Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" at the beginning.

Sen. Roger Marshall, M.D.
United States Senator