



MEETING OF THE
TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION

DATE

AUGUST 19, 2025

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Tuesday, August 19, 2025

COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Hey, good morning, everyone. Uh, this meeting is called to order. Mr. Trobman, has anyone signed up for public comment?

MR. TROBMAN: No, sir.

COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: OK. Let's move on then to the policy agenda items for today. This is Agenda Item 3, 2025 Program Year Report on Apprenticeships.

KERRY BALLAST: Good morning, Commissioner Treviño, Commissioner Esparza, and Mr. Serna. For the record, Kerry Ballast, Workforce Development Division. Texas Labor Code, Section 302.0191, states that the Texas Workforce Commission must report on active registered apprenticeship programs in the state and make recommendations to expand the availability of apprenticeship programs in emerging and high-demand industries and occupations. At this time staff requests approval of the report on available apprenticeships for program year 2025 to be submitted to the Texas Legislature. This concludes my remarks. I'm happy to answer any questions.

COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, Commissioner Esparza, you have any questions or comments?

COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: No questions.

COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, I move that we approve the program year 2025 report on available apprenticeships as recommended today by staff.

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COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I second.

COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Motion carries.

MR. SERNA: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. Before, before she gets away from that front mic, I would like to point out that, uh, Kerry Ballast is retiring from TWC and state government and today is her last commission meeting. Uh, she's done an outstanding job. It's been my pleasure and honor to work with her and see all the things that she's worked very hard to accomplish. She was telling me the story of when Larry Temple, uh, brought her over just to come and observe a commission meeting, uh, which is a good way to hook somebody in. So I just wanted to make sure that you all were aware that today was her last commission meeting.

COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: I appreciate it, Ed. I know, uh, we were aware but we were told that she didn't want any, uh, big fanfare.

MR. SERNA: There's an advantage to being the executive director.

COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Since she started, thank you very much, Kerry, and I appreciate working with you and whatever you need in the future, you always have a place to come back to here with me and appreciate all the help and guidance you gave me when we were starting out. So, thank you.

KERRY BALLAST: Thank you.

1 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: Same, same Kerry.
2 Thank you and congratulations and, uh, please don't be,
3 definitely don't be a stranger. Let us know how we can help.

4 KERRY BALLAST: Thank you so much. Without
5 tears, I hope, I want, this is the most amazing agency and our
6 whole system. It's been an honor to work for you and with you
7 and thank you very much.

8 MR. SERNA: Sorry, sir.

9 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: That's OK. OK, Agenda
10 Item 4, 2025 Report on the Transition from Military Service to
11 Employment.

12 BOB GEAR: Good morning, Commissioner
13 Treviño, Commissioner Esparza, Mr. Serna. For the record, I'm
14 Bob Gear, the director of Texas Veterans Leadership Program,
15 Workforce Division. Texas Labor Code, Chapter 302.020, requires
16 the Texas Workforce Commission to submit an annual report on
17 transition from military service to employment to the governor,
18 lieutenant governor, and the Texas Legis, Legislature by the
19 first of September. This year's report includes the, uh, the
20 normal sections that we have in there, TWC's commitment to serve
21 veterans, our great workforce partners, unemployment rates, uh,
22 and the success highlights success several TWC veteran programs.
23 And of course, we go to the final section which lists those five
24 transition military MOSs, their industry-based certifications,
25 and then their related occupations. I'll quickly go down.

1 There's no change from last year, infantry/rifleman, uh, number
2 two is quartermaster/logistics, three is field mechanic. That's
3 all branches, several mechanic levels. Number four is
4 signal/computer systems/information, and number five is enlisted
5 medic/health care specialist/corpsman/aerospace medicine. I had
6 to make sure I got all the branches in there except for Marine
7 Corps because they use Navy corpsman. All right, at this time
8 staff is seeking commissioners' approval on this year's report.
9 I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

10 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Commissioner Esparza,
11 any questions or comments?

12 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: No, Bob, thanks for
13 uh, getting this report together and, uh, also for supporting,
14 uh, our initiatives to help the trans, military members
15 transition out of, uh, we're continued to remind that, uh, the,
16 what, the 15,000 veterans that enter the workforce every year in
17 Texas, uh, we're utilizing the dislocated worker grants and uh,
18 I appreciate your help in helping me find better ways to get
19 these grants out to uh, to the boards where they're, where
20 they're needed, so, continue to work. You're not going anywhere.

21 BOB GEAR: I'm not going, I got a couple of
22 years left.

23 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: We've got a little
24 bit more to do. Thank you, Bob.

25 BOB GEAR: Thank you, sir.

1 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Thank you, Bob. OK, I
2 move that we approve the annual 2025 report on the Transition
3 from Military Service to Employment as recommended by staff.

4 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I second.

5 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, motion carries.
6 Thank you, Bob. Agenda Item 5, high school vouchers and
7 distribution plan.

8 MAHALIA BALDINI: Good morning, Commissioner
9 Treviño, Commissioner Esparza, and Mr. Serna. For the record,
10 Mahalia Baldini, Workforce Development Division. Texas Education
11 Code 48.302 requires that the Texas Education Agency enter into
12 a memorandum of understanding with the Texas Workforce
13 Commission to transfer funds to subsidize the cost of a high
14 school equivalency exam for individuals who are 21 years of age
15 or older. In anticipation of the fiscal year 26 funds transfer
16 from TEA, staff recommend in, implementing the subsidy program
17 as outlined in TWC rule, Chapter 805, by approving an initial
18 allotment of high school equivalency vouchers to AEL grant
19 recipients as outlined in your notebook materials and approving
20 a plan that allows staff to distribute the remainder of those
21 vouchers in fiscal year 26 to AEL grant recipients as well as
22 allow those grant recipients to develop policies to distribute
23 vouchers to current or former AEL, uh, participants. I
24 appreciate your time this morning and I'm happy to answer any
25 questions you may have.

1 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Commissioner Esparza,
2 any questions or comments?

3 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: No questions.

4 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, Mahalia, I just
5 wanted to say that, uh, this program has a great impact on the
6 state. Staff did a tremendous job this year of finding
7 innovative ways to keep the program running until the funding
8 was allocated. Uh, I would like to thank you and the AEL staff
9 and all the grantees who worked to issue over 10,000 vouchers in
10 the first 11 months of the program year 2025, uh, so that Texans
11 could take their GD, uh, GED exams free of cost so thank you and
12 your staff for all your hard work. Uh, with that I move that we
13 approve the initial allotment of high school equivalency
14 vouchers and the voucher distribution plan as described in the
15 discussion paper and recommended today by staff.

16 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I second.

17 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, the motion
18 carries. Uh, we'll move on to Agenda Item 6, proposed amendments
19 to Chapter 809, Child Care Services.

20 REED O'BRIEN: Uh, good morning,
21 Commissioner Treviño, Commissioner Esparza, and Mr. Serna. For
22 the record, I'm Reed O'Brien with the Office of General Counsel.
23 Before you today for your consideration for approval, for cons,
24 excuse me, before you today for your consideration for approval
25 are proposed rules, uh, amending Chapter 809, Child Care

1 Services. The proposed amendments would clarify and establish in
2 rule flexibility for the commission to suspend provisions of
3 Chapter 809 to improve the delivery of child care services and
4 implement the child care waiting list priority requirements
5 enacted by Senate Bill 462, 89th Texas Legislature Regular
6 Session. Staff recommends submitting the proposed rule for
7 publication to the Texas Register for a 30-day public comment
8 period. Staff also recommends the ability to make minor
9 nonsubstantive changes to the document to comply with
10 publication requirements of the Texas Register and the Office of
11 Secretary of State, and this concludes my comments and I'm
12 available for any questions.

13 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, Commissioner
14 Esparza, any questions or comments?

15 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: No questions.

16 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, then I move that
17 we approve the proposed amendments to 40 Texas Administrative
18 Code, Chapter 809, Child Care Services, for publication for
19 public comment as recommended today by staff.

20 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I second.

21 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, motion carries.

22 REED O'BRIEN: Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: That concludes the
24 agenda items. Uh, is there a legislative report today? Uh,
25

1 seeing none back there, is there an executive director's report
2 today?

3 MR. SERNA: Uh, yes sir, something very
4 quickly. Uh, we received notice from Department of Labor of a
5 grant funding opportunity for state workforce agencies. It's
6 part of the industry-driven skills training initiative. Uh, we
7 intend to apply for the grant. Uh, if we're successful we could
8 be eligible for up to eight million dollars. Uh, the initiative
9 is going to focus on high growth and emergent, emerging
10 industries, uh, such as skill trades and occupation, occupations
11 essential, uh, for advancing artificial intelligence and other
12 technologies that we've been working on, uh, so I think it would
13 be beneficial for us to pursue this. This is just giving you all
14 a heads-up. We'll visit with each office to make sure that we
15 have your, uh, specific comments, uh, recorded or included in
16 what we're focusing on in our grant application but beyond that,
17 this is just a heads-up to let you know that we're going to be
18 pursuing that grant, uh, opportunity. And other than that, I
19 have nothing else, sir.

20 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: Does it, does that
21 have a match involved in it or is it--?

22 MR. SERNA: I'm not aware that it has a
23 match, no, sir.

24 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: OK. Get that money.
25

1 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: All right, thank you.
2 Is there any other order of business, uh, to come before the
3 commission?

4 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: Not from me.

5 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: OK. With that, I'll
6 entertain a motion to adjourn.

7 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I so motion.

8 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: OK, I second the
9 motion and having been moved and seconded, the meeting is
10 adjourned. Thanks, everybody.

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