



MEETING OF THE
TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION

DATE

AUGUST 25, 2026

1 Tuesday, August 25, 2026

2 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Well, good morning,
3 everybody. This meeting is called to order. Mr. Trobman, is
4 anyone signed up for public comment?

5 LES TROBMAN: Good morning, Commissioners.
6 Les Trobman, General Counsel. We have one individual here who
7 would like to provide public comments: Bradley Oliver.

8 BRADLEY OLIVER: First of all, gentlemen,
9 I'd like to say thank you for what you do and to be able to come
10 before you today to present my case and the issues that I have.
11 Hopefully, at the end, regardless of the outcome for me, it will
12 lead to some changes that, in my opinion, need to be made. So
13 that is the reason I'm here in person. Obviously, this could
14 have been done in other ways, and I chose to drive the two hours
15 to get here and two hours back to be a part of today.

16 My name is Bradley Oliver. I'm 69 years old. I've lived in Texas
17 all my life, called it my home, and raised seven kids here, got
18 seven grandkids. So I'm a Texan. And, you know, I just want to
19 say I'm grateful to be in this state because I do feel here that
20 people are interested in what you have to say and they do care
21 about the people. And I'm very happy to be here.

22 So I'm very happy about the fact, too, that our government
23 through the years has decided to put in place an unemployment-
24 type function for those that were gainfully employed by W-2. I
25 was gainfully employed by W-2, worked for the federal government

1 as a subject matter expert, and was let go some three months
2 ago. The unemployment office was immediately notified. I made
3 two trips down there, got my notification that everything was
4 okay as far as the, me letting me go and what my wages are and
5 what I could expect.

6 Unfortunately—well, I should say, let me continue. I began the
7 process that you set in place to do my call-ins, doing my work,
8 you know, trying to get a job. Nobody can live on "Social
9 Insecurity" these days, so I'm looking for another job actively.
10 So if you need someone, please give me a call. I think I might
11 be able to do something.

12 But anyway, the fact is as I began to do my reporting—I don't
13 know if any of you guys—I don't know, I guess I can't do that—
14 If you have gone in there and gone through the automated system,
15 it gives you prompts throughout. First you identify yourself,
16 then you get into the prompts. Well, I've done that over several
17 cycles. I think I've got six weeks now that are backed up and
18 which I'd very much like to get paid for. Unfortunately, last
19 week on Monday, I began to question why it's taking so long to
20 get my pay. And I called in and they let me know that there's
21 something missing.

22 And you know, if you've gone through the automated system, when
23 you get to the end, it tells you your claim has been accepted,
24 you're fine. I'm just questioning why your automated system, if
25 I'm trying to log into it every two weeks, doesn't immediately

1 tell me, "You're ineligible. Please contact us immediately."

2 Because what happens then is you get this false impression that
3 you've got a check that's in the queue that's supposed to be
4 coming. We have to have a better system than that so that the
5 person like myself that didn't realize the ID.me program—which,
6 by the way, should be the number one thing if that keeps you
7 from getting a check.

8 If I was in a TWC office twice, why didn't they help me do it?

9 If they thought I was too old or too stupid or whatever the
10 situation is, why didn't they sit me down there and just walk me
11 through it? If you've ever been to my office there, there's not
12 many people. There's two people, but one person—there's nobody
13 there hardly ever. So it's a very, very remote office in a small
14 town of Caldwell. We've got 5,000 people there; they're not
15 overworked. It wasn't a situation of time.

16 And all I have to say is, if that's what we need—just like when
17 I do subject matter work, the first thing I have to verify on
18 the property that I'm looking at is whether or not it's in a
19 special flood hazard area because that impacts public grants. In
20 my case, the fact that the ID.me was not filled out, it totally
21 impact my payment. And that, gentlemen, I don't think anybody
22 here will argue the fact that I'm standing here, my name is
23 Bradley Oliver, and I don't think I'm going to have to pull out
24 an ID for you to believe that.

1 So if you've got paperwork here, I've been to your office twice,
2 and then you're telling me you're holding up all my checks and
3 not going to allow me to go back and retroactively pay me after
4 I completed that—which I did—it's just egregious to me. How can
5 I lose that money? That money is there for me. The money was
6 earmarked on this date, on this piece of paper. Why is it, why
7 is it now that that money suddenly disappeared because this one
8 function was not done? It takes approximately three minutes to
9 do online.

10 Now, if I'm standing there in a TWC office and you've got a
11 worker there watching me on this computer, why don't you come
12 over there and say, "Look, oh, sir, you didn't do your ID.me, we
13 got to do that right now"? Why wasn't that done? Secondly, when
14 I'm on there calling in all the jobs that I've done and doing my
15 little deal remotely, why doesn't it immediately give me a
16 prompt and say, "Sir, you're not eligible right now, you need to
17 go back and do the ID.me"? Why isn't there a prompt at the
18 beginning of that when I plug in my PIN to tell me that there's
19 a problem, Houston, and that you need to get back over and get
20 that fixed?

21 No, no, it lets me go all the way to the end and when I finish,
22 it says, "You completed it. Thank you." So, the only time—I
23 don't know how long this would have gone on if I hadn't picked
24 up the phone because I didn't get paid and continue to do the
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1 process, realizing that all this was going to be for nothing
2 based on what I've been told.

3 So what I'd like you to do, please—because I've given you a
4 couple of really good suggestions to better the program here in
5 Texas—is reinstate my payments. And obviously, I'm already good
6 now; I'll continue to do it the way I'm supposed to because I
7 assure you with all my heart, I would have never done this if
8 I'd have known that I needed this one little old thing. So I
9 want to thank you, gentlemen, for your time. It's my hope and
10 desire that you will reinstate my funds and allow me to continue
11 to draw my benefits, which I am entitled to. Thank you very
12 much.

13 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Mr. Oliver, did the
14 solution come about through a phone call? You said—

15 BRADLEY OLIVER: I generated the phone call.

16 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Yes, sir. Yeah. Yeah,
17 that's what I meant. You called in?

18 BRADLEY OLIVER: I did.

19 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Okay. I definitely
20 appreciate your feedback. It is timely. The agency is going
21 through Sunset, and there is quite a look back at the system
22 itself. I think you've highlighted a lot of issues with the
23 system. And I think that is definitely taken into account
24 through our UI division or IT systems in general. And I
25 appreciate you coming down to do this, when it comes down to it.

1 It's not a great situation that you have to do in any way. How
2 long were you at the federal government?

3 BRADLEY OLIVER: I was with them totally 11
4 years, but seven years I was out of Florida working remote in
5 Texas. So yeah, I was with them a long, long time. And I'm very
6 used to grant proposals and I'm used to the rules of grants. If
7 you've ever looked at the CFR 44 or you've looked at the PAPPG,
8 which guides FEMA—we have a lot of rules and regulations, too.
9 But we do have an appeals process and they're more than fair
10 when you go to the appeals. I am in an appeal, gentlemen, and
11 I'm asking for you to grant me a favorable appeal.

12 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Good.

13 BRADLEY OLIVER: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Thank you, Mr. Oliver.
15 Appreciate it.

16 LES TROBMAN: Thank you, Commissioners.
17 That's what we had this morning.

18 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Thanks, Les. Now turn the
19 mission, excuse me, the meeting over to Commissioner Connett to
20 preside over agenda items 3 through 8.

21 COMMISSIONER CONNETT: The motion passes
22 with the exceptions noted. That concludes our work on agenda
23 items 3 through 8. Chairman Esparza, I hand the meeting back
24 over to you.

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1 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: We'll take a break.

2 Thanks. CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: We'll get back started on
3 Item 9: RESEA Fiscal Year 2026 State Plan.

4 SUZETTE ROBINSON: That was loud, wasn't it?
5 Impactful. Good morning, Chairman Esparza, Commissioners, and
6 Mr. Pier. For the record, I'm Suzette Robinson with the
7 Workforce Development Division. The Department of Labor awarded
8 Texas \$33,710,498 in RESEA grant funding for FY 2026. This
9 amount is \$8.4 million more than the prior year funding. For
10 your consideration and approval is the FY 2026 RESEA State Plan
11 that lays out how the grant funds will be used to implement and
12 operate the RESEA program during Board Contract Year FY 2027 and
13 how prior year funds will be used to cover program expansion and
14 initiatives. Staff recommends approval of the FY 2026 RESEA
15 state plan, and I am happy to answer any questions that you may
16 have.

17 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Thanks, Suzette.
18 Commissioners, any comments or questions?

19 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: No questions.

20 COMMISSIONER CONNETT: No, nothing here.
21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Suzette, I mentioned I
23 would have questions today; it's just for further
24 clarifications. My first one is talk about career shifters and
25 how could you give me an idea about how consultants identify

1 career shifters among top-tier wage earners and if there are
2 services that they provide that differ from the standard path?

3 SUZETTE ROBINSON: Yes. So the career
4 shifters are identified as a part of the Big Interview process.
5 So when a RESEA service provider registers into Big Interview,
6 they complete a survey and identify themselves as looking for an
7 additional career. A service code is assigned to those
8 customers, and then we pull the list of customers each week and
9 we forward those lists of customers to each, their respective
10 board areas. And this time, instead of sending it to the RESEA
11 point of contact, we actually sent it to the WIOA leadership
12 person as well as the business services person to look at any
13 job opportunities that may be available for that career shifter
14 or any training opportunities that may be available through
15 WIOA.

16 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Great. I wanted to also
17 highlight that the failure to report rate dropped from 29% to
18 16%. Can you point to anything that's helping reduce that rate?

19 SUZETTE ROBINSON: Sure. One of the biggest
20 impacts that we had to the failure to report rate was we made an
21 adjustment in the TWC guidance. Before, we would require boards
22 to provide services within 21 days of the RESEA appointment,
23 while DOL allows us to service those customers all the way up to
24 45 days after the quarter ends. So we shifted the service
25 delivery method to allow boards to provide services all the way

1 up until that point. And as a result, it gave them more time to
2 provide outreach. And then we also give them a targeted list
3 every month of the customers that fail to report; they're able
4 to map it out, use their mobile units to provide services to
5 those customers, and as a result, they've been able to reduce
6 their failure to report rates.

7 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Good, thanks for putting
8 that on record. I want to talk about unspent funds and whether
9 they—let me start there. So unspent funds from Fiscal Year '24
10 was \$7.1 million and in '25 it was \$19 million. There was
11 reference to technical challenges, but beyond that, was there
12 anything that prevented funds from being deployed other than
13 technical challenges?

14 SUZETTE ROBINSON: Sure. So, a part of the
15 reason—we knew with the increased funding that's been happening
16 year over year—we noticed that the profile model was pulling
17 fewer customers that were likely to exhaust. So, in coordinating
18 with I3, they actually, instead of building on the existing
19 model, they broke it down and rebuilt it. And as a result, we
20 are pulling in more customers that are likely to exhaust. They
21 added an additional factor in as well. So we saw a downward
22 trend in the profile model pulling customers. And so when we
23 have less customers, we have the funding to provide—we have more
24 capacity than customers. And so we're right-sizing that as a
25 part of the new profile model and the additional funding.

1 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Great. And funds that we
2 don't spend—do they carry over or are they returned to the feds?

3 SUZETTE ROBINSON: So we don't give anything
4 back to the federal government. So what happens, we're allowed
5 to spend or expend our funds based on the "first in, first out."
6 And so we're able to roll—we have a 30% carryover with all
7 multi-year funding. And so that balance, if we go beyond that,
8 what they do is reduce the funding for the upcoming year. So it
9 could impact future and so I can say thus far we have not been
10 impacted by that, and we hope to not have that be a problem for
11 Texas.

12 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Great, thank you so much.
13 Thanks for having that conversation and putting some items on
14 the record. Commissioner, is there a motion?

15 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: I move that we
16 approve the Fiscal Year 2026 reemployment services and
17 eligibility assessment grant state plan for submission to the
18 U.S. Department of Labor as recommended today by staff.

19 COMMISSIONER CONNETT: Second.

20 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Also vote yes. Motion
21 passes. Thanks, Suzette.

22 SUZETTE ROBINSON: Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Agenda item 10: Chapter
24 809 Childcare Services.

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1 REED O'BRIEN: Good morning, Chairman
2 Esparza, Commissioner Connett, Commissioner Treviño, and Mr.
3 Pier. For the record, I'm Reed O'Brien with the Office of
4 General Counsel. Commissioners, I'm here today regarding agenda
5 item 10, which is the presentation of the final rule for
6 adoption regarding Chapter 809 Childcare Services. Staff
7 respectfully requests that the Commission postpone action on
8 this item until next week's scheduled meeting on September 1st.
9 This brief postponement will allow staff to incorporate a few
10 key clarifications and ensure that the final rule is as clear
11 and effective as possible. Thank you. And staff is available to
12 answer any questions you may have.

13 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Okay. All in favor, I
14 guess. Commissioner, any comments or questions on that?

15 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: No questions, and I'm
16 in favor of waiting as well.

17 COMMISSIONER CONNETT: Same, no questions.
18 Happy to postpone a week. Thanks.

19 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Les gives me a thumbs up.
20 So I think we can do that easy. Okay, thanks, Reed. Appreciate
21 it.

22 REED O'BRIEN: Appreciate the extra time on
23 that.

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1 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Agenda item 12. Michael,
2 you got anything? He are on his way. Here come the judge. Here
3 come the judge.

4 MICHAEL BRITT: Good morning, Mr. Chairman,
5 Commissioners, Mr. Pier. For the record, Michael Britt,
6 Governmental Relations. Brief update: TWC will be testifying at
7 two legislative hearings. Actually, tomorrow at 9:00 AM, Bob
8 Gear will be testifying before the Senate Select Committee on
9 Veteran Affairs. Mr. Gear will be testifying on the committee's
10 interim charge related to strengthening the military-to-civilian
11 transition. And then at 10 AM tomorrow, the main event: we will
12 be testifying in front of the House Committee on Trade Workforce
13 and Economic Development on three of the committee's interim
14 charges. Chairman Esparza will be testifying on the committee's
15 interim charge monitoring the implementation of House Bill 4903
16 from the 88th session. That bill created the Quad-Agency
17 Childcare Initiative. And then Mr. Pier will be testifying on
18 the committee's interim charges related to program integrity as
19 well as the committee's interim charge on agency oversight,
20 providing a brief update to the committee on TWC. That concludes
21 my comments. Happy to answer any questions.

22 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: All good. Commissioners,
23 any questions for Mike?

24 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: No questions here.
25 Thanks, Mike.

1 COMMISSIONER CONNETT: No questions. Thank
2 you.

3 MICHAEL BRITT: Thank you, sirs.

4 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Thank you, Michael. Item
5 13. Steve, any reports from you?

6 MR. PIER: [shakes head]

7 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Very good. Great report,
8 Steve. Thank you very much. Commissioners, that brings us to the
9 end of the agenda. Is there a motion to adjourn?

10 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Yes. But before I do
11 that, I just wanted to kind of give a shout-out to Liz
12 Hernandez, who's the Director of Infrastructure Services. She
13 will be retiring today after 26 years with TWC. So I want to
14 commend her for all the great work that she's done to keep all
15 our facilities here in Austin and TWC running so efficiently. So
16 with that, I just wanted to give her a big congratulations on
17 her retirement.

18 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: She's probably hard at
19 work; so I don't see her in the room, so we can talk about her.

20 MR. PIER: We're wondering if nobody shows
21 for her going-away party, for her retirement party, if maybe
22 she'll stick around. So, you know—

23 CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: [Inaudible]

24 MR. PIER: Yeah, exactly. Maybe it won't
25 happen. So yeah, we're set to lose Liz.

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CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Thank you, Liz.

COMMISSIONER CONNETT: Wish her well. Liz has been very, uh, a total professional, very welcoming to me as I joined the agency about a year ago. So we wish her all the best in her retirement. So second your shout-out, Commissioner Treviño, and the motion to adjourn.

COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN ESPARZA: Motion's been made and seconded. We vote to adjourn, and we're done. Thank you very much.