Panel: Immigrant Integration - Christine Quinn, Chicago Regional Administrator, Employment & Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, will review federal efforts to support the economic integration of immigrants and refugees.

**Licensing Best Practices**

Ensure that Licensing Restrictions are Closely Targeted to Protecting Public Health and Safety, and are Not Overly Broad or Burdensome

1. In cases where public health and safety concerns are mild, consider using alternative systems that are less restrictive than licensing, such as voluntary State certification (“right-to-title”) or registration (filing basic information with a State registry).

2. Make sure that substantive requirements of licensing (e.g., education and experience requirements) are closely tied to public health and safety concerns.

3. Minimize procedural burdens of acquiring a license, in terms of fees, complexity of requirements, processing time, and paperwork.

4. Where licensure is deemed appropriate, allow all licensed professionals to provide services to the full extent of their current competency, even if this means that multiple professions provide overlapping services.

5. Review licensing requirements for the formerly incarcerated, immigrants, and veterans to ensure that licensing laws do not prevent qualified individuals from securing employment opportunities, while still providing appropriate protections for consumers.

**Work to Reduce Licensing’s Barriers to Mobility**

1. Harmonize licensing requirements to the maximum extent possible across States.

2. Form interstate compacts that make it easier for licensed workers to practice and relocate across State lines, while also enabling State regulators to share practitioners’ performance histories.

3. When forming such an interstate arrangement, avoid categorically excluding individuals with a criminal record or adopting the licensing requirements of the most stringent participating States.

4. If agreeing on common standards for interstate licenses is difficult, consider a “two-tiered” structure that allows States with more flexible requirements to retain their rules while restricting interstate reciprocity to workers who satisfy a higher bar.

**Promising Practices for Foreign-Educated Skilled Immigrants**

- Physician Retraining Program: FEP to BSN/MSN
  - [http://fep.fiu.edu/](http://fep.fiu.edu/)

- Retraining Program for Immigrant Engineers
  - [https://www.cooper.edu/academics/outreach-and-pre-college/retraining-program-immigrant-engineers](https://www.cooper.edu/academics/outreach-and-pre-college/retraining-program-immigrant-engineers)
NYC Immigrant Bridge
•  http://www.nycedc.com/program/immigrant-bridge

Michigan International Talent Solutions/MONA
•  http://www.michigan.gov/ona/0,5629,7-323-75982---,00.html

Massachusetts FED to Dental Intern

National Council of State Boards of Nursing—Resource Manual on the Licensure of Internationally Educated Nurses

Resources to watch:
Registered Apprenticeship
✓ The President has challenged the country to double the number of apprenticeships within five years, as part of our response to a growing demand for highly skilled workers.
✓ We know that apprenticeship works and can provide a pathway to the middle class and a career without the burden of student debt.
✓ Apprenticeships are an opportunity for all jobseekers, including skilled immigrants to forge a path into the middle class.
✓ There is particular promise in competency-based apprenticeship, which allows folks to demonstrate their skills on-the-job, and advance their career all while earning income.
✓ Last September, we awarded $175 million for the American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI). These 46 grantees have committed to expanding apprenticeship programs in new and growing industries, and serving under-represented populations.
✓ And last year, Congress appropriated a historic 90 Million to support apprenticeship expansion – a portion of which will be available later this summer to support innovative strategies that bring underrepresented populations into apprenticeship.

The Occupational Licensing Portability Project
✓ In June, we announced our plan to award up to $7.5 million to help states enhance the portability of occupational licenses across state lines and reduce overly burdensome licensure restrictions, many of which negatively impact skilled immigrants.
✓ Grants will support the formation of state consortia, focused on reducing licensing barriers to labor market entry. Ensuring that licensing requirements recognize the skills and knowledge earned overseas and in the military is a key focus.
✓ The application was open until July 18, 2016. Plan to award in the Fall
✓ We are confident that this project will provide useful insights on how to reduce the barriers that skilled immigrants face when seeking occupational licenses

Veterans Occupational Licensing Demonstration Grant
✓ We’ve been invested in credential portability for several years. Starting in 2013, we worked with NGA in six states to translate military service members’ skills, credentials, and experiences to the civilian workforce.
✓ Many of the strategies used in that demonstration are applicable and replicable for skilled immigrants who face similar barriers.
[For example, the State of Illinois used a bridge program model for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN). They developed a curriculum to fill training gaps, worked with three community colleges to implement it, and created an advertising campaign to market it.]

America’s Promise
✓ America’s Promise is an open grant opportunity that provides approximately $100 million to expand high quality education and training programs that give Americans the skills most in-demand from regional employers for middle- to high-skilled jobs.
✓ Grants will be awarded to pilot and scale partnerships between employers, economic development, workforce development boards, community and technical colleges and systems, training programs, K-12 education systems, and community-based organizations that will strengthen the pipeline of Americans ready for in-demand jobs.
✓ The funding opportunity announcement specifically notes that foreign-trained immigrants may be included with the target population for services and training.

TechHire
✓ We just announced awards for our Tech Hire grant competition. - $150 million H-1B TechHire grants to 39 partnerships providing services in 25 states. Grant amounts range from $2 million to $5 million.
✓ TechHire grant projects will provide employment and training assistance to rapidly train workers with the skills required for well-paying, middle- and high-skilled, and high-growth jobs across diverse H-1B industries such as IT, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, financial services, and broadband.
✓ All projects will incorporate a strong up-front assessment component that allows for a customization of services and training to meet the needs of the targeted population to become employed, retain their employment, or advance to a new position.
✓ Two grantees are specifically serving individuals with limited English proficiency, and skilled immigrants are eligible to participate in many of the grant projects.

TAACCCT Skills Commons
✓ Skills Commons is another great resource for organizations working with skilled immigrants to fill skill gaps. Our Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program has created a free and open online library called SkillsCommons.org containing free and open learning materials and program support materials for job-driven workforce development. The Open Educational Resources are produced by community colleges across the nation and can be found, reused, revised, retained, redistributed and remixed by individuals, institutions, and industry. With over 700 institutions contributing to the repository, the open library of materials at SkillsCommons.org will expand over the next few years. New features are being developed that will allow end-users to better preview courses and materials in the repository. In some cases content has been translated into Spanish.

Online tools
✓ The Department of Labor has developed several online tools on skill transferability and credentials databases that are useful for skilled immigrants seeking work and the organizations that support them. We have a handout that is circulating and also will address in the Navigating Occupational Licenses and Other Useful Credentials breakout session this afternoon. Several of these resources are available in Spanish.