





APPEARANCES: (Cont'd)

External:

ISABEL HODGE, United States International  
Coalition on Disabilities  
BRIAN HORN, Disability:IN  
PETER KALDES, American Society on Aging  
NANCY LEAMOND, AARP  
ROBERT MORRISON, machinist (retired)  
MIKE NOLL, USW Local 1237  
DAHLIA SHAEWITZ, Institute for Educational  
Leadership  
BONNIELIN SWENOR, Johns Hopkins Disability Health  
Research Center  
DAMON TERZAGHI, Advancing States  
EDWIN WALKER, Administration on Aging, HHS

P R O C E E D I N G S

(1:00 p.m.)

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3 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Well, good afternoon,  
4 everyone. My name is Amy Karpel, and I'm one of five  
5 Commissioners at the United States International Trade  
6 Commission. I'm excited to welcome you to our fifth  
7 roundtable to study the distributional effects of trade and  
8 trade policy on U.S. workers.

9 Today's roundtable will give us the opportunity to  
10 discuss the impacts of trade on workers with disabilities and  
11 on workers of differing ages and education level. I'll be  
12 the moderator for today's roundtable. The agency's Vice  
13 Chair, Randy Stayin, and Commissioners David Johanson and  
14 Rhonda Schmidlein are actively listening and may ask some  
15 questions toward the end of our discussion.

16 Commission staff members David Coffin, Simon Athome  
17 (phonetic), Tamara Khachaturian, and Jennifer Powell  
18 organized this roundtable, and I want to thank them and the  
19 rest of the team for their great work. Before we get  
20 started, I thought I would tell you a little bit about the  
21 Commission and the context of this roundtable.

22 The U.S. International Trade Commission is an

1 independent agency. We're not part of the Biden/Harris  
2 Administration or Congress. We assist the Administration and  
3 Congress when requested. We provide them with independent  
4 information and analysis through various means, such as the  
5 study. In addition, we have other responsibilities, such as  
6 deciding import injury and unfair trade cases for U.S.  
7 industries. Our job is to be independent and objective in  
8 everything we do.

9 Today's event is one of seven roundtables that is  
10 part of a study to collect input on the potentially different  
11 effects of trade on U.S. workers. This study was requested  
12 by the United States Trade Representative, Katherine Tai, a  
13 member of the President's cabinet responsible for U.S. trade  
14 policy.

15 During a recent event, USTR Tai referred to these  
16 roundtables and the related work the Commission is doing on  
17 the distributional effects of trade as providing a "roadmap"  
18 of how to make trade policy more targeted and effective.

19 Each roundtable will focus on a different category,  
20 including skill, wage, and salary level, race and ethnicity,  
21 gender and orientation, and age, disability, and education,  
22 especially as they effect under-represented and under-served

1 communities.

2 At the conclusion of all of the roundtables, the  
3 Commission will submit a written report summarizing the  
4 information gathered. This report will be delivered in  
5 October of this year and it will be publicly available.

6 We have a diverse group of participants for today's  
7 roundtable. We have people who have worked on factory  
8 floors, union leaders, academics, researchers, advocates, and  
9 a public servant. My role today is to ask questions and  
10 manage the flow of discussion so that everyone has a chance  
11 to speak.

12 Your role as participants is to share experiences,  
13 opinions, and information. We want this to be a wide-ranging  
14 conversation, so you may hear something that you don't agree  
15 with. Just remember that there are no right or wrong  
16 answers. We value all perspectives. We want your candid  
17 thoughts.

18 So, before we get started, I have a few  
19 housekeeping items. Our discussion today is scheduled to  
20 last for two hours, with a short break after the first hour.  
21 Having said that, we may continue our discussion past 3 p.m.  
22 to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard. Of

1 course, we realize that not everyone may be able to stay past  
2 3, so please do not feel obligated to do so.

3 Please be conscious of the fact that this is open  
4 to the public and the press. Also, the discussion today is  
5 being transcribed for the record, and a link to that  
6 transcript will be included in the final report to USTR.  
7 Therefore, you should be careful not to share any information  
8 that you or any organization with which you are affiliated  
9 may be viewed as confidential.

10 If you would like to respond to a question, please  
11 use the WebEx Raise Hand feature and I will recognize you.  
12 If that doesn't work for some reason or if you've done that  
13 and I don't see it for some reason, just wave your real hand  
14 and get my attention.

15 If you are participating by phone, you may jump in  
16 when you sense there is a pause, or you can email us at  
17 de@usitc.gov and the team will notify me that you would like  
18 to speak. Please remember that only registered participants  
19 will be invited to speak during today's discussion. If  
20 you're here today as a member of the public observing and you  
21 would like to provide some input, you may email us after the  
22 event at de@usitc.gov.

1           Whenever you make a comment, we ask that you state  
2 your name so it's clear to everyone who is speaking. And if  
3 there's an organization with which you are affiliated that  
4 you would like to identify, please also state the name of the  
5 organization.

6           Once again, thank you all for being here today.  
7 I'm looking forward to our discussion.

8           The goal of today's roundtable is to gain a better  
9 understanding of workers' experience and how that differs  
10 through experiences of other workers based on age, education  
11 level, or whether they have a disability or accessibility  
12 requirement and why. These roundtables are specifically  
13 focused on the impacts from trade, so let's break that down a  
14 bit.

15           A trade impact, for example, could be increased  
16 competition with imports that causes a U.S. company to lay  
17 off workers or reduce wages, or it could be new opportunities  
18 to export, causing a business to grow and hire more workers,  
19 or it could be a decision to offshore a business or for a  
20 foreign business to invest in a factory in the United States,  
21 or it could be another effect.

22           The key for today's discussion is to understand how

1 and why impacts brought about by trade, what some have called  
2 trade shocks, affect workers differently based on their age,  
3 education level, or disability. It is less important for  
4 today's discussion that you can identify a particular  
5 experience as attributable to trade. Experiences about how  
6 and why any type of change or economic shock affects  
7 different types of workers differently are welcome and  
8 provide valuable insights for the study.

9 I'm going to group my questions into two or three  
10 buckets. First, I would like to ask about the type of  
11 challenges workers are experiencing in the workforce related  
12 to age or education level or whether they have a disability  
13 or accessibility requirements and explore how those  
14 experiences differ from other workers; second, I'd like to  
15 ask about how trade has impacted workers differently based on  
16 age or education level or disability; and third, about  
17 policies or programs that can help workers deal with the  
18 adverse impacts of trade or to take advantage of trade  
19 opportunities, particularly for aging workers, workers  
20 without a college or high school degree, and workers with  
21 disabilities or accessibility requirements.

22 Today's experience is like our past roundtables.

1 These three topics may bleed together, and that's fine. My  
2 intention is not to be too rigid about the structure of our  
3 conversation.

4 I also want to recognize that the challenges a  
5 worker experiences based on age, education level, or  
6 disability may differ, but in an effort to keep everyone  
7 engaged, I'm not going to separate the conversation into  
8 different segments, and I invite participants to share their  
9 experiences and perspectives with respect to age, education  
10 level, or disability in response to any of the questions. So  
11 let's get started.

12 Before getting into other questions, I thought I  
13 might start out by getting a sense of what drew you here  
14 today to this roundtable. Are there a few participants who  
15 would like to share?

16 MR. BOONE: I would. I would like to thank you and  
17 the Commissioners for the opportunity to participate in this.  
18 Over the 50 years that I've worked in the steel mill, we have  
19 been negatively impacted by trade many, many times, so I'm  
20 honored to be here today, and, hopefully, I can give you some  
21 insight from my side of how we've been impacted. So I'm  
22 honored to be here. Thank you.

1 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you.

2 Ms. Hill.

3 MS. HILL: I wanted to thank you as well, and I  
4 also was drawn to this because I've seen some of our -- I  
5 work for the United Steelworkers. I'm also a secretary for  
6 the -- at the international, and I'm also a corresponding  
7 secretary for the Coalition of Labor Union Women, and I've  
8 seen folks -- and it has a huge impact on them and their  
9 community and I just welcome the opportunity, especially  
10 since, you know, even in some of our facilities, disability  
11 is definitely an issue because it's hard physical work. So  
12 thank you very much for the opportunity to speak on this.

13 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you.

14 Ms. Hodge.

15 MS. HODGE: Good afternoon. I'm Isabel Hodge from  
16 the U.S. International Council on Disabilities. I think I  
17 was really drawn to this conversation today because, you  
18 know, there's one billion people in the world with  
19 disabilities and there are some U.S. disability organizations  
20 that are focusing on, you know, business and trade and  
21 exports and imports and, you know, how that impacts the  
22 disability community. But I'm more interested on the impact

1 of the U.S. not ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights for  
2 Persons with Disabilities and how that impacts U.S.  
3 businesses that have a global presence and some of the lost  
4 import -- or U.S. export opportunities there. So I'll  
5 probably talk about it a little bit more later, but I'm  
6 really hoping that we can talk about the convention a little  
7 bit today.

8 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you.

9 Mr. Attig.

10 MR. ATTIG: Thank you so much. My name is Will  
11 Attig. I'm the Executive Director of the Union Veterans  
12 Council of the AFL-CIO. We represent over a million working  
13 veterans throughout the country. And I am really here not  
14 because I'm an expert on trade and trade policy, but I'm an  
15 expert on the veterans community and especially our specific  
16 topic that the Union Veterans Council focuses on the most,  
17 the socioeconomic effects that our economy and our country  
18 has on the men and women who served our country, whether it  
19 was for two years during Vietnam or for 20 years during the  
20 global war on terror. And we see a dramatic coalition  
21 between financial stability and the effects that are at issue  
22 with our veterans community that we see every single day and

1 we hear talked about a lot.

2           And with the veterans community, we're a very  
3 unique and small group where we have large numbers in very  
4 consolidated pockets that we can take a good look at, and  
5 we're really focused on the younger veterans, their pathways  
6 into stable jobs throughout the country that gives them that  
7 pathway to the American dream, but then also retirement and  
8 security in our veterans community and the effects of what  
9 trade deals in the past have done to affect that group of  
10 veterans that right now should be living out their lives but  
11 now find themselves struggling because of the effects of  
12 these past trade deals.

13           COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thanks for those who have  
14 shared.

15           I did want to make one announcement. For  
16 participants that prefer to communicate in written form via  
17 chat, you can either use the chat feature to alert Bill or  
18 you can email the team at [de@usitc.gov](mailto:de@usitc.gov) and your question or  
19 your comment will be read out loud. Thank you.

20           All right. So I appreciate those introductory  
21 remarks about what drew you here. I thought that would be a  
22 nice way to open and sort of set the scene. So I welcome

1 others if they're inspired later on to respond to that first  
2 question, you may do so.

3 But, in the meantime, I will move on to our sort of  
4 first roundtable official question and ask, what challenges  
5 do aging workers, workers with a disability, or workers  
6 without a college or a high school degree experience with  
7 respect to finding or maintaining employment or earning a  
8 living wage? What factors may be at play that make that  
9 experience different than for other workers?

10 MR. NOLL: Hello.

11 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Yeah, please go ahead, Mr.  
12 Noll.

13 MR. NOLL: My name is Mike. I am President of the  
14 USW Local in Newark, Ohio. I feel that there's a lot of  
15 issues around especially older people getting jobs simply  
16 because, you know, we've lost so many jobs. Our labor force  
17 is -- I mean, it's hugely expanded and a lot of the jobs that  
18 we lost, you know, over the years, those are the people  
19 that -- you know, the older people had those jobs. Now  
20 they're gone. They're trying to get in somewhere else and  
21 when you go -- you know, an employer is going to look at you  
22 and look at the long road and see, like, okay, well, we can

1 have this guy that's 20 years old for 30 years or we can have  
2 this guy that's 60 years old and he's going to be gone in no  
3 time, and it just hurts the older generation. They're not  
4 able to get the jobs that the young people perform, and the  
5 fact that we lost all those jobs, I mean, it just puts them  
6 in a situation where they're kind of behind the eight ball.

7 And as far as, you know, like, having a high school  
8 diploma and stuff, coming into a factory job, I would -- I  
9 think that it would be beneficial if -- a lot of factories  
10 only require a high school diploma if need be. I think it  
11 would be hugely beneficial to everyone involved if a company  
12 would hire someone without diploma or GED with an agreement  
13 that they would go through the process to get it and, you  
14 know, the company could even help them do that. I think that  
15 would be hugely beneficial to getting people on board and,  
16 you know, for people to work. That's it.

17 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you, Mr. Noll.

18 Let me check who was next here. Ms. Hodge.

19 MS. HODGE: Hi again. I would say that, you know,  
20 the Affordable Care Act, you know, and other legislation  
21 is -- you know, while we have that, that has created -- you  
22 know, there's still significant gaps in the programs and

1 services that assist workers with chronic conditions and  
2 disabilities, who, you know, they want to continue working  
3 when their chronic conditions progress and their functional  
4 limitations increase. However, you know, these gaps still  
5 exist, and I would say one of the big gaps is access to  
6 long-term support services, such as personal assistant  
7 services in the workplace. No commercial healthcare  
8 insurance provides access to personal assistant services in  
9 the workplace.

10 So think about this. You've got these children  
11 that benefitted from the Individuals With Disabilities  
12 Education Act and, you know, inclusive education. They have  
13 this fantastic high school diploma. They've gone on to  
14 college, but they have a significant disability that requires  
15 assistance with toileting and feeding in the workplace, and  
16 when they enter the workplace, they lose all of the Medicaid  
17 waiver and all of the benefits they were getting from the  
18 government that provides those services because they're not  
19 provided in the workplace.

20 So, you know, that's a significant gap. We have a  
21 whole lot of American young people with college degrees that  
22 can't access the workplace because that's not in place. It

1 should be, you know, covered services, healthcare services.

2 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you for sharing that.

3 Ms. Hill.

4 MS. HILL: I'd just like to say for workers with  
5 disabilities it is often very difficult. I've worked with  
6 some of these folks, and it's often difficult to get  
7 employers to make even small accommodations. Some of them  
8 are very reluctant to make any kind of an accommodation. I'm  
9 not sure why, even though, you know, under EEOC guidelines,  
10 they need to, but all I can say is they make mole hills into  
11 mountains because they frequently claim that it would be  
12 extremely expensive to accommodate workers for something as  
13 simple as a shift change.

14 And sometimes it's even they even have a job open  
15 and they have where they could, you know, get the worker on  
16 that shift and they're reluctant to do so and I'm not really,  
17 you know, sure why. Sometimes they have to be forced to do  
18 so. Sometimes you see workers that are reluctant to pursue  
19 EEOC cases. I'm just saying from a perspective, it is -- you  
20 know, sometimes it's just like they were going -- I can tell  
21 you of one case where they were going to actually fire an  
22 employee because he was unable to use one of his arms, and

1 they had to get a new fork truck and they did not want -- and  
2 they were going to get one with a joystick. Without even  
3 testing it out for him, they were just going to get rid of  
4 him.

5 And we were able to intervene and he was actually  
6 able to use the fork truck with a joystick much easier than  
7 he could the one with the wheel, and, actually, -- as a  
8 result of our intervening, we actually got them a discount on  
9 the fork truck for what they were going to get. And, yeah,  
10 it was just -- it's really disappoint -- I don't know how we  
11 put out there to employers that people really need to work  
12 and they should be accommodating rather than trying to block  
13 them.

14 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you.

15 Ms. Ackerman.

16 MS. ACKERMAN: Yes. I work at -- used to work at  
17 Rubbermaid in Wooster, Ohio, which is a plastic -- rubber and  
18 plastic manufacturing facility. I started working there when  
19 I was in my 20s and figured that was the place. Back in the  
20 day, you would go to a factory and you would stay in a  
21 factory until you retired. I did have a little bit of  
22 college before I went there, but at the time, people were

1 having more luck getting good pay in factory jobs and having  
2 a rough time finding the jobs that they went to college for.  
3 I was a single parent the majority of the time I was at the  
4 factory, and since it was a good-paying job, I had insurance,  
5 was able to raise my kids, give them all the sports equipment  
6 and everything they needed and have insurance.

7           Unfortunately, we were bought out by a company that  
8 wanted our name more than anything else, and the place closed  
9 down when there were a lot of us in our late middle ages. I  
10 was, like, 45 or something, and, like Michael said, people  
11 look at your age. So here I was with 28 years. Actually,  
12 really more than that because I was married briefly to  
13 someone that was in the service and had a break in my  
14 seniority. But it's hard to find a job then.

15           We found our place. We were able to bid on jobs  
16 that worked for us. We were in a place that did help people  
17 with disabilities and stuff, but now here we have a whole  
18 mess of people in our town that are looking for jobs and  
19 they're in their middle ages or very close to retirement.

20           Some of the people were able to stick it out.  
21 Since I wasn't close to retirement, I knew I needed to find a  
22 job because this -- Newell was who bought us -- was going to

1 eventually close us down because that's their history, and we  
2 were the only union shop.

3 So we had people that were my age or a little bit  
4 older that ended up instead of having one good-paying job  
5 luckily -- I mean, I'm so thankful my kids were grown and so  
6 I was through -- you know, made it through that and  
7 everything. But now we had people that they had kids that  
8 couldn't find jobs and they had kids that were living still  
9 with them, and it was just an absolute mess.

10 Some of our folks had to work three jobs just to be  
11 able to keep the things that they were still paying on or the  
12 homes they had and the different things they still had. And  
13 people -- sometimes I think some of the benefits that we  
14 could have had at work -- now I was always -- I felt like I  
15 made good money and I definitely had good insurance, but I  
16 was always just that wee little bit above what I needed to be  
17 able to have help with childcare. So, at that time, it might  
18 make a difference of if I just made \$20 less I could pay \$140  
19 less for childcare, which is way different now. So I never  
20 thought about people with disability that would be having  
21 those same type of issues.

22 But you'd asked earlier why we got on this call.

1 Right now, I'm working with a public policy group that  
2 advocates for American manufacturing. And I listened to one  
3 of the earlier roundtables, and someone asked one of the  
4 workers out of a steel mill -- asked if ever in negotiations  
5 the company threatened them by actually saying, if you don't  
6 accept this contract, these wages, we're going to move your  
7 job out of the country, we're going to go ahead and ship it  
8 overseas. I was not a participant, so I wasn't allowed to  
9 say anything, but it infuriated me because they don't have to  
10 say anything at the table to make us feel like we don't have  
11 a choice.

12 Where I work, they had already brought in two tiers  
13 lower paying, which created havoc within the shop. They also  
14 had already taken one of our departments and sent it to  
15 Mexico. You always, always have the threat that they're  
16 going to take your job to another country. I don't care what  
17 they say at the table. It is always hanging over your head.

18 Now we have Rubbermaid -- of course, my plant  
19 closed. It was the original plant. Now we have Rubbermaid  
20 proudly made in China. One of the deals is the big box  
21 companies. I mean, that's what they say. I'm not proud  
22 they're made in China, but China puts that on their label,

1 proudly made in China.

2 One of the big box companies, that was really the  
3 beginning of our downfall, and I'm sure all of you would know  
4 what that big box company is. They told you, you can't  
5 have -- we're not going to sell to you if you can't meet this  
6 price. So, of course, they're going to go to someplace where  
7 they can get the product cheaper, and that product was  
8 already because of the trade policies we had created before  
9 that time. Now they were going to China or wherever. You  
10 know, they were coming from someplace else.

11 So even though -- so we were competing with them  
12 just because of trying to keep our customers, and eventually  
13 we lost. And this all goes back to trade. If it wasn't for  
14 the trade, they would have never had that option. And then,  
15 once the factories closed down in town, everybody that said  
16 "I will never, never, never shop at that place" now has no  
17 option because they can't afford to shop anyplace but that  
18 place. And then all the places in town that were the local  
19 stores and the local businesses, they're all closed because  
20 nobody can keep -- nobody -- it just is devastating. It's  
21 just devastating.

22 Okay. Sorry, I forgot the --

1                   COMMISSIONER KARPEL: That's all right. Thank you  
2 for sharing, Ms. Ackerman.

3                   MS. ACKERMAN: I'm sorry.

4                   COMMISSIONER KARPEL: I would want to clarify. I  
5 think -- I'm sorry you were upset about the previous  
6 roundtable question. I think the spirit of it was certainly  
7 to see if employers had been trying to leverage --

8                   MS. ACKERMAN: Oh, no.

9                   COMMISSIONER KARPEL: -- the use of the factories.  
10 I don't think it was meant to say that it doesn't happen  
11 unless it's explicit, so --

12                  MS. ACKERMAN: No. I -- no, I -- nothing to  
13 do -- nothing about that.

14                  Also on that call someone said, oh, we've created  
15 so many jobs, we've got so many jobs now in Florida because  
16 of trade because all these imports are come -- all this  
17 stuff's coming in and we have all these people. And I just  
18 wanted to say, yeah, how many of those people -- how much are  
19 you paying those people? Can those people live on the  
20 job -- on the money you're paying them? Do they have to have  
21 more than one job? Do they have insurance? You know, are  
22 they going to still have that job in eight years? You know,

1       it's --

2                   COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you. Those are  
3       important questions, so I'm hoping we'll get people during  
4       our table today to talk about all that.

5                   MR. MORRISON: This is Robert --

6                   COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Okay.

7                   MR. MORRISON: This is Robert Morrison. Can I jump  
8       in for a minute?

9                   COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Sure.

10                  MR. MORRISON: Okay. My name is Robert Morrison.  
11       I'm a retired machinist now, but I was a machinist for over  
12       31 years here in Burlington, Ohio, an IAM shop, International  
13       Association of Machinists. We were bought by a big foreign  
14       German company. I'm not going to mention their name, but it  
15       rhymes with Siemens, and then they owned us for four years.  
16       They shut us down. They offshored our jobs to the Czech  
17       Republic and Varadotto (phonetic), India, and a non-union  
18       plant in North Carolina. We were owned by Dresser-Rand.  
19       Siemens bought Dresser-Rand out and in the process they've  
20       shut down eight Dresser-Rand facilities, seven of which were  
21       union-represented facilities. And it was just -- it was  
22       terrible. Our plant was always profitable, innovative, and

1 productive. We were one of their lowest cost plants to  
2 operate. In fact, after they closed us down we still had a  
3 handful of people working here in sales and design and stuff.  
4 And the lady that announced our closure came back to  
5 Burlington, Iowa, and said, "We realize now we made a mistake  
6 by closing this factory," but they didn't open it back up.

7           Also here in Burlington, we've recently lost our  
8 former GE plant, which was bought out by ABB. They closed  
9 and they moved to North Carolina. So we've lost probably 500  
10 jobs in the Burlington area since 2019, good-paying jobs.

11           And like I said, I was forced into early retirement  
12 at 64. I broke my leg at work on June 29, 1994, shattered my  
13 right tibia. So I had a 50 percent impairment in my right  
14 leg, 23 percent body as a whole, and I knew when they shut us  
15 down at 64 that nobody would hire me. So, I was forced into  
16 early retirement, tightened my belt up a couple notches, and  
17 I'm keeping a roof over my head, and the lights on, but  
18 there's not much left at the end of the month.

19           This factory closure affected people so badly. One  
20 of my friends, I worked across the aisle from him for ten  
21 years, he committed suicide over it.

22           You know, we think companies don't give a damn

1 about American workers; it's all about their profit, and then  
2 when they realize they realize they cut the goose that laid  
3 the golden egg, you know, they tell us, oh, we realize now we  
4 made a mistake. Well, that doesn't bring the jobs back, it  
5 doesn't bring my deceased friend back.

6 And, so I'm very pissed off at this German company,  
7 and what they did, and especially closing these other union  
8 represented factories around the country. So, thank you for  
9 letting me speak.

10 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Yes, thank for sharing that.  
11 I'm very sorry about the loss of your friend.

12 MR. MORRISON: Yeah, he was a good guy. He made  
13 them a lot of money too, a good machinist.

14 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Sorry. Mr. Boone.

15 MR. BOONE: Thank you. You know, I've worked in  
16 the same location for 50 years for six different companies,  
17 and LTV was -- I worked for Republic Steel, then it was LTV,  
18 and in 2001 we were in the throes of massive imports, you  
19 know, legally dumped foreign steel, you know, steelworkers  
20 had Stand Up For Steel, and LTV filed bankruptcy.

21 They vacated the healthcare for over 30,000  
22 retirees that was processed throughout their whole company.

1 They vacated the pensions as well, which went to the PVGC.

2 And we had opportunities. We took advantage of the  
3 programs TAA, TRA, TIA, we took advantage of all of that, and  
4 to reflect what my brother from southern Ohio said, the union  
5 president of USW Forever report, that age was a factor. You  
6 know, guys who were 65, you know, 58, 60 years old, and they  
7 go through training, and they try to get a different skill,  
8 they're not technologically adept, and they struggled.

9 They went through jobs. And there's 50 people that  
10 would apply for a maintenance job in the city, you know, and  
11 because I was union president involved with the union, so, I  
12 knew a lot of them. And these employers would actually bid  
13 down, and the guy would say, well, we can pay you \$12 an  
14 hour, and he says I'll take it. Somebody else he knows and  
15 goes, right, and applies for the same job, we can pay you  
16 \$11. So, they were pitting each other against the wages to  
17 drive the wages down knowing all these people needed jobs.

18 And, so, you know, the age was a factor. If you  
19 work at a steel mill for 40 years, you break yourself, you  
20 break your body, and, so, even though they don't carry the  
21 definition of disabled, or have a disability, they are  
22 disabled. Their backs are gone, their legs are gone, their

1 hips are shot, hands don't work anymore.

2 So, they go out and try to get a job, and as my  
3 brother -- union brother said, there's -- they're not going  
4 to hire you.

5 And as we go forward, you know, and I know we'll  
6 talk about trade later, but, you know, the steelworkers  
7 always believed in fair trade, not free trade, fair trade.  
8 And we believe if trade was fair, we can compete with  
9 anybody.

10 And when you have countries like China, as they  
11 were ridiculously out of control in subsidizing, dumped all  
12 this steel, we took out 100,000 petitions to Washington, D.C.  
13 to get LTV to take, I think, it was money from the Bird Bill,  
14 I think it was, you know, half a -- \$500 million you'd get  
15 for the Bird Bill.

16 Well, LTV said no thanks, and they vacated it, and  
17 they devastated lives, you know, retirees struggling, their  
18 pensions to the PVGC they only paid a maximum by age,  
19 people's pensions were cut in half, and they struggled, and a  
20 lot of them are still struggling.

21 But, you know, it's been a crazy ride. Again, I've  
22 worked for six companies in the same location, and I now work

1 for Cleveland Cliffs, it's an American company, and they  
2 appear to be very good with the union, which we are grateful  
3 for because when we were Middle (phonetic), and Archer Middle  
4 (phonetic), Archer Middle was ruthless, and they did tell us,  
5 you know, we'll shut you down, we'll move your plant.

6 And it's been a crazy ride, it's been a crazy ride,  
7 and I'm grateful we have a lot of people that survived it,  
8 but we had suicides as well, and a lot of depression. So, it  
9 was rough on all of us, and I can certainly relate to most  
10 the topics we're going to discuss here today. Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Mr. Kaldes.

12 MR. KALDES: Thank you, Commissioner Karpel. My  
13 name is Peter Kaldes. I'm the CEO of the American Society on  
14 Aging, and we are a professional membership society that  
15 represents professionals who are in the field of aging. Many  
16 of them are on this call, as well as are working in local  
17 communities.

18 And I comment the ITC for actually looking at trade  
19 policy through the aging lens, as well as all the other  
20 lenses that you're applying. It's important because, as you  
21 heard, so many folks are dealing with what we refer to, and  
22 folks in the field of aging, is ageism, and age

1 discrimination in the workplace.

2           You know, for the economists on the call, in theory  
3 discrimination is a market inefficiency, right, that it  
4 should actually hurt employers, and in theory older workers'  
5 wages should actually reflect the economic value of the work  
6 that they create.

7           But you heard today already how employers basically  
8 set wages below the value of the work an older worker has  
9 created, and then you combine that with ageist stereotypes  
10 around productivity and skills, and the end result is what  
11 you've heard, which are wages are lower, and are negatively  
12 impacted by these actions.

13           Now, I think it's useful to understand how age  
14 discrimination is tied to wages, but also the labor  
15 participation rates. Older workers are increasingly working  
16 more out of not just blunt, but out of need, as you heard  
17 today, yet job discrimination, especially in hiring and  
18 firing, can have a devastating impact on all older workers.

19           There's a ton of research out there on this  
20 particular point. I know our friends at AARP have some  
21 really thoughtful analysis on this Urbanist too (phonetic),  
22 others have demonstrated something like 56 percent of U.S.

1 workers over the age of 50 reported losing full-time,  
2 long-held positions before they were even ready to retire,  
3 and only one in ten of these workers were experienced, have a  
4 significant drop in earnings, and they can never earn as much  
5 ever again, and we've heard that here today.

6 So, again, I just -- I thank the Commission for  
7 hosting this, and looking at trade policy, specifically which  
8 we'll talk about a little later, through the lens of aging.

9 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you. Mr. Attig.

10 MR. ATTIG: Thank you so much. And I'm now going  
11 to echo Peter with just thanking you again for having this  
12 frame when it comes to something as technical as trade.

13 I try every single day to tell people that the  
14 issues are veteran issues, and, I think, each person on this  
15 call already represented to you it has to do that. I have to  
16 fight that wages are a veterans issue, that trade is a  
17 veterans issue because it affects each one of us so much.

18 And there's just communities that are diverse,  
19 communities make up folks from both a wide range of ages, but  
20 we're also one of the most diverse groups. We have a high  
21 rate of disability, but we also have large numbers of  
22 minorities, and an ever-growing population, much more looking

1       like America than it did a long time.

2                   And when you think about how some of these policies  
3       affect us, especially when it comes to the age aspect of it,  
4       we saw after World War II an economy and policies that worked  
5       for the American worker. We saw veterans coming back from  
6       war to being able to create jobs, work in factories, create  
7       that American dream we all talked about.

8                   There's a different story for the Vietnam veterans  
9       when they came home from Vietnam where when Vietnam veterans  
10      came home many of them did find jobs, they did find work, and  
11      throughout that process they were succeeding, but then in the  
12      mid 80's, mid to the late 80's, the mid 90's, we saw a  
13      massive drop-off in employment.

14                   We also saw a dramatic increase in suicide in  
15      working age ages of veterans, and this goes right back to the  
16      stories that we've heard already about this thing.

17                   I'm sorry to bring this up, this is a critical part  
18      of our veterans community, is veterans suicide. We saw that  
19      increase in the younger veterans community, or in the working  
20      class, 40 -- 35 to 50-year olds between the 80's and the  
21      90's.

22                   Why was that? Well, we saw a massive loss of jobs

1 in our veterans community, so people who worked for the steel  
2 mills, coal-fired-powered coal mines, manufacturing jobs, we  
3 saw a massive drop-off.

4 When my generation of veterans came home, for the  
5 largest group of us we came home between 2005-2012, the  
6 largest group of folks who fought during Iraq and  
7 Afghanistan, and then we saw a massive shift. We saw younger  
8 people facing the highest rates of veteran suicide. We saw  
9 the youngest veterans facing the highest rates of  
10 unemployment and under-employment.

11 And when you look at what the common denominator is  
12 between all of this it's trade policy. When we started to  
13 create policies that worked against working class people, it  
14 put veterans, disabled people, and people without a -- just a  
15 high school education in the cross-hairs.

16 Our veterans community has a higher level of  
17 under-education when it comes to lack of college. We see  
18 that today where our veterans -- the wages when it comes to,  
19 you know, non-union veterans that have a high school  
20 education that worked in these plants.

21 I was part of an event a few years ago in Chicago  
22 where a company that makes Oreo cookies laid off a large

1 number of workers, and it was unexpected, just like Jeff  
2 talked about. They didn't warn anybody, they went to a  
3 contract negotiation, the equipment to go to Chicago to build  
4 a new plant was on the way, and they diverted to Mexico.

5 Thirty percent of those workers were minority  
6 veterans from inner city Chicago. They were working a job  
7 that allowed them to take care of their families, and because  
8 of the trade policies that allowed that company to move those  
9 jobs to Mexico where the price of Oreo cookies has not gone  
10 up, I can guarantee you that, and not gone down that's for  
11 sure. It's gone up over time, but it's not gone down since  
12 this move happened. But they went from paying their workers  
13 \$30 an hour with some benefits that gave these folks a chance  
14 at just living a good life to giving workers in South  
15 American and Mexico, I think, it was less than \$4 an hour to  
16 do the same job.

17 There is no way we can compete. And the people who  
18 bear the brunt of it are the American workers, the disabled  
19 workers, and the workers that need those jobs to let them  
20 survive.

21 Again, I'm sorry, I'm going to shut up, but I've  
22 talked too much, but it really means a lot to us, and we've

1 got to figure out a way to give these opportunities back to  
2 this young generation of Americans, this young generation of  
3 Americans whether it's the millennials, or below. We do not  
4 have the opportunities to succeed in this economy right now,  
5 and trade policy is going to shape that for the years to  
6 come.

7 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Let me just ask a follow-up,  
8 Mr. Attig. In terms of the sort of challenges that veterans  
9 face, you mentioned some of the younger veterans facing  
10 challenges because of maybe lack of a college education  
11 because they were serving during the time when maybe their  
12 counterparts would have been doing that.

13 I think you also mentioned disabilities as well.  
14 Are there other aspects that you think are challenging their  
15 ability to sort of participate in the work force in an equal  
16 sort of fashion as other workers?

17 MR. ATTIG: I think generally, and I'm going to  
18 make sure I take a step back and say that on general when you  
19 look at overall numbers, veterans do better in the economy  
20 than non-veteran counterparts. Over such a small population  
21 the ones that do bad do very bad. There's only ten percent  
22 of all veterans that earn over \$100,000 a year when you think

1 about that overall.

2 The lack of job creation in areas that our veterans  
3 live and go home to is critical to this aspect. When you  
4 think about veterans that live in communities like where I  
5 came home to southern Illinois, I thought the worst fight I  
6 was ever going to fight were the streets of Ramadi (phonetic)  
7 during the surge.

8 And that sounds like a talking point, but I really  
9 mean this, is that when I came home after the Great Recession  
10 into a community that's already been devastated by years of  
11 jobs being -- you know, manufacturing jobs, mining jobs, in a  
12 small community in southern Illinois, you know, I came home  
13 to a recession where I really faced a struggle. I faced a  
14 struggle not having an education. I faced a struggle of a  
15 job market being saturated.

16 Just, again, we were talking about the disabled  
17 folks, the job market was saturated with folks with high  
18 degrees, and my little, you know, veterans DV-214 couldn't  
19 tell me, tell folks how to get a job.

20 That increased unemployment to 19 percent in my age  
21 group at that time during the recession when veterans were  
22 coming home, and it was mainly in areas that had seen massive

1 job loss during the recession, and then also during  
2 the -- you know, the manufacturing draw down beforehand.  
3 It's across the board across the country.

4 And then the other big aspect is retirement  
5 insecurity in our veterans community because it's Vietnam  
6 veterans right now that are retiring that have had to work  
7 multiple different jobs, and constantly lose the value of the  
8 dollar, the value of that hour of labor it gave throughout  
9 the last 50 years that led them to a point where now they're  
10 finding themselves trying to retire, you know, and really  
11 finding themselves without -- again, in desperation. But, I  
12 think, there's a lot of people who are in the retirement  
13 community that can talk about that better than me.

14 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much. I  
15 appreciate that. Ms. Swenor.

16 MS. SWENOR: Yes. I am Bonnielin Swenor. I am  
17 Director of the Johns Hopkins Disability Health Research  
18 Center. I'm just very happy to be here.

19 I am a person with a disability, and my work  
20 focuses on addressing inequities for people with  
21 disabilities. I am not an expert in trade policy. I am an  
22 expert in data, and doing research centered on communities

1 that are most impacted.

2 I, along those lines, am grateful, and learning a  
3 lot from this conversation, and just, again, really grateful  
4 for this discussion.

5 I'll also share that my background and training is  
6 also in aging research, so I span a few sides of this  
7 conversation.

8 I'll echo what was just said, quite honestly, for  
9 the disability community we are a diverse population. We are  
10 the largest minority group in the United States, 67 million  
11 adults have a disability, and as a data scientist, I know  
12 that's an under-estimate. That's about one in four American  
13 adults, and that spans older adults, younger adults,  
14 veterans, people in and out of the work force. But we are  
15 differentially impacted by trade policy.

16 What I'm hearing in this conversation really is  
17 circling on issues of power, choice, and opportunity, and, I  
18 think, that's really said in all this -- to this conversation  
19 of people with disabilities in the work force.

20 The unemployment rate for people with disabilities  
21 is more than twice that for people without a disability, and  
22 part of the reason -- well, there's many reasons, but part of

1 the reason is because we don't know what to do about it,  
2 quite frankly, and that's been echoed in some of these  
3 conversations in prior statements.

4 We don't have a good play book of best practices.  
5 We don't have data to address how to change this issue  
6 qualitative and quantitative, and we are living in a society  
7 that is increasingly data-driven to create policy, and to  
8 change practices. We just don't have that kind of data for  
9 the disability community to find solutions. That's one area.

10 The other is an issue that was discussed, which is  
11 accommodations. The conversation before was really about  
12 individuals with severe disabilities, but it's important to  
13 understand that disability is a spectrum, it includes a wide  
14 group of people, and, actually, includes people that may not  
15 themselves identify as having a disability are protected by  
16 despite disability rights laws, including in employment  
17 situations.

18 Many employers don't understand those laws, many  
19 employees don't understand those laws, and that puts people  
20 at a power imbalance, quite frankly, and can lead to some of  
21 the challenges that others have discussed in the work force  
22 of being inequitably impacted by hiring decisions, and

1 changes in the employment market.

2 The other issues, honestly, are around stigma and  
3 stereotype for people with disabilities. Although we do have  
4 laws to protect against that, it absolutely happens, it  
5 happens all day. And when we're thinking about -- I think as  
6 Deb was discussing, you know, some of these situations around  
7 layoffs, and decisions employers are making, I have far too  
8 many friends, and colleagues, and community members who have  
9 been on the chopping block of employment because, honestly,  
10 of stigma and stereotype, just like in ageism. It's an  
11 important issue to address, and think about.

12 And then there's also critical issues around  
13 policies that are in place, limitations of work related to  
14 SSI, people with disabilities can only work so much up to a  
15 certain, you know, income level, or asset level, that limits  
16 their opportunities.

17 It's certainly not enough for many people to earn a  
18 living, and those types of policies impact opportunity,  
19 impact their viability in the labor force, and when there's  
20 shifts in decisions, and shifts in trade policies, it, again,  
21 takes away opportunity, and shifts the power balance for  
22 individuals from the disability community.

1                   COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much. I  
2 wonder if I might ask you one follow-up question. In terms  
3 of the lack of data, I know there's some data on  
4 participation of individuals with disability in the work  
5 force, but I understand there may be deficiencies in that.  
6 Do you have view on what kind of data is needed?

7                   MS. SWENOR: Absolutely. Yeah, so you're right, we  
8 have data on if you have a job, or not, right, but I don't  
9 think that's enough to close the gap; it hasn't been.  
10 There's been a gap for decades, and what we need to better  
11 understand is career trajectories, better understanding of  
12 accommodations, who is getting them, who is not, why not, at  
13 an aggregate level.

14                   We also need to better understand that data through  
15 an intersectional lens, so an individual -- a black  
16 individual with a disability is going to have a different  
17 experience in the labor force than a white individual, for  
18 example. That's critical.

19                   And, I think, yeah, we just need a deeper depth of  
20 data to really understand, as I was indicating, best  
21 practices. I think it's going to determine on the setting  
22 and the situation, so it's sort of hard for me to speak in

1 real specifics, I guess I would say, although I appreciate  
2 the question.

3 But, I think, what I would say is to point to  
4 collecting better data to get to the place to really finally  
5 close that gap, and we just haven't gotten there. We haven't  
6 gotten past just do you have a job or not.

7 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Okay. Thank you. I'm going  
8 to go ahead and move just to reading my next question, but by  
9 all means, please continue answering either the first  
10 question I -- the first or second question I presented, or to  
11 the third. I just am conscious of our time, so I want to  
12 make sure I put these all on the table, and we can continue  
13 discussing any, or all, of the questions.

14 So, that next question is looking at that trade  
15 piece, so how has trade impacted workers who are aging,  
16 disabled, or that do not have a college or high school  
17 degree, and how is that impact different based on their age,  
18 education level, or whether they have a disability, or an  
19 accessibility requirement.

20 So, everyone who wants to answer that question, or  
21 the previous ones, are welcome to participate. And, I think,  
22 although for a bit longer, and then we'll look to have maybe

1 a five-minute break, so let's have a little more discussion,  
2 and maybe we'll break in a few more minutes.

3 So, who was next on my list? Ms. Shaewitz.

4 MS. SHAEWITZ: Sure. And I'm going to  
5 repeat -- try not to repeat what Bonnielin has said. I am  
6 coming to this, again, not with a knowledge of trade policy,  
7 but from a disability policy background, so I'm going to work  
8 around a few issues.

9 First, you asked about what kind of data we need.  
10 We need data to understand, or research to understand which  
11 policies are working, and which aren't working. I agree 100  
12 percent that since 1973, and the establishment of the  
13 Rehabilitation Act, we've been so focused on just getting  
14 people with disabilities a job. It's not enough just to have  
15 a job, we need to be thinking long-term about career.

16 I agree that stigma, assumptions about what a  
17 person with a disability can or can't do, and a lack of  
18 knowledge about free and existing resources and supports that  
19 exist at the federal, at the state, at the community level,  
20 prevent employers from hiring people with disabilities.  
21 There's also a need to keep employees who become disabled  
22 on-the-job, what policies are in place to keep them

1 on-the-job, what's successful. There are some activities  
2 going on out there, I'd be happy to share what I know, but  
3 there's not enough.

4 And I know we're talking a lot about different  
5 kinds of industries, but there has been research recently  
6 that people with disabilities in white collar positions this  
7 study showed that 30 percent of the employees had a  
8 disability, but only three percent were open about their  
9 disability, they were afraid of being harassed, they were  
10 afraid that they would not be promoted, that they would be  
11 viewed poorly by their supervisors and co-workers, and for  
12 the most part it's true, they will be harassed, they will not  
13 be promoted, and they won't be given the same opportunities.

14 And I have many family members with disabilities,  
15 and I could give you a number of anecdotes, but I don't want  
16 to take up a lot of time about folks who in my family -- from  
17 my parents to my cousins who have experienced exactly those  
18 things.

19 So, the last thing I want to say is during the  
20 Great Recession we saw people with disabilities were the  
21 first to lose their jobs, they were the last to be rehired.  
22 Now, with long COVID, we're going to see more people than

1 ever enter the disability population, and there are long-term  
2 impacts of that.

3 So, getting around to what would help around trade,  
4 I think that there need to be training opportunities, job  
5 placement opportunities, but over 90 percent of businesses in  
6 the U.S. are small businesses. The vast majority of them,  
7 over 80 percent, have five employees, or less, so you're  
8 really talking about a small business employer issue when  
9 you're talking about hiring and retaining people with  
10 disabilities. It's a big industry trade issue, and it's a  
11 small business issue as well.

12 So, thank you for allowing me to speak. I  
13 appreciate it.

14 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Ms. LeaMond, I know you had  
15 your hand up, but you put it down, but if you still want to  
16 speak, I understand you have to leave early. So I'd welcome  
17 either a comment on any material relevant to today's  
18 roundtable if you like to do so before you have to leave.

19 Okay. Well, then let's go to the next hand raised,  
20 which is Mr. Enayati.

21 MR. ENAYATI: Yes, hi.

22 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Did I pronounce that wrong?

1 I think I may have --

2 MR. ENAYATI: No, no, that was great, that was  
3 great.

4 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Okay.

5 MR. ENAYATI: Yeah. So, I appreciate being invited  
6 to be a person in this roundtable. A little bit about me,  
7 and why I'm here. I am a labor economist at Cornell  
8 University, where I hold the role of research faculty. My  
9 areas are in disability and compensation.

10 And, so, I'm going to try to do this very quickly  
11 some points, and then tie them directly to, I think, the role  
12 that policy regarding trade could have. And, again, I am not  
13 a trade economist, I'm a labor economist.

14 So, first of all, I just wanted to, again, echo,  
15 and others have said this, disability is an overlapping  
16 group. There are individuals that are veterans with  
17 disabilities. There is a well-known relationship between  
18 aging and disability where people age into a disability, and,  
19 so, I think, just being aware that policies that affect one  
20 group will affect parts of other groups, and just are all  
21 pretty well connected in this world.

22 One thing that I think is an area for potential

1 influence would be employer policies and practices. So,  
2 accommodations have been brought up a couple times today, and  
3 I could not agree more that they range from fairly  
4 substantial, to be honest, to fairly insignificant. And if  
5 you actually look at Bureau of Labor Statistics collected  
6 data, 95 percent of requested accommodations go to  
7 individuals without a disability, 95 percent. So, that  
8 should put things into some perspective. And, I think,  
9 primarily a lot of times employers in their thinking at the  
10 strategic level they're not aware that it's that prevalent  
11 where the population of individuals without a disability.

12 And a couple of points here. So, as the U.S. work  
13 force transitions from where there are a large share of  
14 workers working remote to now hybrid are going back into the  
15 office, I think this is a prime opportunity to engage again  
16 with U.S. employers about the policies that they have in the  
17 workplace that actually promote accommodations in the  
18 workplace. I would like to state that I've got some  
19 colleagues that are working with the Department of Labor's  
20 Office of Disability Employment policy through a program  
21 called the Employer Assistance and Resource Network, EARN.  
22 This is something that they deal with all the time.

1           And so that, I think, might be a good resource and  
2           connecting point. Two more quick points. I also have some  
3           work on aging, and one thing that we can see has affected  
4           American workers is the change in compensation structure over  
5           time.

6           So, older workers who have been at one company for  
7           a prolonged period of time are more likely to have a  
8           compensation structure that was geared toward the company  
9           person, right?

10          So, we think that you're going to be here for 35  
11          years. The way that you design that compensation structure  
12          is that you pay them less than they produce when they first  
13          start off, and you pay them more than they produce at the  
14          end. This is the theoretical framework, right?

15          What happens is -- when we absolutely see this in  
16          the realized data, so, not just theory -- when recession hits  
17          and there's large amounts of unemployment, older workers that  
18          worked at an employer for a prolonged period of time faced  
19          the steepest weight loss in wages.

20          So, I'm talking, like, 15 to 18 percent lost in  
21          their wages. Something that policymakers can be aware of is  
22          that a highly at-risk population are older workers when we

1 move towards a recession. Last point connects to something  
2 that Delila said, is the Department of Ed. pushed some new  
3 initiatives focusing on shifting the mindset of state  
4 locational rehabilitation centers from getting people into a  
5 job and instead placing them into a career.

6 So, getting them into community colleges where they  
7 can get a credential or a certificate to then help them  
8 establish a higher-paying job. And so, I think these are  
9 crossover initiatives that certainly do tie into trade  
10 policy. Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much. Well,  
12 we've sort of hit the hour mark here and a little beyond, so  
13 I'm going to pause right now. Next after we take a break,  
14 Ms. Hill, Mr. Boone, and Mr. Ericson, I see you have your  
15 hands up. So, we will start with you, but let's first take  
16 just a five-minute break and then we can resume our  
17 conversation. And I think Bill will put up a time clock for  
18 all of us so we can keep track of those five minutes.

19 MR. BISHOP: Yes, we sure will.

20 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

21 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Welcome back, everyone. So,  
22 we can just resume where we left-off, and just again remind

1 participants here, you're welcome to answer any and all of  
2 the questions we've put out so far today. We don't need to  
3 necessarily do everything in order, and I know they're hard  
4 to keep separate when we ask this question, in terms of what  
5 are the challenges workers are facing getting a job or having  
6 a good-paying job and asking the question about how trade  
7 impacts different workers differently.

8 So, with that, I think first up after the break is  
9 Ms. Hill.

10 MS. HILL: Thank you. I just wanted to point out a  
11 couple of things that would be really helpful for workers  
12 with disabilities. One of them would be extension of paid  
13 leave because some of these folks have appointments they need  
14 to go to. They may or may not have it. They may or may not  
15 have the ability to get off.

16 And the fact that we need paid leave, not unpaid  
17 FMLA -- we need paid leave because a lot of these folks are  
18 facing challenges and having to take off work to go to the  
19 doctor means that they're losing money and they need that  
20 help.

21 The other thing -- and you can get that, you  
22 know -- you can see that. Sometimes they run out of their

1 short-term disability and extension of paid leave before the  
2 short-term disability that we've negotiated. Some folks have  
3 long-term disability, some don't, but they also need to make  
4 sure that, you know, that they've got that for their jobs.

5 And also, the lack of education for folks, you  
6 know, a lot of folks might have -- do not have college  
7 degrees, and they have problems finding jobs. And I know of  
8 some folks that, because of trade, were bounced between  
9 several different jobs in the past, like, 10 years -- three  
10 or four different jobs, and each time, of course, much like  
11 Dan said, you lose money.

12 And if you've got kids in college, you may not be  
13 able to afford for them to go to college anymore because it  
14 goes onto the next generation. Because you had a good paying  
15 job, you no longer have that job, and there's just, a lot of  
16 times, a lack of community supports because these communities  
17 are devastated whenever, like, facilities shut down due to  
18 trade.

19 They lose tax dollars through income taxes. They  
20 lose the tax dollars to the school system, so the school  
21 system degrades, and then unemployment is inadequate because  
22 right now we're seeing places where unemployment is only \$265

1 a week. We're seeing places where, you know, it only lasts  
2 for 12 weeks.

3 So, a lot of these things, if you have the trade  
4 adjustment assistance, it's really helpful, but even so, if  
5 they have to cover -- I believe you have to do some coverage  
6 of your healthcare there, if I recall correctly, up front,  
7 and there are sometimes -- I know like the State of Virginia  
8 had some coverage at a state program that really helped  
9 people with that because they covered immediately for their  
10 health care.

11 And there's also just things like making sure that  
12 people have mental health programs and adequate mental health  
13 care because of the loss of jobs, because these communities  
14 often don't have good paying jobs anymore, and there's  
15 despair there.

16 And all you have to do is look in, you know, what  
17 happened in some areas of West Virginia with drug abuse and  
18 alcohol abuse, and you know that happens after people lose  
19 their jobs, and then they don't feel that there's opportunity  
20 there for them to get the same kind of a job.

21 And they see their families lose, you know, the  
22 opportunity to go to college. They lose their retirement

1 security. The one gentleman I saw that bounced between a  
2 number of different jobs, there were pensions there, but he  
3 didn't have an opportunity to vest because those jobs, he  
4 didn't work there long enough to vest for his retirement  
5 security.

6 And also, I'd like to give you a shout-out to JAN,  
7 Job Accommodation Network, in terms of disability. They are  
8 absolutely fabulous, and not enough people know about them,  
9 and not enough employers know about them. And I think that's  
10 about it, just to make sure that we invest in communities.

11 I mean, whenever you see plants shut down, then  
12 there needs to be additional investment from the Government  
13 into these communities to make up for what happened with the  
14 plant shutdown so that they can thrive, as well. So, just a  
15 thought there. Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you, Ms. Hill. Mr.  
17 Boone?

18 MR. BOONE: I've been very fortunate to be a part  
19 of the United Steelworkers Union for over 50 years, and  
20 they've always been at the forefront of trade, and over the  
21 last 15 years, I spent nine years as Vice President of our  
22 local Union and six years as president of our local union, so

1 I've had the opportunity to be involved in a lot of the  
2 actions against trade, and more recently, the 232 trade case  
3 that did help steel workers.

4 But, you know, through two bankruptcies, two  
5 indefinite idles and a permanent shutdown -- and that's just  
6 our plant in Cleveland -- but throughout the steel industry,  
7 tens of thousands of jobs have been lost. You know, some to  
8 technology, of course, but mainly because of imports.

9 And you'll see in the paper, you know, back when it  
10 happened to us, the major closure, bankruptcy, divestment of  
11 the pensions and the healthcare, you see. You know, 3,800  
12 people lost their jobs, and it's like, oh, but what's left  
13 out of that equation is, in the steel industry anyway, there  
14 are three to five peripheral jobs that are also impacted.

15 The different contractors, the suppliers that keep  
16 us going with raw materials, refractories, and everything  
17 else. So, there's three-to-five jobs, and they're impacted,  
18 too. And so, that spreads out, and in the communities around  
19 the plant, you know, the local diners close, you know, the  
20 bars closed.

21 A lot of the services that were there for people  
22 become understaffed. And, you know, we talk about the people

1 with disabilities and, you know, the FMLA for people that  
2 have disabilities that don't impact their ability to work in  
3 the steel mill -- you know, they benefit by the advantage of  
4 FMLA.

5 But, you know, you have to have a certain number of  
6 employees to even be eligible to participate in FMLA and, you  
7 know, it's just devastating. I have friends that are  
8 veterans that, you know, a little bit older than I am but,  
9 you know, they lost their jobs in the mill, and fortunately,  
10 you know, they had the veteran healthcare, but they go out  
11 and try to get a job, you know, one, they're older, and two,  
12 they have a certain condition that prevents them from taking  
13 these jobs, so then their wages go -- we make a decent living  
14 in the steel mill, and we've had to fight for everything.

15 But the actions we've taken over trade, you know, I  
16 think we've had tariffs twice, and I think it was during the  
17 Bush Administration we might have had some tariff relief.  
18 Again, the 232 helped, but, you know, they call us  
19 "protectionists", but we're not protectionists. All we want  
20 is an opportunity to participate fairly again.

21 You know, the steelworkers, we're not against  
22 trade; we're for fair trade, but free trade is different, and

1 it just impacts all of the communities around us. Even now,  
2 you know, it was mentioned earlier with -- I forget the  
3 company they mentioned, but, you know, now it's made in  
4 China -- probably made in China.

5 And that's the mentality, I think, of big  
6 businesses. I have a friend who has an MBA from Harvard, and  
7 he said that one of the things they tell you there is people  
8 don't matter. Profit and the shareholders matter. So, that  
9 has always been something that we fight against.

10 There is discrimination against the disabled, and  
11 even though it's better, it's still there. And when they do  
12 this, it becomes not about the lives that are impacted, it's  
13 about money. And to see all these people lose their jobs and  
14 then fight for a job that even has half of the wages, maybe  
15 less, no healthcare.

16 My son's healthcare plan is catastrophic. The  
17 first \$10,000 come out of his pocket. And, you know, the  
18 healthcare industry is, a lot of times, money-driven. And,  
19 you know, all the policies that we make are helpful and I'm  
20 proud of what the Government's always trying to do, help the  
21 disabled, and they need it.

22 But, you know, when you have everything coming in

1 from the other -- like now, we're worried about China because  
2 we get so much from them, if they become adversarial to the  
3 United States, we're going to be in trouble. So, you know,  
4 the imports are necessary.

5 There was a time when the steel industry couldn't  
6 provide enough steel for the American demand and imports were  
7 okay -- you know, to make what the American companies  
8 shouldn't do, and I'm a big proponent of Made in America.

9 And it's not just steel. It's everything that's  
10 imported. We could have so many jobs right now that are  
11 hiring. You know, you can find a job, but look at the wages  
12 that you get when you find these jobs. Everybody's hiring  
13 right now, like where I live, and they can't find people to  
14 work because, you know, we talked about unemployment later,  
15 and if you get, like, \$325 a week, then you go get a job,  
16 after you hit that amount, they start taking money away.

17 So, you're locked in, and whether you're disabled  
18 or not, the system works against you, and I'm really grateful  
19 that, you know, the ITC is looking into that, and I'm hopeful  
20 that we continue this path, you know, the way society is now,  
21 we're looking to include all aspects of society, you know,  
22 whatever you are, whether it's gender, disabilities, or

1       whatever, all these people have to be included.

2               And the policies that we're making against trade  
3 will create more jobs that people should be able to do that  
4 they otherwise couldn't. So, I am a big proponent of fair  
5 trade, and I appreciate what we're doing here. Thank you.

6               COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much. So,  
7 next up, I think we have -- Mr. Ericson, did you have your  
8 hand up, or did you put it down? All right. In the  
9 meantime, I think next up is Mr. Attig.

10              MR. ATTIG: Thank you. Commissioner, I think that  
11 you'll hear a much different story if you had CEOs and  
12 corporate economists on this call today, and I'm just really  
13 glad you have workers talking about it. The fact is, we have  
14 two economies in this country. We have an economy that works  
15 for CEOs, Wall Street, multi-national companies, companies  
16 that are working to cut every penny to give us products, but  
17 at the same time, you know, not pay their workers at a fair  
18 wage, et cetera, to take advantage of that.

19              Since NAFTA -- I mean, we can go back farther than  
20 that -- but when you think about the losses in American  
21 communities that millions and millions of manufacturing jobs  
22 and factory jobs that have been lost, we see who that

1 targets. We see who that devastates. It's communities; it's  
2 people.

3 We need trade policies that set the tone. Those  
4 CEOs would tell you that trade is one of the major parts of  
5 the economy. Well, if that's so, trade policy needs to work  
6 for the most important part of the American economy, and  
7 that's the workers -- end-stop, in my opinion.

8 Workers need to be able to show their value or be  
9 shown their value, and our policies don't do that. From  
10 trade policy, that turns into labor policy, and we all know  
11 where labor policy is right now. It's rigged against regular  
12 people -- not if you're just a union member or not.

13 Union policy drives up wages for everybody. So,  
14 you know, the idea that policy impacts labor which then  
15 impacts things like wages. Today, it's almost embarrassing  
16 to say that there are companies that are moving to the South,  
17 places that doesn't have high wages, high labor, and setting  
18 up shop so they can pay the workers who manufacture the goods  
19 that we buy, at a lower wage. Something's wrong there.

20 So, to me, there's going to be a lot more smarter  
21 people giving comments and things about the exact things that  
22 we could change in the policies, but the reality of it, we

1 need a trade policy that works for the American workers.

2 Things like the TAA that got mentioned earlier on,  
3 right? TAA is something that needs to be reinstated. It  
4 needs to be reauthorized. It needs to be expanded. I mean,  
5 we don't only have trade policies that's affecting workers.  
6 We have a change in technology and a change in the workforce.  
7 The future of work is much different than it is -- than it  
8 was before.

9 And between 2010 and 2014, 23,000 veterans used  
10 TAA. So, it's something that is being used, and it can be  
11 used to benefit folks as we shift these jobs. But I just  
12 want to make sure that, you know, the reality of it is that I  
13 think a lot of people on this call would challenge the  
14 fact -- whether you're from the disability community, the  
15 aging community, or labor community, the workers -- is that  
16 these companies, these policies, are rigged against the  
17 people, and especially in the communities that need them  
18 most.

19 So, what the trade commission can do is look at  
20 data, right. Look at the communities where these losses have  
21 happened. Look at the communities where jobs haven't been  
22 replaced since 2010 when we lost all the factory jobs, to

1 2001 when China became part of the WTO, right? Look at the  
2 communities that lost their jobs. Look at the communities  
3 today, and you're going to see the numbers that show what  
4 we're all talking about anecdotally.

5 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much. We're  
6 going to go to Mr. Noll, and then I'll move to the next  
7 question, which is asking about programs and policies that  
8 can help. So, I know we've already touched on that with many  
9 of your responses. So, go ahead, Mr. Noll.

10 MR. NOLL: The way that I look at it, I mean,  
11 there's like an interconnectivity to all of this. You start  
12 with bad trade policy or whatever. You know, go back to  
13 NAFTA and what happened with NAFTA, and it was terrible, and  
14 it was detrimental to working people in this country.

15 We lost so much. Well then, you turn around, you  
16 look at the community that that happened in and, you know,  
17 as, I believe, Janet said, that, you know, you decimate the  
18 tax base because you don't have people working. You, you  
19 know, have social programs that are very much -- they're  
20 actually more needed now because you have less people working  
21 and you have less tax money going in to help those social  
22 programs to help people.

1           And it's like dominoes, and you just watch them  
2 fall one after another, and it's like we're participating in  
3 a race to the bottom. And it all starts with trade policy.  
4 We need to make sure, as Dan said, you know, we basically  
5 need a fair shot. You give us a fair shot, we'll compete  
6 with everyone.

7           But we can't compete against somebody paying  
8 somebody three dollars an hour because nobody up here can  
9 live on that. It's just not possible. Then, you create a  
10 situation where you've saturated the workforce with  
11 unemployed people, and then you have people with disabilities  
12 and, you know, older people, that they're being discriminated  
13 against, but the discrimination gets far worse when the  
14 employment pool is so large and you have people clamoring for  
15 jobs.

16           I mean, the discrimination is super easy at that  
17 point for employers to just ignore, well, that guy, you know,  
18 has a disability or this woman can't do this, so we won't  
19 even try to accommodate and we'll just, you know -- there's  
20 so many people we can choose from. And that kind of race to  
21 the bottom mentality, it hurts every one of us, and that's  
22 all I had to say.

1                   COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you for sharing that.  
2 All right. Well, I'll move to another question, but I did  
3 want to mention too that -- encourage everyone to  
4 participate, even if you feel another participant has said  
5 exactly what you're going to say. The point is to gather as  
6 many voices as we can.

7                   So, don't feel shy about repeating something that  
8 maybe you've heard another participant say because it's  
9 valuable to know that maybe you share that view as well. So,  
10 we've already touched on this to some degree. So, I'll just  
11 read it off for completeness.

12                   What policies or programs have been successful in  
13 helping workers to deal with adverse impacts from trade or to  
14 take advantage of trade-related opportunities. Are there  
15 ways that policies or programs need to be changed to better  
16 address the needs of workers who are aging or who are  
17 disabled or do not have a college or high school degree? Are  
18 there areas in which more or better resources are needed?  
19 Ms. Hill, I'll start with you. You had your hand up first.

20                   MS. HILL: Yes, I'd like to point out a little bit  
21 more focus on apprenticeship programs and retraining people  
22 would be good. Because right now, we see a shortage of

1 people in the trades, and I realize it takes a long time to  
2 train someone, but there's a lot of people that I think that  
3 could have been trained if, you know, whenever you have a  
4 plant shutdown, or give it help to move to another community.  
5 That would also be helpful, some sort of moving allowance,  
6 something like that, so that they can reestablish themselves  
7 someplace else.

8           And I did want to throw in there, you know,  
9 just -- can we have less corporate power on the part of CEOs?  
10 Because, you know, many of them don't invest in their  
11 communities, they don't see any kind of, you know -- as Mike  
12 said, all they want it corporate profit.

13           And they already have record profits, but it's  
14 never enough. And I would like to see, like -- I just want  
15 to say, like, we had a facility that was Milo  
16 (phonetic) -- they produced generic drugs. They were one of  
17 the few generic drug producers in the country.

18           There are questions about the safety of imported  
19 drugs -- generic drugs and the dosage. Roughly 80 percent  
20 are being imported. To me, it seems like there would have  
21 been a public policy, you know, a public policy point there  
22 that we should have more drugs made here.

1           And also what happened was when they were  
2           purchased, Milo was purchased, they then gave the facility  
3           over to West Virginia University so nobody could buy it and  
4           produce more drugs there in the U.S.. So, I just have a  
5           question on that. Thank you very much.

6           COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you for sharing. Next  
7           up, let's see here, Ms. Shaewitz?

8           MS. SHAEWITZ: Yes, thank you. I wanted to share a  
9           few things around policies to consider and maybe places to  
10          look at for possible policies. It was mentioned that the  
11          U.S. Department of Labor has an Office of Disability  
12          Employment Policy.

13          That's your partner; that's your friend right in  
14          the U.S. Government. They are currently leading a study of  
15          states on policies that support stay-at-work and  
16          return-to-work for people who acquired disability on the job.

17          I think what they're learning can be translatable  
18          to trade industries. Just last fall, nine state vocational  
19          rehabilitation agencies were awarded grants to demonstrate  
20          practices that lead to advanced careers for people with  
21          disabilities, that includes a focus on STEM careers,  
22          registered apprenticeships -- I'm so glad that was

1 mentioned -- and industry trades.

2           So, I think there are some shifts happening at the  
3 State level maybe we can learn from. That vocational rehab,  
4 or VR system, is there for people with disabilities, but a  
5 lot of people aren't aware that it's there, including  
6 employers, and there are other Federal and State and local  
7 job training and retraining programs that exist that aren't  
8 designed to be inclusive.

9           So, we've got to really design programs and  
10 policies that think about inclusion from the beginning. I  
11 had mentioned small business owners before. The SBA, Small  
12 Business Administration, works with small businessowners, but  
13 we need to provide support specific to disabled  
14 businessowners.

15           That includes loans to help a group that has  
16 traditionally been more impoverished, and specifically,  
17 Black, Latinx, and Native American people with disabilities  
18 who are severely under-resourced. They don't have the same  
19 net worth or savings as white people and Asian people with  
20 disabilities, who still earn and save less than people  
21 without disabilities.

22           A couple other notes, there are Federal Contractor

1 Requirements that target awards to service disabled veterans  
2 but not just a category for people with disabilities -- or  
3 businesses, rather, with disabilities, disability-led, and  
4 the Federal Government is a model employer. So, there might  
5 be some things there that we can learn from that can be  
6 shared across business and industry.

7 Fair Trade policies, like this event is trying to  
8 lead to, need that disability lens. I'm so glad that you've  
9 included people from the disability community here. People  
10 with disabilities should be in those conversations about  
11 designing policy, including measuring implementation so that  
12 you can make sure that inclusion really is built into the  
13 design of policies, and I would say the same for all of the  
14 people on this call who are talking from the worker  
15 perspective.

16 Workers need to be informing the policies that are  
17 decided, not just businessowners, not just Federal  
18 policymakers. And finally, I think we're all kind of dancing  
19 around this.

20 We live in a capitalist society. It values profits  
21 over people, but it makes really good business sense to put  
22 your employees first because then you're going to have great

1 products, you're going to have great customer service, you're  
2 going to have positive outcomes for everyone.

3 So, maybe one person makes a few million dollars  
4 less one year and the rest of us make \$10,000 more a year.  
5 But that really means treating employees well, valuing the  
6 qualities they bring, and it's not always about the most  
7 widgets that a person can produce.

8 People can be valued for a tangible and intangible  
9 assets that they bring, and I will close there. Thank you  
10 again for allowing me to speak.

11 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much. All  
12 right. Mr. Kaldes?

13 MR. KALDES: So, on trade policy, I think, when you  
14 look at TAA and you look at the median age of the TAA  
15 beneficiary, it's 51-years-old. And so, there is, you know,  
16 a real need to broaden the lens of how trade policy impacts  
17 workers through an aging lens.

18 And so, we would suggest that the American seniors  
19 (phonetic) -- TAA needs to be expanded to account for the  
20 sheer numbers of older adults that are impacted by trade  
21 displacement.

22 But then, in addition, when you look at the other

1 senior-related and age-related job retraining programs across  
2 the Government, they often are uncoordinated or underfunded,  
3 and ignore other aspects to how these programs are deployed  
4 locally.

5           So, for example, their local dollars will often  
6 fall to stereotypes about workers and older workers, which I  
7 talked about old earlier because there's these systemic  
8 issues around ageism and discrimination. Separate from TAA  
9 and job retraining efforts, I think there's an opportunity to  
10 review just broader trade policy mechanisms and how certain  
11 trade policy decisions impact our community, in particular,  
12 older adults.

13           And what I mean by that is, when there are  
14 decisions being made at the Federal policy level on tariffs,  
15 consider their impact on older adults. For example, take  
16 nutrition. During the pandemic, we've had supply chain  
17 issues that were exacerbated by some trade decisions, and  
18 food was not being delivered to the most vulnerable  
19 populations that needed it.

20           Think about ASA members, for example, who represent  
21 community-based organizations who literally did not have full  
22 packaging to deliver meals, if you were, say, a Meals On

1       Wheels locally.  Similarly, think about tariffs on aluminum.

2                 While they may be important for other reasons,  
3       think about the impact on the cost to purchase these aluminum  
4       cans and other supplies needed to deliver food that, you  
5       know, if you're a corporate entity, you can either absorb  
6       those tariffs or pass them onto the consumer.

7                 If you're a non-profit entity dealing with tariffs,  
8       you don't have any alternative means to absorb those costs  
9       because you're either on a fixed Federal grant budget -- so,  
10      our nutrition budgets needs to be expanded -- or you just  
11      done provide service.  There aren't tax breaks for  
12      non-profits to absorb the tariffs.

13                So, I would suggest that, from a trade policymaking  
14      perspective, intentionally and an outreach to stakeholders  
15      beyond simply posting a notice in the Federal Register is  
16      increasingly important.  I think we need to reach into  
17      communities and inform them about why they need to  
18      participate in the process to help improve -- whether it's  
19      trade policy, or any policy, for that matter.

20                COMMISSIONER KARPEL:  Thank you very much for  
21      sharing.  Who do we have next?  I believe Mr. Attig?

22                MR. ATTIG:  Thanks again.  And I'm sure that we're

1 not going to solve every trade policy through this call just  
2 today, but the reality of it, we need to work on trade policy  
3 in a direct way, whether it's TAA, other improvements that  
4 work for the workers.

5 But in regards to other things that we can  
6 do -- labor. Labor standards, labor policies, both in  
7 America but overseas. There is no way that we should be  
8 consuming as much products that are being made through slave  
9 labor, as many people would call it -- underserved, underpaid  
10 communities.

11 So, we need to have labor standards on both sides  
12 of this conversation. And I know steelworkers would probably  
13 say a lot about that, too, and I truly believe that. But the  
14 reality of it, when it comes to American policies, when we  
15 look at high school-educated folks or lower, in the Veterans  
16 community in 2008, Veterans with just a simple high school  
17 diploma or equivalency made 26 percent more than a non-union  
18 Veteran counterpart.

19 Think about it. 26 percent -- that is a massive  
20 increase, right? But when you look at the general  
21 populations, it's even a bigger number. And for people with  
22 less than a college diploma, in 2008 it was 49 percent more

1 with a union contract.

2 High school diploma is 35 percent. Some college,  
3 43 percent. The union difference matters. Union standards  
4 matter to the American society and workers around the world.  
5 And I bet you can look at that number -- it's very similar  
6 across the board for different demographics that are  
7 represented on this call.

8 So, again, I'll lead with me not being an expert  
9 but saying that trade policy needs to work for people and  
10 workers, and labor needs to be on both sides of the pond,  
11 especially for the American workers that really need a shot  
12 in the arm today.

13 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you. Thank you very  
14 much. Okay. I have a few more lined-up: Mr. Boone, Ms.  
15 Swenor, and then Mr. Walker. I just want to note, we are  
16 getting to almost the 3 o'clock hour, about 10 more minutes.

17 I think we've had a really great and rich  
18 conversation, so I'm anticipating going past three, including  
19 to open the floor up to the other Commissioners observing  
20 today to ask a few questions that they may have. So, I just  
21 wanted to flag that for people. I know some may have time  
22 commitments, and I respect that as well. Mr. Boone, you're

1 up next.

2 MR. BOONE: From my opinion, a lot of the trade  
3 policies -- and they're two ways, you know, the trade  
4 policies. Sometimes it's to help the American worker, and a  
5 lot of times, they don't. So, you know, a lot of these  
6 things come through Congress. Our representatives are  
7 elected to represent the people, but a lot of times you see  
8 that where they're not listening to their constituents.

9 One of their constituents said that, you know, ship  
10 our jobs overseas. So, you know, we need to get Congress  
11 onboard. We need education programs. We need to educate the  
12 public in a better way to reach out to them.

13 The steelworkers have a program called Rapid  
14 Response, and they send out to all their members, and we try  
15 to get them educated, involved, if there's inaction  
16 someplace, to get it to go and stand up for what's right for  
17 America and the workers. And, you know, unions are  
18 wonderful, but, you know, I can't remember, I think maybe  
19 there's 50 percent of the public workers are maybe union, but  
20 only about 20 percent or so in the private sector are  
21 unionized.

22 So, a lot of times, we get to benefit more from the

1 trade policies than other people actually do, you know, like  
2 the 232 case again, which is more recent. That was  
3 beneficial to us. But something else, I think.

4 You know, we have the term "disabled", and I don't  
5 know -- you know, there was a lot of awful words or phrases  
6 they used to term the disabled in the past or now, but  
7 there's a stigma attached to the term "disabled", and we have  
8 to change that. You say somebody is disabled, and  
9 immediately they go right to the far thing, you know,  
10 disabled as you possibly can, and it's not the case.

11 I have a friend whose son is disabled, and he just  
12 won Employee of the Month at Giant Eagle. So, you know, we  
13 have to work on this stigma, you know. Disability does not  
14 mean useless. Disability does not mean you can't contribute  
15 to society, you know? I have friends that have disabilities,  
16 and they're amazing, the determination they use to get  
17 around.

18 I am considered disabled under the ADA -- you know, the  
19 Americans with Disabilities Act was a wonderful thing for,  
20 you know, the country as a whole. And they're not a  
21 throw-away society. And they are impacted harder than other  
22 people. They have a job, and they train, and train, and

1 train, and train, and then they finally get a job, and then  
2 because stuff comes from overseas, now they don't have a job  
3 anymore, and they're lost.

4 And the despair and everything comes back that it  
5 always did, from my personal experience of seeing it. So,  
6 you know, I think we need to look at the term "disabled" and  
7 find another definition of it. Because are they really? Are  
8 they really disabled? I don't have the answer for that. I'm  
9 sure someone can speak on it much more eloquently than I can.

10 But I'm proud of what the Government is trying to  
11 do for us and, you know, if we have, you know, Republican  
12 Presidents, we have Democratic Presidents, and they tend to  
13 follow, you know, different philosophies. And right now, it  
14 seems like the policy is favoring the American worker.

15 In some ways it doesn't look like that, but  
16 overall, we have to get engaged and we have to make our  
17 voices heard. Because a country like China, they're  
18 buying-up America now, and they're setting up their plants in  
19 the United States, but they don't want a union.

20 So, there is protectionism on both sides of this,  
21 but we have to give the disabled people a fair shot, and I  
22 think that comes with changing the terminology and how we

1 look at them and how we refer to them. Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much, Mr.  
3 Boone. Ms. Swenor?

4 MS. SWENOR: Hi, yes. Thank you, Dan, for saying  
5 all of those things. I actually had my hand raised and then  
6 Delila said much better than I could've just about everything  
7 I was going to say and more. And I just want to endorse  
8 that, including, you know, looking to ODEP, Office of  
9 Disability Employment Policy for good policies and practices  
10 and doing this really great work for employment in people  
11 with disabilities.

12 I do want to speak to actually what was just said  
13 about term "disability". You know, I am proudly disabled. I  
14 don't think there's anything actually wrong with the word, to  
15 your point, Dan -- and I think this is what you were saying;  
16 I don't want to over-speak for you, though -- it's the  
17 connotation.

18 It's society's view of it, right, that probably  
19 needs to change. The disability community is changing and  
20 shifting, and the rest of the world just hasn't evolved along  
21 with us. And Dan said it really well. That has to change.  
22 We're not a throw-away population. That was very well-said,

1 very beautifully said, so thank you for that.

2 And I also want to echo the comments that others  
3 have made in that, you know, people are policy. We have to  
4 be included in these policy decisions, and that doesn't  
5 happen enough. And there isn't enough thought about who  
6 isn't in the room when these conversations are happening.

7 People that are oppressed and marginalized  
8 sometimes don't have equitable opportunity to be included,  
9 even when there is outreach, and I want to elevate that,  
10 making sure the outreach is accessible, the opportunities to  
11 participate are accessible and inclusive you know enduring,  
12 you know, working extra (phonetic) hours, perhaps, in certain  
13 situations if people are paying by the hour in jobs that are  
14 hourly wages, things like that, to make sure individuals  
15 actually have a true opportunity to give their voice and  
16 participate.

17 And also, as a Data Scientist, to say, we see that  
18 in the data. Data are a powerful tool, and data oppression  
19 is a real thing. And what I mean by that, is data are not as  
20 neutral as I sometimes think people assume them to be.

21 The exclusion of data collection on disability is  
22 not happenstance. It is, in fact, a reflection of what we

1 just discussed. Society's view of people with disabilities  
2 is not even important enough to collect data on. And then  
3 that translates into being left out of policy decisions,  
4 which are data-driven.

5 And so, I think when we think about including  
6 community, it's not just in forums like this. It's including  
7 community in all of these places, in decision about the data  
8 to advance the policy, how that data should be collected, how  
9 that data should be used, what data should be considered more  
10 important than other data, and having, as an academic, a  
11 bunch of academics sit in a room and make those decision  
12 doesn't always work.

13 It probably almost shouldn't be the drive. It  
14 should be the community that should drive the decisions,  
15 inform the people doing those analyses, and then inform the  
16 policy. Thank you so much.

17 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you. Thank you for  
18 that very much. Mr. Walker.

19 MR. WALKER: Hello, everyone, and thank you for the  
20 opportunity to participate today. It's been quite a  
21 discussion. Thank you very much. I am Edwin Walker. I am  
22 at the Administration for Community Living which is within

1 the Department of Health and Human Services, and we represent  
2 the interest of people with disabilities and older  
3 individuals.

4 And to Mr. Boone's comment and Ms. Swenor's  
5 comment, we tried to address that issue, that negative  
6 connotation of being disabled. And we used people-first  
7 language by saying "people with a disability" so that a  
8 person is the individual you see and hear first.

9 You don't think about their ability or their  
10 disability, and we are focused on combating issues of ableism  
11 as well as issues of ageism, because the discriminatory  
12 aspects of that really impact the ability of people to really  
13 live what we strive for, which is to live an engaged life in  
14 their communities.

15 We didn't name the agency the Administration for  
16 Aging and Disabilities, we named it after the aspirations of  
17 the populations we're serving. That is community living.  
18 People want to live in the community and be actively engaged  
19 in the community.

20 I also wanted to focus on what Ms. Hill identified  
21 in response to the initial question about programs. I think  
22 the concept of apprenticeship and retraining is something

1 that we should focus on. I'm glad she mentioned ODEP.  
2 Within the Administration for Community Living, for people  
3 living with disabilities, we are focused on competitive,  
4 meaningful employment.

5 I heard many comments about how, because of trade,  
6 industry has left, and what we're left with here is often  
7 low-paying jobs that you can't make a living on. And so, we  
8 want to ensure that people -- all people of all ages and all  
9 abilities -- have the ability to be employed in meaningful  
10 employment.

11 And within the Department of Labor, there is  
12 another division, the Employment and Training Administration,  
13 and they run the only Federally-funded older-worker program,  
14 and it's the Senior Community Service Employment Program,  
15 designed to retrain older individuals -- low-income older  
16 individuals with very limited prospects for  
17 employment -- retrain them and get them back into the  
18 workforce in order to transition them to full-time employment  
19 that allows them to not live in poverty, that allows them to  
20 be financially secure, and to continue living in the  
21 community.

22 I would be remiss if I didn't comment on Peter's

1        comments, as well. The budget implications of trade policy  
2        on non-profit community-based organizations is critical. We  
3        need to focus on that and always remember those implications  
4        because costs are always passed down to the lowest level.  
5        And so, it has an impact on our nationwide network of  
6        community-based organizations, made up of dedicated  
7        individuals, as they attempt to provide services and support  
8        to enable people to live a productive life.

9                Again, thank you for this opportunity. It's been a  
10       great discussion.

11                COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much for that  
12       contribution? Ms. Hodge?

13                MS. HODGE: Thank you. Earlier in the call I  
14       mentioned the convention on the rights for persons with  
15       disabilities. So, we're thinking about Congress and  
16       policies. The failure of Congress to actually ratify that  
17       convention had some huge implications.

18                For example, when a country that has ratified the  
19       convention is looking for expertise in products, they're not  
20       looking to the U.S. now; they're looking to other countries  
21       that ratified. And so, a real example is there was a country  
22       in Africa that wanted a fleet of busses -- accessible

1 busses -- but they didn't come to the U.S., and we've been  
2 doing accessible busses for decades.

3 They went to the Chinese, and what they got was  
4 inaccessible busses with the handicap logo on the side of the  
5 bus. That was basically it. So, think about assisted  
6 technology that we have in the U.S. that's not being shared  
7 because those countries are going to those countries that  
8 ratified.

9 Just a lot of workers with disabilities lost out on  
10 that because they're working with companies that produce, you  
11 know, products that are for the disabled. So, you know,  
12 there was a lot of missed opportunities there, and I want  
13 everybody to keep that in mind when we, you know, hopefully  
14 look towards trying for ratification again.

15 There's huge business implications in the  
16 disability community. Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you for sharing that.  
18 Ms. Hill?

19 MS. HILL: I just wanted to add just that there  
20 needs to be some sort of calculus of societal cost for these  
21 trade decisions that is much more detailed. When companies  
22 take them overseas, they look at their profit, but they don't

1 look at what happens to the communities.

2 Also, I would also like to point out that a lot of  
3 communities have, you know, once companies have left, there's  
4 a lack of public transportation for people to get to jobs.  
5 They may have lost their car or something like that because  
6 of these adverse trade decisions and they're not making as  
7 much money.

8 I would also like to point out, just to make a  
9 couple points for disabilities, SSI disability takes a long  
10 time to get -- sometimes, like, two years -- there's a long  
11 backlog, which needs to be addressed -- and it also needs to  
12 have a higher payment.

13 Because I've talked to folks that have difficulties  
14 on surviving on it and, you know, they might need additional  
15 services. The services may or may not be there. I also  
16 wanted to put a plug in for increased investment in public  
17 housing, especially accessible housing.

18 And, you know, there are people that can -- and  
19 somebody else made the point for services -- there are people  
20 that don't have accessible housing and don't have the  
21 services and can no longer stay in their homes, and they have  
22 to go into some sort of assisted living when, if there were

1 better services, they could stay in their homes.

2           And also, I want to put a plug out there for  
3 increasing the minimum wage because that desperately needs to  
4 be increased, and please get rid of the sub-standard minimum  
5 wage for those with disabilities. I don't think that  
6 differently-abled workers should be considered worthless.  
7 That is ridiculous, and I just want to make sure that that  
8 gets addressed as well.

9           I think that's probably what I wanted to make  
10 sure -- oh, I did want to put a plug in for, like, trying to  
11 get some sort of encouragement for companies to hire workers  
12 that are older. There is a huge amount -- as other have  
13 said -- of ageism, and I know a number of people who are  
14 trying to find jobs now who it's supposed to be a hot job  
15 market, but they can't get their resumes even considered.

16           And older workers with these automated resume  
17 services, I think older workers need to be trained to make  
18 sure their resumes are getting heard, and I wonder if, a lot  
19 of times, they're just not getting completely screened-out.  
20 I know a number of older workers who just cannot find  
21 something.

22           And some of them are educated. Some of them have

1 advanced degrees. But younger workers end up getting hired  
2 instead of older workers. Thank you very much.

3 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much. Okay.  
4 We're going to go to Mr. Erickson and then Mr. Noll, and then  
5 I'm going to open it up to my fellow Commissioners to see if  
6 they have any questions, since we are getting late in the  
7 time. So, Mr. Erickson, I'll let you go ahead.

8 MR. ERICKSON: Sure, yeah, thank you very much for  
9 allowing me to participate in the roundtable. I really  
10 appreciate it. So, my background, I work with the Dying  
11 (phonetic) 10 institute on employment and disability at  
12 Cornell University. I've been doing disability research for  
13 over 20 years now.

14 I just wanted to speak a little bit to Bonnielin's  
15 concern about the quality of disability data. I agree that  
16 it isn't perfect, but if you go back 20 years, you know, like  
17 the Census Bureau, the 2000 census, was really one of the  
18 first censuses that actually asked any significant questions  
19 on disability. And since then, the ACS has included six  
20 questions.

21 Again, not saying that they're the perfect  
22 questions, at all, but at least there are six questions, as

1       opposed to maybe just one question. The Current Population  
2       Survey, since 2008, has been asking the same set of  
3       questions. The CDC's regular (phonetic) behavioral risk  
4       factor surveillance system survey has been asking.

5                Again, I'm not saying these are perfect surveys by  
6       any stretch or, you know, perfect questions, but there is a  
7       lot of data around -- the Federal Government has expanded the  
8       use of those questions though, I think it's about 10  
9       different Federal surveys now.

10               So, there is a lot of data out there, in terms  
11       of -- you know, where there really identifies all people with  
12       disabilities -- no, it doesn't. The one that you mentioned,  
13       the survey on income and program participation, which is  
14       where the 67 million number comes from, is, you know, by far,  
15       you know, the most comprehensive.

16               But unfortunately, trying to get that many  
17       questions in some of these larger surveys is just  
18       problematic. I also just wanted to mention that there is,  
19       for Federal Contractors, there is the §503 that encourages  
20       Federal Contractors to hire people with disabilities on the  
21       EARN project funded by ODEP, and we are, you know, working  
22       with employers, trying to understand what else can be done to

1 help improve employer practices and policies to, you know,  
2 hire, and promote and retain employees with disabilities.

3 So, you know, we're working on that. It's a  
4 complicated issue, but hopefully we're -- with some progress  
5 in trying to figure out, you know, what can be done so  
6 employers can do a better job of hiring, recruiting, and  
7 promoting employees with disabilities and what sort of  
8 policies and practices they can implement to improve that.

9 So, I guess, yeah -- see Bonnielin you have your  
10 hand up, so I'll let you jump-in.

11 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: No, I appreciate that. And I  
12 suspect Ms. Swenor wants to talk a bit about the data issues,  
13 too. So, Mr. Noll, with some indulgence, I think you were  
14 next, but maybe we'll jump to Ms. Swenor and they can talk  
15 about the data.

16 And I guess I would throw it to you, the question  
17 on the data. How much, if at all, does the data capture  
18 disabilities that aren't physical disabilities, that maybe  
19 are mental or learning disabilities or other kinds of  
20 disabilities?

21 MR. SWENOR: Thank you. So, first, yes, what Bill  
22 just said is correct. The ACS questions have been rolled-out

1 and are the approved HHS disability questions. There are six  
2 questions. They are ascertaining disability beyond physical  
3 disability -- visual, hearing, independent living.

4 What they miss is mental health, or mental illness.  
5 They're missing learning disabilities. And I agree with what  
6 Bill said. Perfect should not be the enemy of good here. I  
7 have given other testimony endorsing those questions to that  
8 exact point. We have the Washington group portions, which  
9 the community of people with disabilities endorses more  
10 strongly.

11 But there is that. What I would say, though, is  
12 what I was referring to on the data is what we do not have is  
13 a depth of data on people with disabilities within a  
14 workplace environment, right? We have these national  
15 surveys, but as a data scientist, sometimes I have pause on  
16 those data.

17 Again, good shouldn't be the enemy of perfect, but  
18 when we really want to drill-down on policy, those samples  
19 are nationally represented based on gender, race, ethnicity,  
20 and geographic location. Does that mean that it is  
21 representing our population of people with disabilities?

22 It is not sampled, it is not part of the sampling

1 frame, and there is some discrepancies in the estimates.  
2 That 67 million actually is from the most recent estimates of  
3 disability prevalence, which is from a report my center put  
4 out using the Bertha's data.

5 So, I think that when we talk about the disability  
6 data, we do have to be cautious -- but again, I agree with  
7 what Bill said and perfect shouldn't be the enemy of  
8 good -- but we do need more fine data in understanding why we  
9 still haven't closed those employment gaps.

10 And to me, that begs the question of, the data we  
11 have, even from, you know, 2000 census moving forward, hasn't  
12 gotten us there. What is the data we need? We need to go  
13 back to the community, ask them, right -- that's my  
14 point -- what is the data we need, where are the questions we  
15 need to follow to close this gap, and then collect the data  
16 around that.

17 And that, I think, just hasn't, honestly, happened.  
18 The community hasn't been engaged enough in this process or  
19 in those data collection efforts. So, that was my point.

20 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much. So, Mr.  
21 Noll, we'll wrap up with you, and then we'll see if other  
22 Commissioners have questions.

1           MR. NOLL: What I wanted to bring-up, like I said  
2 earlier, like, I look at this thing as kind of a domino  
3 effect, and I believe it was Dan earlier that had talked  
4 about how our politicians are not listening to their  
5 constituents. They're basically listening to big business,  
6 and I believe Janet had said something about wrestling away  
7 corporate power.

8           And I really think that we need to focus on  
9 overturning Citizens United. I think it is terrible for our  
10 country, and I think we need to focus on -- we have  
11 anti-trust laws on the books, and we are not using them. We  
12 are not implementing them in any way, shape, or form, and  
13 there's monopolies all over this country that should've been  
14 dismantled a long time ago.

15           We have corporations competing against workers  
16 instead of each other like capitalism is intended. They  
17 should be competing against one another, but they've gelled  
18 together, you know, like the Summer of Love with the cable  
19 companies. Like they've just divided the country, and now  
20 you can't -- you have one cable option where you're at, and  
21 it's not acceptable. And our politicians need to stand up  
22 and start enforcing the antitrust laws. And that's all I

1 had.

2 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much.  
3 Quickly, Mr. Attig, I hate to cut off any conversations we're  
4 considering.

5 MR. ATTIG: Very quick on this point. We were  
6 having a conversation about trade policy, and we're talking  
7 about childcare, healthcare, workers' wages, something is not  
8 right here, right. But those are the policies that we have  
9 to change to make sure American workers are part of this  
10 economy, disability rights really.

11 We need an economy that works for the working class  
12 people, and it starts with these companies. They're taking  
13 the tax cuts, they're taking the money out of the  
14 communities. We should make policies around people basically  
15 just trying to work, and live their lives, and that's what I  
16 hear a lot of here. So, I just had to make that point. I'm  
17 sorry.

18 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: No, no, no need to apologize.  
19 Thank you for adding that. All right. Well, let's see if  
20 Vice Chair Stayin, do you have anything, or Commissioner  
21 Johanson, any questions you want to ask?

22 VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Yeah, I have a couple of

1        comments. I was taken by the comment that disabled people  
2        are not a throw away group, they need to be -- and they have  
3        to have a seat at the policy decision table, and, I think,  
4        that that is just so, so true, and it's so right on.

5                I remember years ago that I had a very good friend  
6        who was disabled, and he was here in Washington, he wasn't  
7        working for a lobbying group, he was here lobbying for the  
8        American for Disabilities Act, and he would go, you know, to  
9        Senate office to Senate office, and he would sit there with  
10       his disability, and he would give conversations.

11               I'm sure he wasn't the only one, but that's kind of  
12       what it's -- that's really what helps, and, I think, that  
13       that is what needs to be done to get these things  
14       accomplished. You don't have to come to Washington to do it.  
15       You can go talk to your Congressman, you can go talk to your  
16       Senators. They have offices around your state. Talk to  
17       them. Bring together a group. Make it clear what's  
18       happening, what's needed, and ask for their help.

19               And, I mean, no matter what party they are, I think  
20       we're talking about American people, American disabled  
21       workers, American older people, older people who still have  
22       wonderful skills to get in there and do that work very

1 effectively. We have to think about that, and I feel so  
2 strongly about that.

3 There was an interesting article in the paper today  
4 about education and how important is that for jobs, and the  
5 point was being made what's more important, a college  
6 education or a person who has skills, and to me I don't know  
7 where that's coming out.

8 It seems to me that the job skills are more  
9 important than the fact that somebody got an education. I'm  
10 not saying -- I got an education, and I'm very pleased having  
11 had it, but that's another issue, and I wonder how that plays  
12 out in the companies when you're seeking jobs.

13 Enough of my talk. I'd like to hear from you.

14 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Anyone want to offer a  
15 reaction to anything raised by Vice Chairman Stayin, or speak  
16 to this particular issue about -- I heard this too of  
17 employers sort of giving major -- requiring a college degree  
18 without sort of thinking about whether the skills required  
19 for the job really would benefit from having a worker with a  
20 college degree. Ms. Ackerman?

21 MS. ACKERMAN: Yes. I am one of the older folks,  
22 so I was one of them that told my kids -- when we were

1 growing up it was like you're supposed to go to college,  
2 you're supposed to go to college, and it ended up like I had  
3 said earlier, people would come out of school and not be able  
4 to find a job, and then they'd have their B.A., or whatever  
5 degree, and they'd be working a press right next to me making  
6 the same money that I was working until later.

7 I clearly think it's important for people to have  
8 an education just because we need people like -- that are  
9 collecting the data, and doing all the studies, and doing all  
10 the research. We need people to have an education.

11 I have a younger son, my youngest son. He's not  
12 young now, but my younger son has always been a very hard  
13 worker. He was wheeling and dealing baseball cards when he  
14 was maybe 12, you know, to 14. He got married very young,  
15 right. In fact, he was still a senior in high school when he  
16 got married, and they're still married. They have two grown  
17 kids that did go to college. One of them is working on his  
18 second Master's Degree.

19 But my son started working right away because he  
20 had a child, and he was a hard worker, and he was a  
21 supervisor very young in a factory. He worked at several  
22 different factories each time moving to make better money.

1 Each time he moved was an improvement in his wages, or his  
2 benefits, or the working conditions.

3 He was one that would -- always cared about the  
4 workers. Even though he ended up being a supervisor very  
5 young, he would be a supervisor, he always cared about the  
6 workers. But it ended up he'd be working in a factory, and  
7 next thing you know, that factory, like Rubbermaid, he did  
8 work at Rubbermaid at one time, would get sold, and the next  
9 thing you know, he didn't have a job.

10 And then he'd go to another factory, and he'd be in  
11 a position there. He'd start in maybe as a factory worker,  
12 but be promoted, and be in management, and he'd lose that  
13 job.

14 He was one of the people that it's important to be  
15 making things. People have pride in making things, and, I  
16 think, we need to have more of that in the United States, not  
17 just people doing service jobs, not that they're not  
18 important, but eventually I told my son -- even though I was  
19 able to raise him at a good paying manufacturing job, and  
20 some of the places he worked were union facilities also, even  
21 though he was in management, they paid good -- but they  
22 closed. I said, look, you got to get out of manufacturing.

1 If you want to raise your two sons, you have to find  
2 something else.

3 And he didn't have an education. I mean, he didn't  
4 have college degrees, he had different stuff he took, but he  
5 ended up he left manufacturing and he did some mortgage  
6 broker stuff, or whatever, but eventually ended up in a tire  
7 place, and just like the manufacturing places, the tire  
8 places are affected by the sales places -- I mean, tire  
9 business, not a manufacturing, they're affected by all the  
10 jobs that are going overseas, you know, the supply chain.

11 Like we said, it's the small -- if the big place  
12 leaves, so do the small places, they all shut down, and when  
13 a big place decides it wants to come back, there's no -- none  
14 of the supply chains are here because it went overseas when  
15 they left, you know.

16 So, now, that place kept getting sold, and, so he  
17 would be a manager in that place thinking he was going to be  
18 there until he retired, and they kept selling, and they kept  
19 being not the community business, not the local tire place  
20 that was for the community anymore, now it's this big chain  
21 place.

22 And, so, finally, he bought his -- got his own. He

1 started his own business. He bought a small tire place from  
2 somebody that was getting ready to retire. He's got tire and  
3 mechanics, and he treats his employees well. They have  
4 trouble getting parts, and stuff.

5 But it's a shame, he is a dedicated, hardworking  
6 person. He can't get jobs at some places because he didn't  
7 have the college degree, but he's very successful now without  
8 the college degree, and some people just want men to have  
9 college degrees, and there are people that need to do stuff  
10 with their hands. And, I guess they're both important, but  
11 we shouldn't slight one or the other.

12 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you, Ms. Ackerman. I  
13 appreciate you sharing that. Mr. Attig?

14 MR. ATTIG: So, this is a really personal question  
15 for me, I think. I was raised really poor in southern  
16 Illinois, and I had severe learning disabilities until I was  
17 13. I barely could read and write. So, that being mentioned  
18 is really important.

19 I struggled through high school when it came to  
20 doing work. I was always very smart. I always had skills.  
21 I was always a leader. And that was one thing why I joined  
22 the military because I knew it was going to give me an

1 opportunity to learn and improve myself, and I did.

2 I became a leader of soldiers. I was in charge of  
3 a Battalion of 25, in charge of 14 soldiers, two Sergeants,  
4 and combat out of combat. And I excelled in the military. I  
5 had a uniform on. I wasn't a poor kid with learning  
6 disabilities from southern Illinois.

7 When I came home I faced the devastating fact that  
8 I lost almost all of that overnight. I came home without a  
9 job, a degree, and a future. I dropped out of college  
10 because of issues I had from fighting in combat for as long  
11 as I did.

12 But the lack of education, I don't have a college  
13 education, that first year coming home was devastating to me,  
14 and the worst day of my life after about eight months into  
15 this year just struggling, I went and interviewed for a job.  
16 I'd been asked by the H.R. folks at a job fair that I'd come  
17 to be a mid-level manager at a pet food distribution center  
18 being paid \$13 an hour with some benefits, and told seven  
19 people how to load stuff (phonetic) on the back of trucks.

20 I just led 14 soldiers and two Sergeants in combat  
21 for 17 months. I interviewed for about an hour. I thought I  
22 had the job. He didn't want to talk about my education. He

1 wanted to talk about Army stuff, and the last question he  
2 asked, he said, you know, in your packet where is your  
3 college degree at?

4 And I had to leave that job. I didn't have the  
5 tools to argue my stuff. The worst day of my life. I had to  
6 borrow \$20 to go to that job, and, again, think about eight  
7 months ago I was considered a hero when I came home.

8 There was a story where I was at (phonetic) a  
9 welding hud. And about a month after that job interview,  
10 after I almost became a statistic, the statistic we talk  
11 about, I was already homeless, I was already couch surfing,  
12 couch surfing from my mom's house to my brother's house. I  
13 got into a welding program and became a huge pipefitter, and  
14 that led, you know, to this call today.

15 So, it's not -- all right. Unfortunately, it's  
16 looked at as something that's slighted, and, unfortunately,  
17 these trade policies create the system against people like  
18 me, you know, people like Bonnie. So, it's personal. It  
19 means a lot to recognize that. There's a lot of people with  
20 skills, but just like someone said about apprenticeship  
21 courses, if you're giving somebody a job as a welder paying  
22 nine bucks an hour without any benefits, what's the point.

1           So, there's a lot of people with skills that just  
2           need an opportunity, and their shot at it, and they don't  
3           have that.

4           COMMISSIONER KARPEL: We really appreciate you  
5           sharing that. Thank you. Who is next? Mr. Boone.

6           MR. BOONE: I'd like to speak to Mr. Stayin's  
7           point, and, you know, the point about education, college  
8           degrees, and apprenticeships. So, in our industry there's a  
9           severe lack of maintenance people, and every industry, and  
10          every country it's hard to find electricians, welders, all  
11          what they would term skilled trades.

12          I grew up in a small town in southwestern  
13          Pennsylvania that had 350 people in it, went to school in a  
14          three-room brick schoolhouse. And I had friends who quit  
15          school in the 9th, 10th, 11th grade, and they couldn't pass a  
16          GED, you know, let alone what they call a RAZA (phonetic)  
17          test to qualify into our maintenance programs.

18          But the thing about education and apprenticeships  
19          is very important. There's a society out there that they  
20          need to know that you can make a very good living with a  
21          skilled trade. You know, these guys I grew up with, you  
22          know, they couldn't pass any of these tests, but they could

1 fix anything, you know, and life experience has been  
2 overlooked.

3 And, you know, sometimes it doesn't count for  
4 anything, but we need to get people involved in the trades  
5 again because no matter how much automation we have, there's  
6 still going to be equipment that needs repair, and you need  
7 the people that have the skills to do that.

8 But the statement with the college degree, you  
9 know, they come out of college, they got \$100,000 in student  
10 loans, and, you know, it was pushed for the last 30 years get  
11 a degree, get a degree, get into business, and the trades  
12 fell by the wayside. So, they're coming out of college,  
13 they're making \$30,000 a year, and they got \$100,000 in  
14 college debt.

15 So, we need to reach out somehow and get people  
16 interested in the trades again. Not everybody wants to get  
17 their hands dirty, not everybody wants to work midnights, and  
18 things like that, but the standard of living can be raised a  
19 lot across the country by getting people who have the  
20 mechanical skills.

21 You know, mechanical ability sometimes there's no  
22 way to test that. You can test aptitude on paper, but

1 mechanical aptitude is something that's demonstrated more  
2 than, you know, something on paper. So, you can be an  
3 electrician, but if you don't have the skills, you're really  
4 not. You should not be an electrician by trade or title, and  
5 have all that.

6 So, you know, what we're talking about here is like  
7 a massive kind of approach, but, you know, we need to get  
8 this society interested in the trades again, and what it  
9 takes to keep businesses running.

10 You know, profit is -- profit became a dirty word  
11 in some ways, and it's okay to make profit, it's how they do  
12 it, and how they treat their workers. And, you know, as Mr.  
13 Attig said, you know, you're paying a welder \$9 an hour when  
14 his skills in the right industry are worth \$30, but they need  
15 that opportunity and exposure to those opportunities so that  
16 they can take advantage of them. There's a vast underused  
17 element of society out there that we need to tap into. Thank  
18 you.

19 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you. Ms. Hill.

20 MS. HILL: I just wanted to mention a couple of  
21 things, one of which is we clearly need to keep the jobs  
22 here. We need to make sure that we, you know, can continue

1 to make things here, especially where, you know, the cutting  
2 edge technologies are concerned.

3 Companies that got the 2017 tax cuts did not  
4 increase their research and development. We know products  
5 come from research and development. They're not investing in  
6 their own companies. They're sending that profit to  
7 shareholders and CEO pay, and that needs to change.

8 The other thing, and, you know, if we invest in  
9 these things like electric buses, climate change, you know,  
10 things we need for climate change, then we will have jobs in  
11 the future. We will have -- and that needs to be invested  
12 in. That's really incredibly important.

13 It's just a lack of investment. Companies are not  
14 investing in these jobs period. It's not just the R&D, it's  
15 things like we wouldn't have the level of disability that we  
16 have from either age, or just strictly disability, if  
17 companies would actually make things ergonomically.

18 And I can remember that there were a couple of  
19 folks that I talked to where there was a very heavy door, and  
20 multiple people were getting shoulder -- were getting tears  
21 in their shoulders because of these heavy doors. The  
22 companies are not investing in ergonomics, why should they,

1 when they can get workers, and they don't really care if  
2 they're disabled. That was the other point that I wanted to  
3 make.

4 And things like if you look at hospitals, they can  
5 invest in patient lifting equipment. Instead, they prefer to  
6 have their LPNs have back issues rather than investing in  
7 equipment to make the jobs easier.

8 I would also like to mention that we -- you know,  
9 of course, as I said, we need to have the labor rights there,  
10 and, you know, the issue of ageism, as I said early, really  
11 needs to be developed in terms of, you know, whether  
12 it's -- we develop some sort of program for encouraging  
13 employers to hire older workers. I would really like to see  
14 something like that.

15 And I said, just making jobs less physical, and  
16 making jobs easier, and that would require investment by  
17 companies. Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you. Ms. Swenor?

19 MS. SWENOR: Hi, yes. Thank you. I want to first  
20 echo that sentiment that's been said that, you know, a  
21 college degree certainly should not be a requirement for  
22 every position, and to deeply consider the inequity that that

1 creates, and thank you to Will for sharing that personal  
2 story.

3 You know, higher education is not equitably  
4 accessed by everyone. People with disabilities are half as  
5 likely to have a college degree. About 19 percent of  
6 undergraduates in this country identify having a disability,  
7 but only a third of those graduate from college eight years  
8 later, a third.

9 There are deeply unaddressed inequities in higher  
10 education for people with disabilities. I work in higher ed,  
11 gone through higher ed with a disability. I clawed my way  
12 through. I still face it in my job everyday.

13 It is a problem and a barrier that absolutely  
14 impacts the work force, and needs to be addressed system  
15 wide, quite honestly. It is, again, a reflection of how  
16 society views people with disabilities. It is the ableism, a  
17 lack of universal design, knowledge of accommodation, and,  
18 honestly, misunderstanding that disability rights are a  
19 shared responsibility. But it's an important component to, I  
20 think, the discussion we're having.

21 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much. Mr., I  
22 pronounced your name correct the first time, Enayati.

1 MR. ENAYATI: Yes, thank you. And don't worry, it  
2 took me a full year of first grade to try to get that down.

3 So, I have a couple of points. I'll turn it  
4 towards our discussion on skilled trades, and it makes sense  
5 why we've been talking about the skilled trades. There's a  
6 whole other very large section of the U.S. work force that  
7 does not have a college degree, and is also not in the  
8 skilled trades, but that would be affected by trade policy.

9 One potential option here to support these  
10 individuals because I think they're also affected by, I would  
11 call, companies unnecessarily requiring college degrees. So,  
12 for example, if you are in book sale -- so, like I know  
13 someone who is in sales for, what is it, these scholastic  
14 books that they sell to schools, and he had a degree in  
15 agricultural science, nothing to do with sales,  
16 communications, or teaching, but they required a college  
17 degree for him to be in that role when it was functionally  
18 just a sales role.

19 And, so, the question is how can we break that  
20 disconnect because there's some part of the explanation for  
21 why economists have historically advocated for workers going  
22 into a higher education is because we think that it gives

1       them more skills so they can get a higher paying job, but the  
2       reality is that employers are using college degrees as  
3       screening devices to identify worker traits that they think  
4       are going to be productive in their setting.

5               So, for example, they might assume that if you have  
6       a college degree, you're a harder worker, or you're dedicated  
7       enough to stick with a task for a long period of time because  
8       you jumped through the hoops of going to college.

9               I think a college degree is a very poor tool to  
10       identify those worker traits. There are current initiatives  
11       at the Department of Labor where they're looking into what  
12       are called micro credentials, and these are tools that can be  
13       used by individuals in, let's say, the service sector.

14               If you're the wait staff at a restaurant, they can  
15       -- what they're doing is they're embedding with the payroll  
16       company data to show who is showing up to their shifts on  
17       time. You also see who's bringing in the largest tips. All  
18       of this stuff are credentials that then go to that individual  
19       to say I am a dedicated worker, I bring an extra value to the  
20       firm because you can see that through the higher tips that I  
21       make.

22               And, so there are avenues that I think you could

1 pack into these other initiatives that align with these  
2 goals, and then support these workers that are disadvantaged.

3 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much, Mr.  
4 Enayati. All right. Commissioner Johanson, did you want  
5 to --

6 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Yeah, I had a question, and  
7 I appreciate you all sticking around, I know it's been a long  
8 afternoon, but this is all very interesting.

9 You've also talked about different programs for  
10 training, and I was wondering if any of you are familiar with  
11 any state retraining programs, and I ask this because state  
12 retraining programs could possibly serve as models for new  
13 federal ones.

14 Also, Mr. Attig, are you -- could you please  
15 discuss any specific retraining programs designed for  
16 veterans.

17 MR. ATTIG: Sorry. I think that you called on me,  
18 and I've got a weird last name to say it. When it comes to  
19 retraining specifically for job loss, I don't believe that I  
20 know of any at this moment.

21 When it comes to the national level, I do know when  
22 you look into state -- (Technical Interference) when it comes

1 to we owe a dollar, work for a spell, Dollars from the State  
2 (phonetic), do some of that, but we do have trade programs,  
3 programs to retrain veterans when they come out of the  
4 military and need a different industry whether it's building  
5 trades, utilities, that we can expand.

6 So, I don't think that we have any directly. Our  
7 veterans are just members of the population when we come  
8 home. Unless we make something specifically for them,  
9 they're just a regular civilian with this big bag on their  
10 shoulders from the military.

11 I'm sorry if that didn't answer your question  
12 completely, but we have a lot of training programs right now  
13 in utilizing -- just like what I went through, which is  
14 called Helens to Hard Hats. It takes that veteran, goes  
15 through the program, use them before you leave the military,  
16 which is very similar to changing a career, right. If you're  
17 leaving a steel plant, and we are going to transition you  
18 into another occupation, before you lose that job, we should  
19 be preparing you for that next job ahead of you.

20 So, what we do is we train our veterans 180 days  
21 out before they leave the military. The day they leave they  
22 walk into a skilled trade job that's paying a very high level

1 of wages.

2 And, I think, to a point that was just mentioned  
3 from the last speaker, when we talk about all of these  
4 issues, we're talking about many different agencies, and  
5 areas that have to be looked at.

6 Just like the work I do in Work Force Development  
7 for the veterans community in general, one of the biggest  
8 things we're trying to do is break down the siloing between  
9 the agencies. I think that's something we've heard a lot of  
10 on this conversation of how the different agencies do not  
11 talk to each other, or the state government versus the  
12 federal government.

13 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Attig. One  
14 reason I brought this up is that I have a member of my staff  
15 at the International Trade Commission who is a veteran who is  
16 actually in a federal program to help place veterans in  
17 different federal agencies. So, I just wondered how that  
18 would work out.

19 With the federal government, is the federal  
20 government actually contacting private industries and seeing  
21 if they can work to retrain -- if the government can retrain  
22 people for jobs in specific industries? How does that work?

1           MR. ATTIG: They are, and when you look at right  
2 now we're actually working on a work force development on a  
3 task force for -- with the Administration on Truckey  
4 (phonetic).

5           So, what you have to do is you have to work on kind  
6 of like, again, with the last speaker when you look at the  
7 credential matching, and going beyond just what may be on  
8 your resume it was on say your DD214 (phonetic) leave the  
9 military. There's tons of other credentials and training  
10 that American workers go through, whether you're a veteran or  
11 not, that can be used for that next job, that next  
12 appointment.

13           The deal with vets, with the DoD, we use a couple  
14 of different programs. There's a couple different ones that  
15 are used to look at work credentials the military has and  
16 then the placement when they -- when you leave.

17           But again, you have to have the skills matching.  
18 You have to have that match between the credentials that that  
19 service member has as a leave or a veteran has and then the  
20 good jobs. And that's where we see our biggest problem is  
21 that we can train a veteran, but if we send them to do a job  
22 it doesn't give them the stability and the equity that they

1       deserve, it's as hard sell. I don't know, again, if that  
2       answers the question 100 percent.

3               COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Yeah, it does. It does.  
4       And again, talking to veterans who work the FTC, it is very  
5       hard for them to make the transition often from the military  
6       to other parts of the economy. So I appreciate the efforts  
7       you all are making.

8               And to the extent of my question of other people on  
9       the panel, are any of you familiar with state programs which  
10       can service a model for possibly federal programs? I know  
11       the TAA has been discussed at some length today, but are  
12       there other possible programs out there which could be  
13       creative?

14               Yeah, I saw Mr. Boone.

15               MR. BOONE: Yeah, I don't know if it -- this  
16       program is still in effect because I've been away from it for  
17       awhile but, you know, while with TAA, TRA, TIA there was  
18       another program called WIA, Workforce Investment Act. And  
19       that also -- and they worked on that at the state level, but  
20       unfortunately I'm not versed enough to know whether it's  
21       still in process or not. But no matter what they're doing I  
22       feel that states could do more. States could do more and

1 they need to invest in their people and we could raise up  
2 everybody's standard of living.

3 And if we're going to transfer to a green economy,  
4 the training you get is going to be important because things  
5 are always going to break, okay. Electric cars, the people  
6 make money they sell them, but who's going to fix them when  
7 they break? Where is the training for that? The solar  
8 panels, you know, the fact that that's all going to need  
9 maintenance. Windmills. You know, that would be a boon for  
10 steelworkers. But they're going to break and they need  
11 people trained.

12 There's all these jobs that are potentially out  
13 there where people can make a very good standard of living,  
14 but they need access to education and training because things  
15 are going to continue to break. It's just a fact of  
16 manufacturing, you know.

17 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: All right. Thank you.

18 Mr. Attig, you wanted to add something?

19 MR. ATTIG: Right. As I was going through my  
20 Rolodex I was trying to remember, but right now again with  
21 the trucking we had examples from Illinois where we're  
22 working on -- working on state licensing and credentialing

1 that doesn't match up with federal and national credentials.  
2 Right.

3 So in many industries there's state and local  
4 credentials that are needed to apply for jobs or working  
5 industry, whether it's truck driving, teaching, things like  
6 that.

7 What we're working to try and do is when we -- when  
8 a service member leaves the military, we can work with those  
9 state governments to create the credential matches so that  
10 when they go back home they don't have to go through that  
11 entire process again because many times we find when veterans  
12 move -- when American workers move they find themselves up  
13 against credential matching because it's at the state level.  
14 So I think there needs to be more looking -- or look into  
15 state credentials versus the federal credentials as an  
16 overall.

17 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Okay. Thank you. And Mr.  
18 Boone, to get back to your comments earlier on retraining,  
19 just to let you know, at our prior roundtables we've heard  
20 from a number of community college representatives and it  
21 seems like they're certainly moving -- they're certainly  
22 working in that direction for retraining -- or training for

1 the new economy. I live in Virginia and I know the community  
2 colleges here are very active in that area.

3 MR. BOONE: Well, if I could add, you know, when  
4 you mentioned community colleges, the steelworkers have a  
5 program called Steelworkers for the Future and there's three  
6 different community colleges that are now preparing people to  
7 enter into that. It's a two-year program. It comes  
8 with -- with two on-the-job training programs. They pay them  
9 to do this while they're at work. Like in the military they  
10 could work -- they get paid and basically the money they make  
11 will pay for the two years of college if they return it that  
12 way. But that's one program that is connected with community  
13 colleges and it's all about maintenance. It's called  
14 Steelworkers for the Future. So there is some movement on  
15 that area.

16 COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Thank you, Mr. Boone.

17 And I don't know if others have any comments. If  
18 not, we can move on to the -- any other questions there might  
19 be from other commissioners. Thank you for your responses.

20 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: I think that's it. I think  
21 Commissioner Schmidtlein and Chair Kearns weren't able to  
22 make today's roundtable, but this has been a wonderful

1 conversation. Huge thank you to all of you for taking the  
2 time to participate, share stories, share the information and  
3 research you're doing. It's mentally (phonetic) important to  
4 what we as International Trade Commission has been asked to  
5 do, which is listen primarily, and then take what we hear and  
6 produce a report and deliver this to the policymakers in  
7 Washington who handle trade.

8 So thank you again. This has been a very wonderful  
9 conversation and everyone, I am -- huge thanks.

10 MR. ATTIG: Thank you.

11 MR. BISHOP: Thank you, everyone. Have a great  
12 day.

13 COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Goodbye.

14 MR. BOONE: Thank you, everybody. Thank you.

15 (Whereupon, at 3:53 p.m., the roundtable in the  
16 above-entitled matter concluded.)

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**TITLE:** Distributional Effects: Disability, Age, and Education Roundtable

**INVESTIGATION NO.:** --

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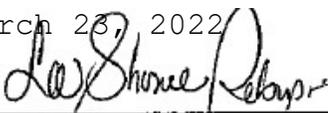
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