

Workforce Promotion and Access Act (WPA Act)

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The economic impact of COVID-19 continues devastate American families, with [21 million Americans](#) unemployed due to the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. As we fight for a recovery that ensures we aren't leaving any American behind, it's time to consider strategies that we know worked previously to create good-paying jobs with reliable healthcare and paid time for family and sick leave. In the vein of the Works Progress Administration, the Workforce Promotion and Access Act (WPA Act) would provide for direct job creation at the community level.

Program Design

- **Authorizes the Department of Labor to fund the creation of a job guarantee program** which will give 3-year grants to eligible entities to ensure that any individual who applies for a job through the program will be provided with employment. Along with offsetting unemployment, the living-wage pay and benefits of these public jobs will create competition in private-sector employment, helping to lift the floor for employment nationwide.
 - The Secretary of Labor will create the application process. Eligibility for state, county, city, territory, or tribal lands is based on having a local unemployment rate the lower of 10% or 100% of the national unemployment rate.
- **Provides grants based upon on local need**, ensuring that work would advance critical local and national priorities for which the private sector under-provides, like child and elder care, infrastructure, clean energy, and community revitalization.
- **Ensures that every adult 18 years or older is eligible for one of these guaranteed jobs.**
 - Pay starts at a minimum at \$15/hour, and every job must provide paid leave for family, illness, and national emergencies like COVID-19, and health coverage.
 - The funds can also be used to provide workers in the program with supportive services such as childcare, job training, and financial literacy.
- **Requires the creation of a “Community Job Bank” website**, which will feature a description of high-impact jobs sourced primarily by local communities and Federal agencies, based on their needs and priorities, as well as the process for individuals to apply for such jobs.
- **Expands the Work Opportunity Tax Credit** to include qualified participants from the programs.
- **Avoids taxpayer funding by using a Wall Street Financial Transaction Tax** to fund the program which will raise \$777 billion over ten years.
- **Authorizes an annual audit of the use of grant funds by selected communities** to identify ways for DOL to more effectively administer the grant program moving forward.
 - The DOL will further evaluate the program's implementation and impact across many metrics, including unemployment rates, private sector wages, safety net spending, poverty rates, and incarceration rates.