**Proposed ACA Year 2 Plan and Overview**

The ACA provided extensive recommendations as part of their interim report submitted in May 2022. However, DOL believes the final report would benefit by having the ACA provide a broader strategic framework for these recommendations. DOL asks the ACA to develop 6-10 high level elements of a strategic framework that can be included in the final report that will provide broader context for the totality of the recommendations provided, as well as provide a future roadmap for expanding, diversifying, and modernizing Registered Apprenticeship.

In addition to this strategic framework, included below are specific topic areas proposed for the ACA to address in Year 2 of the committee. These priority topics were identified based on DOL’s need for additional feedback on more specific policy areas and in consultation with the ACA chair and co-chairs. These priority topics align with previous ACA subcommittee focus areas, build on recommendations identified in the ACA interim report, and include DEIA as a cross-cutting focus across all topic areas.

DOL recognizes that these are complex policy issues where there may not be an initial consensus. However, DOL envisions that the ACA will strive to develop specific issue briefs and recommendations that can be complementary to, but do not need to be included in, the Final ACA report (due May 2023). DOL has developed possible questions that the subcommittees could address in its issue brief and will provide a template for use by subcommittees. To this end, the Department will utilize the existing subcommittee structure, but will narrow the scope of each of the previous subcommittees to focus on specific areas and priority questions. ACA members that wish to switch subcommittees should submit a request with their preferred subcommittee for Year 2 to OA as soon as possible.

**Proposed Year 2 ACA Topic Areas and Corresponding Sub-questions:**

1. **Industry Engagement in New and Emerging Industries:** (*Year 2 Focus: Industry Engagement to meet the emerging needs of industries that have historically used registered apprenticeship and those new to registered apprenticeship*).
   1. **Strategic Framework for Final Report.** Please develop 1-2 statements to be included as part of a broader strategic framework that provides overall direction for this specific topic area (Industry Engagement). Final themes or principles will be selected by the ACA as a whole to be included in the final report. Examples (for illustration only) of possible statements in this area include the following:

*While the sponsors and apprentices are the essential customers of the National Apprenticeship system, the system is made up of a broad range of stakeholders, partners and entities with clear roles that add value and benefits for our shared customers.*

*Registered Apprenticeship must continue to innovate to serve the emerging needs of existing industries and those industries that are new to apprenticeship resulting in a skilled workforce equipped with industry-recognized and valued credentials*

* 1. **Year 2 Issue Brief – Promoting Strategies Leading to Family Sustaining Wages across Industries.** How can DOL support strategies, including career pathways, for apprenticeships in lower wage or entry level occupations across all industries that articulate to higher level apprenticeable positions that provide family sustaining wages? What mechanisms are needed to articulate between or across apprenticeships such as direct entry and advance credit? Should there be different levels of Registered Apprenticeship? How do we ensure that well established existing occupations are not fragmented into lower skilled (and lower paying) occupations? Regarding DEIA, what actions are needed to mitigate occupational segregation, particularly in lower wage occupations, for under-represented populations?

1. **Apprenticeship Pathways: Pre-Apprenticeship, Youth Apprenticeship, and Degree Apprenticeships** (*Year 2 Focus: Youth Apprenticeship and Post-Secondary Pathways).*
2. **Strategic Framework for Final Report.** Please develop 1-2 statements to be included as part of a broader strategic framework that provides overall direction for this specific topic area (Apprenticeship Pathways). Final themes or principles will be selected by the ACA as a whole to be included in the final report. Examples (for illustration only) of possible statements in this area include the following:

*Registered Apprenticeships provide high quality career pathways for both adults and youth that lead to family sustaining wages, support good jobs (safe, worker voice, benefits, other), and provide ongoing post-secondary education options.*

1. **Year 2 Issue Brief - Youth Apprenticeship.** As DOL explores the viability of establishing different standards of registration for Youth Apprenticeship, particularly in-school youth at the secondary level, which core elements of apprenticeship (particularly requirements related to RTI and OJT) should be different and how? If the standards for registration are not different, what other mechanisms should be explored to expand youth apprenticeship and promote “dual” apprenticeship models? Should there be entry level occupations that are identified and/or developed as suitable for youth apprenticeship? What specific actions should Education take to promote career pathways and greater alignment with Registered Apprenticeship with secondary and post-secondary organizations? Regarding DEIA, how should DOL assess different youth apprenticeship program designs serving in-school vs. out-of-school youth, as well as opportunity youth.
2. **Apprenticeship Modernization** (*Year 2 Focus: Defining and Promoting High Quality Apprenticeship Programs)*
   1. **Strategic Framework for Final Report.** Please develop 1-2 statements to be included as part of a broader strategic framework that provides overall direction for this specific topic area (Apprenticeship Modernization). Final themes or principles will be selected by the ACA as a whole to be included in the final report. Examples (for illustration only) of possible statements in this area include the following:

*The National Apprenticeship system should be highly regarded, well-understood, navigable by its customers, and seen as high quality post-secondary education and training and the nation’s premiere workforce development model*

* 1. **Year 2 Issue Brief – Defining and Promoting High Quality Apprenticeship Programs.** Should DOL expand its core performance indicators for Registered Apprenticeship Programs beyond completion rates? What issues should DOL consider when defining any new measures to be adopted, including the burden of additional reporting requirements necessary to calculate any new measures? Does DOL’s Registered Apprenticeship criteria do enough to ensure approved programs are high quality? Should DOL establish a recognition program for high quality apprenticeship programs? What other considerations should DOL take into account in the establishment of such a program? Should there be different approaches or criteria for different stages of program development (developmental, proficient, advanced/mature)? What are the hallmarks and characteristics of the highest quality apprenticeship programs? Please consider criteria that is inclusive of performance outcomes (completion rates, wages, etc.), DEIA, job quality, worker voice, safety and supervision, quality instruction and other factors. Regarding DEIA, how best can DOL drive greater DEIA outcomes through performance measures (e.g., Equity Indices) and/or recognition for programs achieving strong DEIA outcomes? Recognizing legal limitations, are performance measures the right mechanism? Should these be system measures vs. individual program measures?

1. **Promoting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility in Registered Apprenticeship (DEIA)** *(Year 2 Focus: Transformative Efforts to Drive DEIA and Compliance with EEO)*
   1. **Strategic Framework for Final Report.** Please develop 1-2 statements to be included as part of a broader strategic framework that provides overall direction for this specific topic area (DEIA). Final themes or principles will be selected by the ACA as a whole to be included in the final report. Examples (for illustration only) of possible statements in this area include the following:

*Embed DEIA Fully into All Aspects of Registered Apprenticeship: Transformational, Not Siloed, Not an Afterthought, but rather Braided into the System.*

*DEIA will be central to the core and purpose of Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship*

* 1. **Year 2 Issue Brief** – **Transformative Efforts to Drive DEIA and Compliance with EEO (29 CFR 30).** Members of the DEIA subcommittee are encouraged to also join and provide feedback to other subcommittees on key cross-cutting issues such as living wages, occupational segregation, data needs, and regional and industry-specific strategies working on DEIA issues. Regarding pathways to living wages, what actions are needed to mitigate occupational segregation, particularly in lower wage occupations, for under-represented populations? Regarding youth apprenticeship, how should DOL assess different youth apprenticeship program designs serving in-school vs. out-of-school youth, as well as opportunity youth. Regarding promoting quality, how best can DOL drive greater DEIA outcomes through performance measures (e.g. Equity Indices) and/or recognition for programs achieving strong DEIA outcomes? Recognizing legal limitations, are performance measures the right mechanism? Should these be system measures vs. individual program measures? Finally, in addition to the initial focus on infrastructure (BIL) in Year 1, are there additional DEIA specific recommendations necessary to support the implementation of CHIPS and IRA?

**Continuing Subcommittees**

1. **Ex-Officio (Continuing Role)**
   1. Continue work begun in Year 1; cadence to be determined by members.
   2. Given that many ACA recommendations and current workforce development initiatives involve other federal agencies, what mechanisms can be established to promote further federal agency collaboration and alignment? Can Federal partners provide plans or strategies to address recommendations?
   3. How can better data sharing across federal agencies, including data on existing apprenticeship programs, promote stronger DEIA outcomes on workforce development initiatives and/or inform investment selection decisions? How can we make more of this data accessible to the public?
   4. Members or delegates are strongly encouraged to also join other subcommittees