



April 12, 2023

Senator Tammy Baldwin
141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative Robert Aderholt
266 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Senator Shelly Moore Capito
172 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative Rosa DeLauro
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Baldwin, Chair Aderholt, Ranking Member Capito, and Ranking Member DeLauro,

As national organizations representing the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors, we urge you to correct a longstanding inequity in how the federal government reports wage and employment data through the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Specifically, we ask you to direct \$4 million in Fiscal Year 2024 funding to the BLS Office of Employment and Unemployment Statistics, for the purpose of incorporating nonprofit organizations in the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). This funding would allow for the publication of a quarterly news release with detailed estimates of employment and wages disaggregated by industry sector at the national and state levels, and, where possible, a research series of annual averages at the sub-state (county) level.

By law, charitable nonprofits exist to serve a charitable purpose. They play a critical role in enriching our civil society and lifting their communities' voice. In addition to this work, the nonprofit sector is an economic powerhouse – the nation's third-largest employer at more than 12.5 million workers and 10% of the private workforce. In the course of doing good, these organizations constitute a vital piece of our nation's economy.

Most every sector of that economy – including many that are much smaller than nonprofits – can track its employment totals and wage information from BLS on a quarterly basis. This allows employers in those sectors to benchmark their outcomes against larger trends, while helping policymakers understand challenges and craft responsive policy. Unfortunately, nonprofit organizations cannot do the same because nonprofit data are released only every five years, if resources permit, with the most recent data provided for 2017.

In addition to its fundamental unfairness, this system serves our sector and the American people extremely poorly. The nonprofit workforce is depleted and weary after years of pandemic crisis, leaving many vulnerable communities with frayed lifelines while economic pressures build. According to its mission statement in the 2020-2025 strategic plan, the BLS “measures labor market activity in the U.S. economy to support public and private decision making.” This mission simply cannot be achieved with a blind spot for the economy’s third-largest employer.

We appreciate that the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies in both the House and Senate included language in support of nonprofit QCEW data in their respective Fiscal Year 2023 committee reports. This language is a welcome recognition that these data would benefit the American economy, the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors, and – most importantly – the communities that these organizations serve.

For these reasons, we join with [more than 250 nonprofits, philanthropic organizations, and scholars nationwide](#) in urging you to provide \$4 million for the BLS to incorporate nonprofit organizations into the QCEW. We look forward to working with you toward its enactment.

Association of Fundraising Professionals
Aspen Institute's Program on Philanthropy and Social Innovation
Council on Foundations
Independent Sector
National Council of Nonprofits
United Philanthropy Forum