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RACE/ETHNICITY ROUNDTABLE )

Thursday,
March 10, 2022

Teleconference
U.S. International
Trade Commission
500 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C.

The roundtable commenced, pursuant to notice, at
1:00 p.m., before the United States International Trade
Commission.

PARTICIPANTS:

USITC:

CHAIR JASON E. KEARNS, Moderator
VICE CHAIR RANDOLPH J. STAYIN
Commissioner David S. Johanson
COMMISSIONER RHONDA K. SCHMIDTLEIN
COMMISSIONER AMY A. KARPEL

WILLIAM R. BISHOP, Supervisory Hearings and
Information Officer
BRITTANY QUICKEL, ASL Interpreter
DANA RED, ASL Interpreter

External:

DR. OFRONAMA BIU, Urban Institute
MICHELLE BURRIS, The Century Foundation
DR. PAM EDDINGER, Bunker Hill Community College
DR. ANTONIO R. FLORES, Hispanic Association of
Colleges and Universities
EMMANUEL (MANNY) FLORES, Washington State
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APPEARANCES: (Cont'd)

External:

MICHAEL MITCHELL, Groundwork Collaborative
MIKE MITCHELL, Alliance for American Manufacturing
DR. GBADEBO ODULARU, Bay Atlantic University
LINDSAY PATTERSON, United Steelworkers
DR. VALERIE RAWLSTON WILSON, Economic Policy Institute
GEORGE SALMERON II, IntlSupplyChain.com
IRVING A. WILLIAMSON, former U.S. International Trade Commissioner
CHAIR KEARNS: Good afternoon to everyone. I'm Jason Kearns, a Commissioner, and the current Chair of the U.S. International Trade Commission. Welcome to our third roundtable to study the distributional effects of trade and trade policy on U.S. workers.

Today is the second opportunity we have to discuss race and ethnicity specifically. I'll be the moderator for today's event. The Agency's other Commissioners, Vice Chair Randy Stayin, David Johanson, Rhonda Schmidtlein, and Amy Karpel, are also actively listening, and may ask some questions towards the end of our discussion.

Commission staff members, Minaz Khan, Kate Linton, and Pamela Davis organized this roundtable, and I want to thank them, and the rest of the big team we have who have been working on this for all of their great work.

Before we get started, I'd like to tell you a little bit about the Commission and the purpose of this roundtable. The Commission is an independent agency, it is not part of the President's Administration, and it's not part of Congress. We are also nonpartisan in the sense that no more than three of the six Commissioners can come from the same political party, and we are well-insulated from political crosswinds given, for example, that each of us...
serves a term of nine years, and cannot seek reappointment.

The Commission provides policymakers and the public an independent analysis and information on matters relating to international trade, and that's why we're here today.

The U.S. Trade Representative, Katherine Tai, asked us to gather input on how international trade affects U.S. workers differently by skill, wage, and salary level, gender, race ethnicity, age, and income level, especially as it affects under-represented and under-served communities.

There will be seven roundtables in all, each focusing on a different topic.

At the conclusion of all the roundtables, the Commission is going to submit a written report summarizing the information we've gathered during the roundtables, and from other parts of this investigation. That report will be delivered in October of this year, and it will be publicly available.

My role today as moderator of this roundtable is to ask questions, and manage the flow of discussion so that everyone has a chance to speak. Your role as a participant is to share experiences, opinions, and information, and hopefully to respond to other participants in the roundtable.

I am very happy with the diversity and breadth of experience you all contribute to this particular roundtable. We have people who have worked on factory floors, union
leaders, educators, researchers, advocates, a business owner, and even a former I.T.C. Commissioner. Welcome, Commissioner Williamson. It's good to see you.

I invite everyone to share their perspective. There are no right or wrong answers. We want your candid thoughts. We're going to need all that experience, and all of you listening and responding to one another to pull this off. To pull this off is a very difficult task.

As I see it, these roundtables are very challenging because they require us to combine three things that are often separate, and that haven't really been combined before.

One, the individual experiences of workers. We have other venues in which we're going to have academic symposium, or hearings, but this is our best opportunity to really hear from individual workers, or those who have direct experience talking with individual workers.

Two, an understanding of how those individual experiences differ based on race and ethnicity, which requires us to look beyond what an individual experiences, and understand the experiences of others.

And then, three, an understanding of how trade impacts all of that.

Let me give you just one example. Trade researchers know that trade policy changes can require workers to transition from one job to another, and they try
to understand how that transition will work, how much friction that will be.

We have some understanding of what kind of job is created, and what kind of job is lost, as a result of the trade policy change. The trade economists to date haven't analyzed to a great extent whether, for example, a black or Latino worker might have a harder, or an easier time transitioning from one job to another compared to others in the work force.

On the other hand, those who study distributional economic effects may know that a black or Latino worker typically has maybe less savings to rely upon when she loses a job, and needs to find a new one, but unlike trade economists, they don't know what sectors of the economy are likely to grow, and what sectors are likely to shrink as a result of trade policy changes.

Those are the kinds of dots we need to connect with this study with lots of help from all of you. Some of you can share your own, or other people's individual experiences, even though you may not be experts in trade policy. Others have researched the economics of various racial or ethnic groups, and still others understand trade very well, but maybe haven't studied economic issues of race and ethnicity.

Still other may be able to tell us firsthand how imports or exports impacted their own job security, and their own wages.
We'll need to hear from all of you, and hopefully you all will listen and respond to one another in order to connect the dots, or break down issue silos as one organization that is represented here has put it, and help us understand those very complicated issues.

So, before we get started, I have a few housekeeping items. First, our discussion today is scheduled to last about two hours, but we're likely to make it more like two and a-half, or three. We've noticed in the past that it takes a little while for the participants to kind of get going, and then once they get going, there's plenty to say, and, so we may go a little bit more like two and a-half hours, or so, and we'll break sometime around 2:15, or maybe a little bit later to let everybody kind of stretch their legs before we come back.

Also, please remember that this is public, and it's open to the public and the press, so discussions today are being transcribed for the record, and a link to the transcript will be included in the final report to you USTR, so, please don't share any information that you view as confidential.

If we have the media joining us today, please feel free to reach out to our External Affairs Department if you have any questions. Contact information for External Affairs is on our website.
If you'd like to make a comment, please use the Webex raised hand feature, and I will recognize you. If that doesn't work for some reason, go ahead and just raise your real hand, and I'll try to get -- I'll try to call on you as well. And if you're participating by phone, as Bill Bishop, our Secretary, mentioned, you may jump in when you sense there's a pause.

Please remember that only registered participants are invited to speak during today's discussion. If you're not a registered participant, and would like to provide input at a future roundtable, or would like to submit written comments, please send an email to DE@USITC.gov.

Whenever you make a comment, please state your name so it's clear to everyone who is speaking, and if there's an organization with which you are affiliated that you'd like to identify, please also state the name of that organization, or the firm you work for when you comment.

Once again, I'd like to thank all of you for being here today. I'm looking forward to an enlightening discussion, so let's all get started. Feel free to jump in at any time.

MR. BISHOP: Mr. Chair?

CHAIR KEARNS: Yes.

MR. BISHOP: I am sorry. I have one more thing to let people know about, and if it's important, so I apologize.
I wanted to let people know that we do have closed captioning available today, and what I'm going to do is share my screen again with you quickly.

Down in this bottom left-hand corner you'll see a little c.c. with a little -- and a little box. Click on that, and you'll see a caption bar start. It is not going to give you the name of the person who is speaking, but if you look at my block, it's highlighted blue, and you can see my name in the upper left-hand corner, so you'll know who's speaking.

The other choices in the bottom left-hand corner of your Webex, you'll see something that says panel options. Click that. You'll see captions. That's going to make a little note section over here. It is going to tell you who, but it is slow. It's not as fast as the chat, or that you'll see, so it's up to you which one you want to use.

I did also want to let people know that Brittany has let us know that we will have our ASL folks just two hours, just until 3:00. Is that correct, or, Brittany, are you able to see us? I saw Dame is unable.

ASL INTERPRETER: I'm sorry, I can't comment about that at this time.

MR. BISHOP: Okay, I understand. I'll find out. I'll find out, okay. But that's the close captioning for folks who do need that, okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
CHAIR KEARNS: Sure, thank you. Okay. So, I want to break the conversation down, I think, into kind of three different components, and, again, it's probably not going to go the way I'm planning it, and I just want it to be a free-flowing conversation, so don't feel constrained by this. But I thought if we started by kind of understanding the context in which we're answering these questions a little bit better. So, how are various communities historically situated in the U.S. labor market, how are different groups in the U.S. -- what kind of impact they have in the U.S. economy, that's the first subject. The second is a better understanding of trade impacts, you know, how trade has impacted workers in particular groups.

And then the third topic will be a better understanding of what kind of trade policies -- what kind of changes could be made to trade policies, in order to better address some of the issues that we talk about to that point.

So, those are sort the three different baskets of issues we'll address, but, again, feel free to comment however you like whenever you like.

But we'll start with the first question. Let's talk about how various communities are historically situated in the U.S. labor market because I think that's an important context to understanding how these communities are impacted...
by trade and trade policy.

So, for example, as it relates to the racial and ethnic community or communities that you are a part of, or are most familiar with, what structural factors help or hinder the ability to find and hold a job, and earn a living wage. What changes have there been over the past 25 or 30 years, for example.

Would anyone like to comment on that question?

DR. EDDINGER: They are really shy people around the table, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR KEARNS: That's okay.

DR. EDDINGER: So, why don't I try to start, and see if I can get the ball rolling here.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay.

DR. EDDINGER: So, I'm a community college president located in Boston, and there are 1,200 community colleges across the nation. We are very typical mid to large size urban institutions, and all of my students come within eight miles of where they live through public transportation, and the racial/ethnic breakdown of my college is also typical of urban communities. It's a quarter white, quarter black, and quarter Hispanic/Latino mix, 15 percent Asian, and 10 percent a mixture of all of them.

My students are from communities of color, inner city communities, and gateway cities that are at least 50 to
75 percent immigrant, and a number of multilingual speakers, and emerging English speakers. So we have about 16,000 students, and we're only medium size, so you can imagine how large that work force impact would be as all of these folks are credentialed, and get into the work force.

We are non-traditional in our age. The average age is 28, so about a third coming out of high school, and the other two-thirds are adults, either immigrant, or adults returning to get a new skill set for work, and, so on. So we are really sort of the ground anchoring of the next generation work force.

Anything that impacts our community, but, in particular, the current COVID situation, has had a deep impact because these are communities that are not well-to-do, and about 77 percent of our students are from the two lowest percentile (phonetic) of income.

So, you can imagine as their communities are impacted, and the basic social network, or safety net, that's underneath them begin to disintegrate, that would be education, healthcare, housing, transportation, childcare, all the things that enables a vibrant work force, or folks to come back to school to get better credentialed, when that begins to disintegrate, the effect is domino, and exponential in some ways. So, I kind of lay that on the table. And close to 50 percent of all the undergraduates in the United
States are from community colleges.

So, our success really moves our work force towards better credentialing, and as all of us are looking at new industries that are emerging in the environment, we call them new collar, not white collar, not blue collar, but new collar work, and that's things like clean energy, green energy, blue -- you know, the blue sector, we're going to need a lot more skilled labor in order to support the emergence of those industries, and I would imagine, I'm not an expert in trade, so I can't say, but it would have a great deal to do with supporting those sectors as well. So, I hope that sort of helped lay the groundwork a little bit.

CHAIR KEARNS: That's very helpful. Thank you, Doctor. Is it Eddinger or Eddinger?

DR. EDDINGER: Eddinger, like Tigger, but I'm happy with Pam.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay. Okay, good. Thank you. I think next up was Mr. Mitchell.

MR. MITCHELL: Yes. Good afternoon, or good morning depending on where everyone is. For the community that I'm in, some of this is going to be a little a repeat, but I came in on a consent degree where the company failed to hire enough minorities within its facility. There were only two of us that came into that position, and then it was a maintenance position in there, and there were a number of
other manufacturers within that community.

Let me start back from here, U.S. Steel. There was American Can. They were there with their plants for years (phonetic), so there were quite a few manufacturers that were in the Gary, Indiana community in there that provided a lot of good paying jobs for a lot of people in there.

As those industries got to be cut back and affected in there, it affected that whole Gary, Indiana community, including U.S. Steel, because when they cut back, I'm going to say within a 60-mile radius it was difficult to find a job.

As was mentioned earlier in there, the transportation was not adequate in order for you to get from one community to another one in there. So it was really hard in there. The community was hit really hard when those manufacturers left in there.

The other part of that is manufacturing in America is no different than the NFL with lack of diversity in the hiring position in there. I guess the Rooney Rule still applied to manufacturing. The difference between the two is the NFL addressed this issue, with several of these issues, with the players on the field. They just needed to address the coaching, and the upper level.

Manufacturing needs to address both of them. And in order to do that, we need to make manufacturing -- we need
to address ours at a higher level, and make it a nationwide shoutout, and not just to individual communities. This needs to be a national shoutout across the country as to how minorities in manufacturing is playing such a small role, and yet their communities is being impacted in a negative way.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, great. Thank you, Mr. Mitchell. I think I have next up Dr. Biu, and Mr. Patterson, and Commissioner Williamson, and Dr. Flores. We have a Dr. Flores, and a Mr. Flores, and, I think, that's everyone I have so far. So, let's start with Dr. Biu, please.

DR. BIU: Hello, again. My name is Ofronama Biu, and I work with the Urban Institute, so I'll share some research that I do around black workers in the economy.

So, black workers historically twice as likely to be unemployed than their white counterparts. The latest jobs report showing that the unemployment rate this past December fell for all workers in the U.S. except for black women. There was also a sharp drop in labor force participation for black women, most recently falling one and a-half percentage points according to Brooking Institute Report. We didn't see that with other groups across race and gender.

Black people have always had lower wages than white counterparts even with the same education, so, for example, you may have heard stats about black women earning 64 cents on the dollar compared to white men, for example.
There is the issue of occupational segregation, suicide from earning less wage within the exact same occupation. There's also the challenge of black workers being segregated into lower paying roles.

So, for example, my research on occupational crowding, which takes educational attainment, education requirements of occupations into account, I found that for every $10,000 increase in average wages in an occupation, the share of black women falls by (technical interference) compared to white men, and nine percentage points for black men compared to white men.

We also see some work force screening opportunities with black people being over-represented in lower paying apprenticeships as well.

And Michael Mitchell talked about manufacturing, and how the fall of manufacturing has impacted black folks. Go on to talk about childcare, and the impact of the decline in childcare worker roles, it impacts black parents, and also the black workers who are in childcare roles, and the many challenges with the low pay, and low healthcare coverage, low retirement coverage in those roles.

And I'll end with, you know, aside from looking at wages in occupations, thinking about benefits, thinking about the fact that black women and black men are less likely to be in roles that offer health insurance and retirement coverage,
and even when they are in the same roles as their white counterparts, their coverage rates are lower.

And also thinking about arrangements. Aside from nontraditional work, temporary work, you see in my research black women to black men being over-represented in temporary agency positions. There's also been other research that's done showing that black workers face less desirable assignments when they are temps as compared to other groups of workers. So, I'll end that there.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay. Thank you, Dr. Biu. And that's something, I think, we heard at another roundtable that with black workers it tends to be last in/first out. That's the expression that was used. I guess that's kind of consistent with what we're hearing from you as well.

Okay. Thank you. Next up, I think, Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON: Good afternoon. How are you doing?

My name is Lindsay Patterson. I'm a business representative for United Steelworkers Local 286, but prior to this I was the President of Local 404 for about 15 years. In our manufacturing facility we made steel tubing. So, you know, we were --

CHAIR KEARNS: You're in the Philadelphia area, is that right?

MR. PATTERSON: Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, yes. And we were Allied Tube at one time. We
were the fastest tube mill in the entire world.

So, you know, when Allied came into Philadelphia, they were looking for workers. A lot of our men and women from our inner cities were able to get jobs, good jobs, through the union, good union-paying jobs, and they were taking a lot of our -- a few of our returning citizens, but they were taking a lot of people from the military. So, if you had a military background, you could definitely come to work at Allied and have a family-sustaining job for life.

So, some of our members were 35, 40-year employees; however, we went from the fastest tube mill in the world, I mean, breaking records, to being affected by trade because of the illegal dumping from China, Korea, and other places.

So, you know, first our company started eliminating certain lines that were profitable in our past, but because of bad trade deals, they said that we could no longer compete with fence piping. Fence piping was one of our major products.

So, now we're giving away the fence pipe industry to somebody else because they can make it cheaper, they can make it faster, and it just kind of started an erosion of our business to the point where in 2015 we were shut down.

So, for us, you know, we were scrambling to try to find out where the next manufacturing job could come from because we were all experts in manufacturing, you know, and
if you've been there for 40 years, it's highly unlikely that
you had a skill doing anything else. If you were there for
30 years, or 25 years, it's mostly likely that's what you do,
you know, you're a machine operator in the manufacturing
facility.

And you traveled. You had your route like some of
the guests spoke of earlier, your bus routes to the plant.
You know, some had cars, some didn't have cars, but in the
surrounding areas there weren't other opportunities similar
to the skill sets that we possessed.

So, the big thing at that time was, well, you can
always go to TAA, you know, and you could get retrained
because that's what everybody was talking about, and to today
still talking about retraining.

So, for me I was 61 years old when the plant
closed, and I did some training, but for an African American
male at 61, there ain't a whole lot of positions that are
going to be open to me. There are not a lot of recruiters
that are going to be recruiting people over 50 to do the same
job that I can get someone 30 years old to do with the same
skill set, with a renewed skill set.

So, you know, we struggle to learn new skill sets,
but young people pick up skill sets quicker; therefore,
they're going to be more efficient on the job, and for an
industry that's booming and growing even in the green sector,
those are challenges that minorities are going to be faced
with for decades to come if we don't figure out a way to
include older generations now that people are living older,
and working until older age.

Retirement age is moving, it keeps moving, they keep moving the needle. So, you can't retire, you can't say, well, you know, that's it, I'm going to retire. You got to find another job. But if you're a machine operator making steel tubing, and now you're going to be a machine operator making solar panels, that's a different skill set, and, you know, that's a different mind set.

So, when I ran steel tubing at a thousand feet a minute, I probably couldn't run solar panels at a thousand feet a minute. You know what I mean? But maybe some young kid that played video games, you know, growing up, they might have that skill set where they can adapt a lot more quickly.

So, from a corporate standpoint what do you do? You can't tell me I'm too old, but you just don't call me back. You can't tell another guy that he's, you know, not fast enough; you just don't call them back. So, now we end up with that vicious cycle that keeps reoccurring and repeating itself.

So, I don't know the answer to that, but I know that these bad trade deals leave us stuck in the community, you know what I mean, where we started from, and where we
were once pillars in the community because we had a major manufacturing job. Major manufacturing jobs means you're a major player in the community. Your family is eating, your family is living, your family is thriving in whatever community you come from.

You know, and in places like Philadelphia, Gary, Indiana, at Chicago, and other places, you know, we have some tough neighborhoods, you know, but through, you know what I mean, successful union jobs, and successful manufacturing opportunities, you know, we're able to survive until the doors close.

And a lot of times we've got to get a second chance. We never get a second chance to regain our prominence in the community; therefore, you know, yeah, Wal-Mart will take you, and show people where the bathroom is, but, you know, you can't buy the new car that your family is used to. You can't send your kids to the best schools that your family is used to. You can't take a vacation, on a trip that your family was used to.

And, so, you know, those are things that not only cripple the neighborhoods, and then you have your second generations that used to be able to piggyback off of mom and dad working in the manufacturing to actually come into those jobs because -- community college is good, college is good, but we know that all of our children are just not built for...
college.

And, so sometimes we force them into a situation that's destined to fail. You know, apprenticeship would be a more likely avenue for some kids who work with their hands, but college is the next level, is the next step.

As the Doctor mentioned earlier, you know, that's where everybody is headed to community college. But coming out of community college everybody doesn't get the proper placement because, you know, the community college is a fast-moving machine, and sometimes it takes a little bit more training to actually understand what you're doing with your hands, and how to become adept at mechanical ability.

And, I think, that sometimes people are just disillusioned about community college, and mechanical ability, you know what I mean? In some places you can't really rationalize those two coming together.

And, so, I think that, you know, in this economy right now we got to look out for all workers, and especially aging workers who are being really, really, really left out of the conversation, and of the training process. You know, nobody wants a 61-year-old apprentice, but that's the guy that can work with his hands, and can get up to speed rapidly, but it's just the thought a 60-year-old apprentice is just -- you either got it, or you don't.

CHAIR KEARNS: That's a really good point, and
we're going to have think more, I think, about, you know, to what extent we need to talk about older workers as an underrepresented, underserved community because I think that there's a lot of reasons for doing so. And so that's a point very well taken.

I want to ask you two follow-up questions, Mr. Patterson. One is, can you tell us a little bit more about what happened to you after? You said you tried retraining, something like that, and it didn't work out so well, so I'd like to hear about your personal experience.

And then also -- I'm just trying to follow up on something we heard from Dr. Biu about how racial minorities, ethnic minorities at your particular factory might have been impacted differently by trade than others.

And so, one thing I'm wondering, of course we've heard about, you know, in some sectors there are more racial minorities in that sector and maybe that sector was hit harder by trade, so that's an obvious impact.

But I think we're hearing from Dr. Biu that the other thing is, even if your factory is just as representative as any other factory of the United States in terms of its racial makeup, it sounds too like from Dr. Biu that, you know, again, last-in first-out, in other words, is that right?

MR. PATTERSON: And not only that, it's just --
look, this is still America. So, you know, I mean, the
perception is that, you know what I mean, African Americans
are not going to learn a new trade. You know, that's just
kind of -- so, we're not given a chance to actually reinvent
ourselves, you know, unless you become a doctor or a lawyer,
you know. Then there's work for you there, but most people
over 50 can't really master a craft like that. They can
barely master, you know what I mean, a computer programming
skill or computer repair skill.

And even if you get a computer repair skill, a
young Asian kid or a young White kid will probably get the
job over an older African American such as myself, just
because of the perception of the times and, who's exposed to
what, you know?

Coming up through school, these kids are all being
exposed to that. So, you know, some of our young African
American men and women will prevail, but for the most part,
we get skipped over and left out because of, you know, our
race, you know, again, because of where we come from, you
know, it kind of limits us to how we can -- because, first of
all, you know, our school background is not going to be
stellar.

We're not going to come from the Ivy League
schools, you know what I mean, that a lot of people come
from. So when you start looking at resumes, you look at the
school that somebody came from, then you look at the level
that they're trying to achieve.

And if they're going into a computer programming
class, well, Mr. Patterson, you know, I appreciate you
applying, but I have five, six, eight candidates that I could
easily look at, you know what I mean? So, that over top of
somebody that's 50, or 61 in my case when my plant closed.

And then I had a lot of other people in my plant
who had 25, 35, even 40 years. You know, they didn't have to
have those skills, so they didn't grow up learning those
skills. So, even if you take a class to achieve those
skills, you don't perfect those skills, you only achieve
those skills.

So, in the fast-moving climate that we're in, I
want somebody that's perfected the skills as opposed to
achieve the skills if I'm going to pay them weekly or monthly
to do this service. And I think that, you know, I mean,
minorities are falling short in that respect.

And I don't know, you know, how we correct that
part in a short amount of time, but it's something that we
definitely need to address, and I hope we do.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you very much, appreciate
that. That's very helpful. Let's see. I think next up we
had -- Commissioner Williamson, I'm not sure in this context
if I call you Commissioner Williamson or if that's just
confusing, but I'm going to call you Commissioner Williamson.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Okay, fine. That's what I've been called for the last 14 years, so that's fine.

CHAIR KEARNS: Good to see you again.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Okay, thank you. No, it's good to be here. Thank you very much for giving this opportunity because this problem of all Americans competing in the international economy and getting their fair share is something that's been bugging me for decades, and I'm very happy that the Commission is finally looking at some of the root causes and trying to think of some solutions.

In that context, one of the things that I wanted to focus on was there's been a lot of talk among economists about the racial wealth gap between Blacks and Whites. And I wanted to mention that in the context of the implications it has for the ability for African Americans and other minorities to compete in the global economy and, shall we say, get their fair share of the benefits of international trade and mitigate the adverse impacts.

Many people have addressed why there's a racial wealth gap and, you know, the history of structural racism, discrimination, you know, it's well-documented. But in terms of our thinking about the implications of international trade, the importance of addressing that problem is urgent.

Building on what Dr. Biu had said earlier,
mentioned that there have been studies that have shown -- and these go back to the 1990s, and particularly there's a Professor Timothy Bateson (phonetic), Margaret Simms (phonetic), and I'll provide the Staff these references after our hearing today.

But they had showed that Black-owned firms are more likely to hire black workers. This may not be a surprise to anybody. I spent a long time in New York, and I noticed, when you're talking about looking to small business, you often thought about what they call "ethnic tribalism", you know, they're going to hire the folks that look like them.

But this is important because if there is a racial wealth gap, then that means that minority-owned firms, the people who work for them are not going to have the same benefits that maybe people who work for a majority of, you know, a white-owned firmed.

And there have been studies that show that, actually, employee-owned firms do more to address their racial and gender wealth gap than other firms. And I'll provide these references, too. And so, in thinking about how do you address these problems, one of the ways of thinking about it is how are workers going to get a fair share.

And if you think about a black-owned firm treating its workers better, I think about an employee-owned firm treating its workers better, that is more likely those
workers are going to compete in the global economy more effectively than if they're with a firm that doesn't have that care about its workers.

And so, I think it is appropriate for the Commission, in thinking about solutions, while you can't tell people how to organize their businesses or how to structure, I think you can point to some conditions which show that workers are going to fare better in certain types of firms.

CHAIR KEARNS: Like employee-owned firms, you're saying, for example?

MR. WILLIAMSON: Right, yeah, and there are some very interesting studies on this, and I'll give those to the Commission.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, thank you. We've been focused more on workers, but I guess you're saying for maybe black-owned businesses, if they have less capital, less wealth in the business, my guess is -- I'm trying to link this up to trade -- I'm guessing, and especially from something we heard in Fresno the other day -- that that may make it harder for them to exploit export opportunities, may make it harder for them to compete with imports in any given situation if they don't kind of have more of a cushion to do that?

MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, that's exactly what it says. And they're not going to probably grow as fast or
successfully as some other firms, and that impacts the
workers who gets hired. You know, the U.S. has a lot of
small business programs, minority-owned business development
programs, and it is worth thinking about those in terms of
whether or not they are effectively helping firms to compete
in the international economy.

I was surprised to learn recently that the Treasury
Department has a program called the Community Development
Financial Institution Fund, which does a lot to help small
business and minority-owned business. So, there's an
infrastructure out there that the country has, and the
question, is that infrastructure adequately served in
minority-owned firms, and are there things that we can do
better to help them do that?

I'll get to, later, about the importance of
services trade versus manufacturing and the role of small,
medium-sized businesses competing in that. But this was the
point I wanted to make at this point. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: That's very helpful, thank you. I
think next up we have Dr. Flores.

DR. FLORES: Thank you, Chairman Kearns, and thank
you for inviting me to be part of the roundtable. And I
obviously want to emphasize that community colleges like
Bunker Hill in Massachusetts are a very large part of our
association. We have more than 500 colleges and universities
that belong to the Hispanic collection of colleges and (phonetic) universities because they have the vast majority of Latino college students.

There are 3.8 million nationwide, Hispanic college students today, and 67 percent of them attend our institutions that are primarily called Spanish-serving institutions. I wanted to also emphasize that these institutions have a very diverse, broadly speaking (technical interference), not just the majority of Hispanics.

More than three times as many African Americans attend Hispanic-serving institutions as they do all the HBCUs combined. And more than 42 percent of all the Asian Americans in college today attend Hispanic-serving institutions. Twice as many Native American college students as there are at tribal college universities attend HSIs.

And of course we have a very sizable number of non-Hispanic White students as well. What they all share in common is that, for the most part, they come from low income homes. And the vast majority of white and Latino students in these institutions, which collectively they enroll about 5.3 million students nationwide, and they have that in common; they come from homes that are low-income.

And families that, for the most part, didn't have the opportunity to get a college education or even a high school education, in some cases. But in the cases of Latino
students, many of them come from homes where not only is
college and the college-going tradition absent, but even the
command of English is not there for their parents or family
members.

And in many instances, they are first-generation
college students from families who have never really been
given an interaction with a college. So, why do I say all of
this? Because I'm listening to the conversation, and the
underlying current of all of the discussions so far, in my
mind, has a common thread, that is, undereducation
--undereducation and training of low-income and minority
populations.

And that's where we are having a structural issue
right there. The gentleman was saying it's very hard to, at
the middle of whatever point in your life you are, shift
gears and be learning when you don't have the foundation.

You can have these skills, but you need to have the
basis, and that includes advanced mathematics, science,
English, and so forth, and many of the families that are
minority lack that.

And so, they can all learn new things that are
heavily based on math and science. And so, advanced
manufacturing, now artificial intelligence, just any area of
technology today is heavily grounded in mathematics and
science.
So, that's why we believe very strongly that the key to much of what we experience in America in terms of inequality, which is very much there and growing in the quality between our low-income families and those that have too much, is based on that, that, for the most part, those at the top are highly educated and come from those Ivy League institutions.

The lower educated probably are going to find themselves struggling to advance. And so, I could get minority-serving institutions, HBCUs, tribal colleges, Hispanic-serving institutions, they all need and deserve a lot more investment from Congress and from states to bring them up to par so that they can have those robust programs and advanced degrees that are so much part of our growing economy.

And unless we invest much more seriously in these populations and these institutions, probably the inequities are going to continue growing. And trade, of course we know, international trade makes not a huge difference, as far as the question of income levels across different populations.

It makes a lot of different within populations when you look at those within a particular community getting higher-level skillsets and education doing a lot better under these conditions than those with not.

And so, I think that's something that the Trade
Commission overly might want to look at, in terms of how you
can recommend to Congress that they invest a lot more than
they have been doing it, and the institutions that are really
now providing the bulk of the new entrants to the American
labor force.

51 percent of all the new workers joining our labor
force today are Hispanic. It is in the demographics. We are
more than 62 million throughout the country, and we're the
youngest population in the U.S.

So, if you look at the make-up of K-12 students,
which are predicting the future, given Texas where I live, 55
percent of the K-12 students in public schools are Hispanic.
You go to California, it is the same thing. These are the
two largest states in the nation.

You know, California would be the 11th largest
economy if it were a country -- I mean, not the 11th, the
5th. Texas would be the 9th itself. All I'm saying is we
need to invest a lot more, particularly in education.

And, you know, when the pandemic hit our country,
the most impacted communities were minority populations. And
that applies to education too because a lot of institutions
didn't have the means to shift gears immediately and move
onto virtual programs because they didn't have the big
pockets and none of that.

And then at the homes where they were supposed to
stay to avoid the contagion, they didn't have the broadband connectivity. It was a one two punch. So, we have a lot to do, and our association of course will be more than happy to work with the Commission in any way possible to bring about change in that area.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Dr. Flores. I think you've sort of answered all three of these questions that we're going to address today -- the context, trade impact, and then new policies. What I hear you saying is, in terms of context, that Latinos are less likely to be highly educated, and then in terms of trade impacts, I think in the United States trade tends to benefit the highly-educated more so than the less education.

And so, I think what I'm hearing you saying is one policy fix would be to provide better incentives and better programs to educate Latinos and give them the education that they need to succeed?

DR. FLORES: Absolutely.

CHAIR KEARNS: Good. Okay, thank you. I think next up is Mr. Flores.

MR. E. FLORES: Thank you, Commissioner Kearns. Hi, my name's Emmanuel Flores. My pronouns are he/him. I'm going to talk a little bit about where I work. My background -- about my education and how I got here, my work specifically on the work that I do with WIOA and TAA, and
then address how communities are impacted with lack of resources.

So, I work for the Washington State Labor Council, ASLCIO. They are a union-led, union-affiliated organization at the State level. We have over 600 affiliated unions. We represent about, or over, 550,000 union workers across the state, and their current officers are President Larry Brown and Secretary of Treasury April Simms, who is also the first Woman of Color and first black person to be elected as a WSLC Executive Officer.

In addition, the work that I do -- excuse me, I'm going to jump on a topic here -- but the work that I do at the Washington State Labor Council is I'm contracted by the employment security department. We're on a grant to be a labor advocate as well as pursue trade adjustment assistance petitions or assist the state in filing them, unions, or just workers all around.

We do a lot of work, from just helping workers navigate or trying to get access to different resources, or if they run into any kind of snags, bumps, or any issues. But a lot of that happens because of the partnership that exists inside Washington State, and there's a lot of partnerships that are around having State agencies, labor, and business at the table and having the discussions and trying to bring forth, kind of, where the commonalities and
where the things are that can be changed or addressed that
will support all workers in an equitable workforce as well as
economic development.

    So, a little bit about my background -- and I feel
it is pertinent to the conversation -- is my parents were
second-generation. I'm third-generation American, but they
also were union workers, and it was not in my economic plan
to be able to afford to go to college. So, I joined the
military, got out of the military, ended up finding two jobs
when I got out, barely paid rent.

    At the time, it was my spouse and my oldest, my
step-son, and, you know, having to come up with creative ways
to scrape up some extra pennies and eating peanut butter and
jelly sandwiches for three meals a day.

    It wasn't until I was connected with my union, my
apprenticeship at that time, which was with the International
Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 73, and that was
where I started on a path that I felt led to prosperity and
economic stability for my household.

    Through those trainings and my education from my
union and my apprenticeship have led me to the work that I'm
doing today. As of today with my union support and the
services that I currently use that I'm with, the Office
Professionals Employees International Union, Local 8, they
have a college fund that I have gained access to, and now --
excuse me, I get choked up -- a little excited, but this coming May, hopefully, as long as my grades go well, I will be a first-generation college student, part of that generation in my family to graduate and have a degree.

CHAIR KEARNS: Congratulations in advance.

MR. E. FLORES: Thank you. So, what I'm getting at is how communities are impacted by trade, or just how communities are impacted when resources aren't available. I want to start with saying that anybody can do anything if they have the right support system in place.

And sometimes there are inherent pushbacks that happen in the system when workers, BIPOC workers, are trying access services and support to either transition or try to make a change in finding the next best step for their household.

So, for example, when the pandemic hit, the immigrant farmers, or the BIPOC community that supported the farming industry that kept our grocery stores stocked with food so I could feed my family, there was no resources at the time, such as unemployment insurance or anything that they could access to support their household when the pandemic hit their family or their space.

So, the Washington State Labor Council engaged with State and other resources in conversations, and they brought together a fund that could help immigrant workers and migrant
workers that were be impacted.

So, you know, when it comes to how this impacts communities, it really impacts even household ownership, and that's one of the things to really think about, is that space, what's best for someone's household. When I say "household", it can be in so many different aspects. It could be a person from having pets that depend on them, other human life, or even elders that are living in their home.

But if household ownership, through a recent economic state study, household ownership is shown in Washington State as over 66 percent white homeownership, Latinx communities are seeing 21 percent less than that, and black or African American communities are seeing 35 percent less than their White counterparts.

Overall, the black and African American communities in the state of Washington, that is 11.5 percent more than the national average. So, how does it impact communities? Well, if the support systems aren't there or there's inherent pushback, people will get frustrated, will be left behind, and will not have a chance to play an active role in the economic development in a state.

So, when it comes to trade, if there are trade deals or a Commission that is watching for these unfair dumpings that happen, I think it's really important, and that trade adjustment assistance benefits are married to trade
deals.

Because right now we're in 2021 TAA reversion. So, TAA has become more restrictive, more restrained, timelines are tighter, and it's harder for workers to access benefits. And I can go on a little more about that later, but I just kind of wanted to stop there on how those impacts are affecting homeownership and, as you can imagine, as things carry on. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Absolutely. Thank you, and yeah, we look forward to hearing more from you about your experience helping people adjust to trade and who you see come through the door and what sort of policy changes. We can talk about that later. I think next up is Mr. Salmeron?

MR. SALMERON: Yes, Chairman, thank you. Hello everyone. My name is George Salmeron. I'm a minority businessowner, intlsupplychain.com, and what motivated me what certification. So, that was a big motivator for me. I hold a few, and what I would like to advocate for is additional programs that offer certification.

Not only that, pathways to growth in the industry, and ending with follow-up job placement and possible mentorship. So, I believe that worked for me, and I believe if we can help with that process or more funding for that, I believe we can engage with the youth and create a better industry.
CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, thank you. We have a lot of folks who want to speak, but could you just tell us a little bit more about your experience then, kind of what leads you to that conclusion?

MR. SALMERON: Well, being a second-generation, the opportunities weren't great for me. I live in Norwalk, and they do have a good program which is called The Teen Alliance Program, and I believe that if we have more programs like that, it definitely would help because that helped me.

CHAIR KEARNS: All right, thank you very much.

Next up is Mr. Lewis, I believe.

MR. LEWIS: Thank you. Yeah, I really appreciate all the previous speakers. I'm Chris Lewis again from Berkeley City College -- hello there, Pam, and I think there's at least one other community college represented here. We're an inner-city urban community college, probably much like what Pam has described for her college in terms of pluralistic demographics and serving a younger urban population.

But we've seen a shift, definitely. I've been working in community college for about 12 years or so, and I was a High School and Middle School teacher before that. I also worked in the mineral resources industry and agriculture.
too, so I'm definitely familiar with some issues associated with trade across, you know, a variety of communities.

In terms of the community college, as I was saying, we've seen a shift from predominately younger students like, you know, right out of high school being the biggest group to older students, over the last probably five, six years at least -- maybe a little more, actually; it's coming up on 10 years that we've seen this shift towards older students.

And that may be associated with big changes in job sectors and people returning to community college for new skills. Just, you know, kind of quickly, because I think there's a lot of more interesting questions that we want to get onto, but I would say trade impacts us in two big ways, our communities.

One is its impact directly on jobs. As sectors open and close or are restricted or promoted through different policies, we see shifts in the workforce, definitely. And as a community college, you know, we, through a variety of different networks, try to respond to that.

We have regional consortiums that help us work with labor market information and so on to work with our programs, and then on a smaller level, we work with individual industries and businesses through our career and technical advisory committees. So, we have, sort of, a somewhat
organic framework for responding to the impacts that come to the different job sectors.

The other area that we're impacted, though, is just shifts, sort of, external things like the cost of gas going up right now, for example, has a huge impact on our students who are generally more restricted flexibility, financially. So, anything that impacts cost of living impacts our students as well.

Traditionally, the community colleges, our enrollment goes up when unemployment goes up, and when unemployment goes down, our enrollment goes down because we do have, you know, a pretty close relationship with job training and, you know, the needs of people looking for work.

So, we're definitely, you know, I think right on the edge there. Some of the factors that help us are the variety of grant programs. We're a Hispanic-serving institution -- thank you, Dr. Flores, who spoke earlier -- and we benefit from that from funding through that.

We get Federal funding through the Carl Perkins Act for Career and Technical Education. We get State funding as well. Our students get financial aid. So there's a lot of different sources of funding, and they tend to be more-or-less flexible in how we can use that money.

So, that is both helpful, but it also can be challenging to find the right source of money for the right
task at hand. And I think the two areas that are the biggest challenge for us in order to meet the needs of our communities are building the onramps, and I think we're getting pretty good at that, getting students into the college, of course, supporting them while they're here -- but the other challenge is building the pipelines to provide, kind of, warm handoffs to industry.

And we work with, you know, such a range of different organizations, community-based organizations, workforce development boards, other government agencies, and then private industry. And so, all of those connections that we have to make are unique -- they're pretty unique.

So, it's more than just the -- I mean, obviously, the more money we have to serve our populations the better, but, you know, I think from my perspective, the challenge is in how we use those funds and how we can use those funds and building all of those networks to leverage that effectively.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you very much, Mr. Lewis, I appreciate that. I think next we have Ms. Wilson.

DR. WILSON: Thank you. My name's Valerie Wilson. I direct the program on Race, Ethnicity, and the Economy at the Economic Policy Institute. I'd like to sort of get back to where we started in talking about structural factors and how that impacts different communities.

I think the biggest, largest, single structural
factor we can talk about is just the overall health and
strength of the economy and the labor market. We know that
when there is robust job growth and we have a thriving
economy, that disparity in unemployment, disparity in wages
tend to narrow. When that is not the case, they widen.

And I think that trade policy plays a major role in
the overall health and strength of our economy, either
contributing and adding jobs to the economy, or the other
result being that jobs end up being taken away. My colleague
and I recently released a report where we looked at the
impact of trade policy on manufacturing employment in
particular.

And we reported that, between 1998 and 2021, about
5 million manufacturing jobs were lost as a result of the
trade deficit. The impact of that loss was not evenly
distributed. In particular, we found that black workers lost
about 650,000 jobs over that period of time, and that was
about a 30 percent decline in Black workers in that
manufacturing sector. So, manufacturing employment declined
about 30 percent.

The thing that was unusual about that was that in
the preceding period we found that black workers' share of
the labor force and share of manufacturing employment sort of
move together. But after that point, as these jobs were
being lost, you know, related to trade policy, we found that
the share of manufacturing employment for Black workers was declining even though their share of the labor force was continuing to rise.

So, that was a major impact, and really a unique impact for Black workers, particularly in a time when there was some shift of manufacturing employment -- automakers in particular; that is probably the sector with the largest share of Black employment in the manufacturing industry -- a lot of those were moving south -- the region of the country that has the majority of the Black population.

But the share of manufacturing employment for a Black person was not increasing at that time. So, that suggests that another issue that comes to play has to do with the location of factories and places of employment and whether or not workers have adequate access to those places.

Another point that I'd like to make in terms of the role of trade policy and its impact on manufacturing employment is another sort of piece of the regional story. When we look back at wage gaps -- let's say in the 1970s through the early 1980s -- the Midwestern region of this country where there as a lot of manufacturing employment, also highly unionized at that time, had the smallest racial wage disparities in that period of that time when we look at different regions of the country.

Over that period as a lot of those jobs left, we
started to see those wage gaps widen in the Midwest to where they looked a lot more similar to gaps that we see in the South, historically, that are typically the largest wage gaps in the country.

So again, all of this is connected with region of the country where manufacturing employment is located, the role that unions play in creating good-paying jobs with good benefits, as several of the panelists have already spoken about here.

The last point I want to make has to do with what others have also referenced and the impact of jobs in that sector in particular for people who don't have a four-year college degree. Again, historically, those steps have been a good pathway to a middle class standard of living for people who do not have college degrees.

The 5 million manufacturing jobs that were lost were replaced by other jobs, and a lot of those were predominately in low-wage service sector employment. So, people were able to find other jobs, potentially, but the quality of those jobs was a lot different than what was available before.

And in particular, the lowest-wage workers in manufacturing typically make about two-and-a-half times more than their counterparts who are working in other industries. So, trade policy plays a major role in impacting the racial
disparities that we observe in the economy, especially with regards to employment and wages.

MR. BISHOP: You're on mute, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Ms. Wilson, that's very helpful, and we'll certainly be considering your study as we put together ours. But I'm not sure if I understand your first point because I think what I hear you say is it's not that black workers are disproportionately in the manufacturing sector and the manufacturing sector is disproportionately harmed by trade, it's not a regional thing.

I didn't think you were saying -- because you were saying a lot of those auto jobs moved from upper Midwest to the South, but there's black workers in both areas. Is it more this thing about, you know, black workers in manufacturing are more likely to get hit harder when there is an impact because last-in first-out, so they're just more vulnerable in there? So, all else even being equal, they're more likely to be harmed by trade I guess is what you're saying?

DR. WILSON: Yeah. So, the point that I was making, in particular when we were looking at wage outcomes in the Midwest that did have a strong manufacturing sector -- autos in particular -- we found that the measured disparities there were much narrower before a lot of those jobs went
away.

So, the loss of those jobs, while it impacts, you know, the entire economy, entire community there, the burden or impact of that was much more profound for black workers because it widened the wage disparities than, you know, compared to what was previously measured.

CHAIR KEARNS: I see. Okay, great. Thank you very much. I should mention first, too, as I said at the beginning that in order to participate in the roundtable other than just observe, you know, we need you to have registered for this event. And so, if you haven't done that, if you can just send any comments you have and maybe register for a future event, send any comments or any requests to register to us at de@usitc.gov, just a reminder about that.

We're coming up to break time, but I know, Mr. Williamson, you have your hand up -- Commissioner Williamson?

MR. WILLIAMSON: Thank you. I could go after break, if you want to take a break. I, sort of, was, like, wanting to be first in line in the second round.

CHAIR KEARNS: Go ahead and speak. I think going a little bit later will get us closer to the middle of this, so go ahead.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Okay, thank you. I wanted to -- first off, I should say, I assume the Commission is going to of course take into account the larger impacts of
infrastructure, our educational system, and the quality of 
that in terms of the competitiveness of workers -- you know, 
those fundamentals that we're always talk about how important 
they are.

But I also want to then turn to the question of, if 
you look at different communities, the nature of the trade 
flows in those areas does have something to do with the jobs 
in the area and making sure there are policies to address the 
potential jobs.

What I'm getting at is I spent nine years at the 
Port Authority of New York-New Jersey. If you look at the 
trade flows to the New York customs district, it was, of 
course, three-fourths imports; that was just the nature of 
the trade there.

And the Port Authority of New York-New Jersey has 
done studies for years on the impact of the jobs created by 
the trade flows through the ports and the airports and also 
the foreign investment that comes in there.

I mention that because we have to think about the 
imports do create a lot of jobs. They do create a lot of, 
you know, logistics jobs, they create a lot of business 
services jobs, a lot of legal jobs, things like that.

And so, if we're thinking about the impact of trade 
on minorities, we want to make sure that there are programs 
that help, you know, black workers and other minorities who
are living in the particular district get the jobs that are in that district.

And so, I want the Commission to think about again, this is what I call part of the infrastructure of helping people compete in the global economy. And so, if you look at the New York area, there are a tremendous amount of business services, healthcare -- high-quality healthcare jobs -- educational institutions, and those all generate a tremendous amount of services exports. And so, we do want to make sure that everybody there is getting their fair share of those jobs.

Speaking about the colleges, I mentioned the Fashion Institute of Technology has a wonderful program on international trade and marketing for the fashion industry, and the fashion industry, of course, is huge there. And so, having those programs that train people to participate in that industry is very important.

Our Baruch College, I guess they just got rated number one in the world for increasing social mobility. So, I think it's important that the Commission point to the need to continue to invest in these institutions that are preparing people to compete in the global economy, and I wanted to mention that.

So, again, as manufacturing jobs are important, but service sector jobs are important too. And so, I just want...
to make sure that there's adequate attention focused on how we can do a better job of making sure that people are getting their fair share of those good service sector jobs.

And again, since a lot of those are small- to medium-sized enterprises, who owns those firms, how adequately supported are they in terms of having the resources to grow their businesses, is important.

I'd also call-out, the Commission did a study in -- Kate Mitton (phonetic) -- the call was, I think with the main author on that -- a study on, you know, intellectual property and the job creation associated with that. And they sort of pointed out that immigrants and minority firms who are engaged in international trade in terms of exporting intellectual property were going to do much better than firms who were not doing that.

And so, I think some of the Commission's previous research becomes relevant here in terms of thinking about how are we going to make sure the benefits of trade are more equitably distributed in the country. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, and your point about regional impacts kind of reminds me of Dr. Wilson was saying about that and what we've heard from other witnesses at other roundtables. I think that's something we're very focused on and I think is in our request letter of understanding how different communities, in terms of geographic communities,
are impacted by trade. So, thank you.

I know we've got two more hands up. Maybe we'll try to get to you both now before we break. Dr. Flores?

DR. FLORES: Yeah, thank you. I just wanted to comment on what I think is almost just inevitable, to continue moving in the direction of increased globalization of commerce in manufacturing. And the whole range of things that go with, even in service jobs, that are possible to be done remotely.

All of those things are going to move in that direction, simply because it's in the nature of the self-interest of companies that want to optimize their bottom line. So, if it's cheaper for them to manufacture in other countries where labor is a lot cheaper and less regulated, the industry, they'll go there.

And there are many other areas of economy that are moving in the same direction. Let me, for example, share -- we all know this, but oftentimes you call about a problem that you have, technical problem with your T.V. or whatever, and you end up talking with someone in India, okay, or you have other type of issue of customer service, maybe you're talking to someone in the Philippines, okay?

And now even the accounting profession, for example, they are farming out a lot of the accounting work to a lot of those places with encryption of information because
it's cheaper for a lot of the accounting firms to do that
type of work elsewhere.

And they certify and they double-check it, they
make sure that it's correct, and then they are more
competitive within our own market because the cost of labor
is so much lower for them than if they pay an accountant
here.

So, the genie is out of the bottle, basically is
what I'm trying to say. And what I think we really need to
think of is how can we arm our lower-income populations and
minority populations with the tools to be competitive in that
environment because, yes, a lot of the loss of manufacturing
jobs was the result of the moving of some of those industries
to lower-cost labor places, but a lot of it, if you look at
the data, in fact most of it is not that -- it's automation,
robotics.

And so how many of our people are going into
robotics, artificial intelligence, and the like? Very, very
few. And those are the higher-paying jobs now in the
industries is keeping those rabbits moving and improving them
and so forth.

So, it's all about making sure that we empower
those populations with the tools they need to be competitive
within the marketplace here, but also globally. And then one
thing that I don't think we have, at least from the
standpoint of Latinos capitalized on, is the fact that, especially the small business owners here -- and Latinos, especially the women, are among the highest creators of small business in the country.

And why would they not connect with people who are producing goods in places like Mexico, Central America, and so forth, and to help those very communities to improve themselves to bring those goods to the marketplace here and be competitive in terms of that, but help also those countries.

Because, guess what, if we don't bring them up in Central America and all of that, they're going to keep coming. And then, it's like a never-ending issue -- the issue of undocumented immigration and so forth, which has a bearing on all of this.

And so, again, I think we need to find ways of being effective and responding to the inevitable, which is this globalization of everything, and to really capitalize on what assets we represent. More Latinos are bilingual. They can communicate with people in Latin America, South America, whatever.

Someone was talking about certification -- I think it was certification, too, of small businesses as minority-owned business that would have some advantage in contracting with the Federal Government and other ways with
big contractors of the Federal Government as well, and also create those relationships with countries where a lot of people are of African-American descent or indigenous descent, or whatever the case may be, as struggling themselves.

And that's why you see so many nations and other Central Americans and Mexicans and whatnot at the border, trying to get in. And so, I think we could really do a lot more if we zero-in on the fundamentals, which is education -- and education not just in the formal sense, but helping people who are creating small businesses and whatnot to understand how they can optimize their own potential by virtue of what assets they bring to the table.

In the case of Latinos, it's bilingual, bicultural, and if we understand how the system work internationally, we'd be in a better place.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Dr. Flores. You raised a lot of interesting questions that I want to ask others to respond to after our break, in particular the role of automation, the role of, you know, if jobs are going to countries that are less regulated in terms of labor standards, maybe environmental standards, or just have lower wages and then they trade with the U.S., and then immigration and trade, which is a lot of questions to answer there.

So, I'm hoping after the break we can hear from others and I can get their thoughts on those issues and

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others. I'm going to suggest that we stop with Dr. Eddinger now, and then afterwards we'll hear from Mr. Flores and maybe get some folks to respond to what's been said so far, including what you just said, Dr. Flores, and then maybe more focused on, you know, trade impacts and also policy proposals.

So, Dr. Eddinger, you want to have the final word before the break?

DR. EDDINGER: Sure, standing between you and the break. And let me try to see if I can set this up for the beginning of the next session, which is the huge demographic change that is either facing us or about a year or two down the road. There's a huge what I call the "demographic cliff" in that, 18 years ago, folks decided not to have babies, and now we don't have enough High School graduates, right?

We're about a quarter down in our percentages of High School graduates, which means there will be less college-goers, less credential workers. This is going to be a problem because the population we would turn to to backfill our need for workers and to keep things vibrant would be our adult population.

And when you look at that adult population, you are facing with all of the demographical characteristics that we've talked about thus far -- immigrants, first-generation, second-language speakers, folks who have fallen out of the
workforce and is now older, folks who are in retraining. I would suggest to you, folks who are in those, and also foreign workers who have come with credentialing -- they're foreignly-trained professionals. So, we have a full group of people who are very diverse who are poised to be the next generation of workers for our country.

In order to credential and to help those groups of learners to become the next generation worker, this is a much different environment in teaching and learning and forming that pipeline than you would native students who are traditional. There are more things to hand-hold, there are more insurances that we have to have to make sure that the pipeline from the learning to the workplace exists and the placement exists.

So, I think we're facing a slightly different understanding of what it means to credential and also what it means to incentivize our employers in order to bring these populations back. It is not just a matter of I'm going to give you some money and grant and go find some workers.

I think we need to be much more intentional and specific to say these are our displaced workers, this is our new-generation of workers, and you need to pay attention to these four things that will make their lives successful.

So, I'll leave it there. I won't go on because I know you all have to go on break.
CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, well we look forward to hearing more from you after the break, but let's take a break now. We'll then follow-up with Mr. Flores. Mr. Mitchell, did I just see you raise your hand as well? Oh, no, okay. Okay, good -- that was just a see-you-after-the-break. All right, so let's return at 2:40, is that all right? Is that long enough for everybody? Or maybe we'll be generous -- go 2:45. We'll come back at 2:45 to continue the conversation. Thank you all very much.

(Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

MR. BISHOP: I ask you to go ahead and turn on our video cams for us, if you will. We'll go ahead and get started. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you. Mr. Flores, do you want get us going again?

DR. FLORES: Yes, thank you. Thank you, Commissioner Kearns.

So, one of the things that jumped in my mind was talking about this kind of -- how trade impacts workers, as well as how it still can sometimes be -- not sometimes, but can -- is disproportional when it comes to brown and black communities. And the Department of Labor has really shown through the studies, as well as the Bureau of Labor Statistics, that the recovery is not prosperous for all, and that is a big, big thing that I feel that shines a light on
how trade just makes it worse. And not saying that just bad
trade deals, but kind of what is that just transition? What
is that transition supposed to look like?

So, if house ownership is already a disparity, then
you have economic resources that get impacted when a pandemic
happens, when natural disasters happen, and then now you're
throwing trade into there, which means if a worker finds a
good union job, or a good paying job, that is not -- I want
to say that is a highroad job. To have opportunities for
continued education, to have opportunities for growth on the
social/economical ladder, but when you take that away, then
those resources are gone, they're depleted.

And as Mr. Patterson shared earlier about his
experience, you know, there's a lot of issues in trying to
transition that you also only have limited funds economically
yourself to try and work with.

So, there was a petition at the Washington State
Labor Council we worked on for Filson, which was a clothing
manufacturer, and some of the workers did not all -- were not
very fluent in English. Or there was also the lumber
industry, which has been heavily impacted. Some of them did
not have an eighth grade education, or reading level.

And, you know, things to think about is when these
jobs are shifted somewhere else, well, looking at trade, if
there's a language barrier because there is a limit, or time
limit in which a person can access certain benefits, or trade adjustment assistance TAA benefits, well, that can impact a training plan, and that really comes to the point that education is not enough.

And that goes to what we were saying earlier about anyone can do anything with the right support system. Well, if education, or a TAA training plan is guaranteed certification for a worker as long as they're verified, and they go through all these steps, but what happens if a worker only retains ten percent of all this information that has taken me five years to retain, and they're expected to retain it in a two-hour period, and then they might have another two-hour orientation, and the only thing that is obtainable is next steps, and that guessing that they are free of any emotional impact of losing their job, losing their economic stability, and their security.

So, that recent study that I referenced that was -- that economic study that Washington State did, they identified that lack of quality jobs, and lack of wealth-creation opportunities, and profound racial disparities in both areas, are some of the biggest issues to identify to create a thriving community for all.

And if policies are looking to change on limited resources, and, again, it is clear that BIPOC communities have even less resources, that there needs to be something
done that support services will bring reliable and safe childcare, that will bring reliable and safe transportation that will support, or give financial support such as trade readjustment allowances, it's paired with a certified TAA training plan because a lot of -- one of the issues that people have to work through is if they're trying to get this training plan to develop and be viable in the work force, then it's really inherent on them proving their economic stability.

Well, without trade readjustment allowances, which is much like unemployment benefits, it makes it harder to prove, it makes it harder for them to achieve that. So, then they have this training plan that they're guaranteed, but they don't have the support services that they need.

So, looking at BIPOC communities, or how that impacts the workers, there needs to be a strong support that will either need a worker not to the bottom rung of the social/economic ladders, but the ability to sidestep, or maybe if they take a step or two back, and room to keep moving forward because as, I believe, it was Commissioner Williamson shared, like other employers, BIPOC employers will do their best to hire because there's that community bias, and they recognize the struggles, and the things that -- the inherent push back that does exist in the system.

So, if the policies are to change, or recognize
these things, or how do we look at how automation really impacted, it's recognizing that education is not enough, these policies need to not run out as TAA reversion is coming to end this June, these things need to be more permanent for the workers in supporting in transition, so they can either go to a new job, or go to another union job.

And, again, I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the support and the help that I've received. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Mr. Flores. Mr. Mitchell, you had something to say.

MR. MITCHELL: Yes, I want to follow-up on Mr. Flores. I think I may get a lot of disagreement on this, is our school system is not designed for manufacturing, and I realize that there's community colleges out there doing a great job.

The school system they do somewhat of a good job preparing a person to go to college, but when you come out of high school, those manufacturing jobs are ready for you to hit the floor running, and that type of education is just not there at that school level in there; therefore, you have to try to pick that up through an apprenticeship, or go get some future training in order to do that.

What the manufacturers are arguing is it's too much money, it's a high cost for them to train someone in order to do a job in there. They want that person to come there, and
they're ready to do that job right there.

I understand that when we start talking about school, and especially in the black and brown community, the lack of resources throw us back even farther when we're trying to get that done too. But that's just another hurdle that I feel we have to get over in order to compete in the manufacturing industry.

The part about combining jobs, I understand we have to do that in order to be competitive, but how do you -- how do you attack something where you're trying to deal with an unfair trade agreement that deals with dumping, that deals with subsidy, that deals with human rights violations, that deals with knowing environmental regulations in there. None of our training is going to address that issue right there.

I'll yield back, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Mr. Mitchell. Mr. Patterson?

MR. PATTERSON: Hey, yeah. No, I just wanted to piggyback off of what Mr. Flores said, and what Mr. Mitchell said about policy changes, and how difficult it is to transition from one thing that you may have been doing half your life, or all your life, to transition to doing something else.

I think one of the policies that should be connected to a TAA program, or programs like that, should be
on-the-job training, not necessarily just classroom training, or certificate training. And like we discussed earlier, you know, the fact that someone gets a certificate, and they could be placed on the bottom rung of an organization where their skill sets with a little bit of on-the-job training could put them in the middle where they came from.

Older men and woman are not going to grasp the educational aspect, and, quite frankly, when you say community college with college or certificate training, most older Americans, especially workers of color, are going to be intimidated, you know. I haven't been to school in 30 or 40 years. So, right away that's intimidating.

And, so even in the classroom setting we're intimidated, and we're less ferocious in terms of gaining the knowledge, and retaining all of that knowledge because when you finish those programs, you have a certificate, you go in, you apply for a job, and like Mr. Mitchell said, you got to hit the ground running when you hit manufacturing.

You know, if there were incentives for manufacturers to bring some of these displaced workers, especially older workers, in through an on-the-job training program with their certificates, and not just hitting the ground running program, you know, there might be an opportunity to get -- you know, some of these people have perfect attendance at work, but you bring them into a
situation with a piece of paper that says I'm a certificate, you still got to train, you got to learn. And like Mr. Mitchell said, if you can't cut the mustard, you're out the door.

So, you know, it's kind of like a revolving door, and we keep going back to ground zero on-the-job training to couple with some of these things, and incentives to actually have companies invest in that because on-the-job training does cost money, nobody wants to spend the money, but if there was some provisions for on-the-job training for these displaced and older workers, we might have an opportunity to succeed.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you very much, Mr. Patterson. That's very helpful. We haven't heard from Ms. Burris yet. Welcome, Ms. Burris. Would you like to respond to that, or add anything else?

MS. BURRIS: Thank you, yes. I'd like to respond. Good afternoon everyone. My name is Michelle Burris, and I work at the Century Foundation, and particularly lead our industry and inclusion cohort.

The purpose of this cohort is to build a manufacturing ecosystem with 13 community colleges, seven of which identify as an Hispanic-serving institution, and one is a historically black community college. Our purpose is that by the end of the cohort, which will be in September of next
year, we will have 3,000 more adult learners of color completing manufacturing credential programs. So, I particularly want to expound on the statements that were particularly said around education and training.

We have one of our cohort members particularly in Baton Rouge where they provide incumbent worker training. That way the students, who are predominantly black in Baton Rouge, they do not have to quit their current jobs, and are able to be up-skilled while they're seeking current employment.

Doing our research at the Century Foundation we found that particularly in cities, even including Chicago, black workers tend to live the furthest away from manufacturing plants, particularly black and Latino workers, and, so it is essential that we bring jobs back to the local base, and back to these communities.

We also know that the training is not enough, which is part of why we have a cohort in our ecosystem. We have community-based organizations. We try to bring in the faith leaders, the K-12 educational partners. We were just able to revitalize a partnership with Chicago Public Schools because we know that just within our community college cohort is not sustainable. We have to be able to bring in those partnerships.

And, so when we think about, you know, the comments...
regarding TAA, they have to strengthen the community college industry partnerships, and we have to have a DEI focus because without that we're going to miss out.

And, so we can have the training, but the jobs also have to be there in the local community, and we have explicitly heard from our community colleges that manufacturing is not -- it's just not on this radar of black students, and, so there has to be a national paradigm shift to really show that manufacturing is a vibrant and thriving career.

And I would last add that we also have to really disaggregate that because it's going to mean something different for black workers and Latino workers, as well as particularly for black women in trade and manufacturing careers.

We found in our research that particularly if we look at the earnings for black women, they're going to be much more stagnant, and much more decreased. And, so it is important also that in some communities we see a complete erasure of black workers in manufacturing and trade careers. And, so, it also is important that we disaggregate this data by race and ethnicities even among communities of color.

And, so, I'm looking forward to the rest of this conversation, and I'll be happy to speak more on what we do in our cohort.
CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Ms. Burris. Dr. Eddinger?

DR. EDDINGER: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I wanted to give an example of how the TAC grants, the education adjustment grants, have worked for us after the last great recession. Our college, and a number of colleges that were in our consortium, have three different TAC grants, and they did different things.

There was one TAC grant that helped us with infrastructure building, so that we were able to establish a number of entry level allied health programs that are sitting in the City of Chelsea, which is at least 50 percent Spanish-speaking, if not more now. And it allowed for sort of an entry level hand-hold into a sector, an industry sector that allows for advancement, and greater pay, and particularly important for women.

So, the TAC grant was really good for that, and we're still running those programs eight, ten years later. And a portion of the other TAC grants were used for tuition and fees, and wraparound services that were particularly important for the not what are called post-traditional students who are intimidated, right, by this idea of college. Sometimes we don't use the word college, we use post-secondary training because it's not necessarily a whole certificate they need; they may need a small set of classes
to get them to the next step. So, we're very, very aware of that.

In the process over the last decade of serving our communities of color, and our low income communities, and first generation students, we realize that it's just not a matter of access, it's not a matter of getting them into the company, or getting them into the door, it is the ability to maintain a culture of not just acceptance, but valuing the culture well these students are bringing to us. Rather, they're adults with life experiences, or the community wealth that are in these diverse -- that touches diverse cultures.

I have seen many examples of having wonderful folks coming into the door who are diverse into companies that cannot maintain a welcoming enough environment, so they leave. The leakage of that talent is defeatist, right.

So, even as we have policies that opens up the door, and lays out training, and infrastructure, and all of those things, if we don't pay attention on how we have to transform the cultures of companies in order for workers of color, workers of different backgrounds to be able to climb the ladder into middle management, into senior management, nothing we do is going to be sustainable in terms of race and ethnicity, and all the different diversities that we have.

So, you know, that's not often talked about because it is in some places the third rail, and in some places folks
really believe good practices in business is good practice in business, and this is a new conversation that's not always in the environment, but, I think, it makes a huge amount of difference, and that can be incentivized, you know, in a number of ways. So, thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Dr. Eddinger. Let me say first that I think we're going to try to go until 3:30. We'll go longer if some folks can stay on, but we'll kind of shoot for at least 3:30. I want to make sure other Commissioners have a chance to speak, so I'll probably go no more than ten more minutes before giving them a chance to speak as well, maybe even a little bit less.

But, let's see, I think Mr. Flores had his hand up next, and then Commissioner Williamson.

DR. FLORES: Thank you, sir. I wanted to say thank you to Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Patterson about calling out registered apprenticeships, and, excuse me, but I also want to clarify when I'm talking education, I am talking registered apprenticeships, I'm talking about training that community-based organizations have, and, in addition, post-secondary, or colleges.

But from my understanding with trade adjustments there is an OJT factor for that training benefit, but it's kind of a weird, and not easily, or in my feelings, not an easily accessible thing. If someone is trying to utilize it,
it's a good tactic that they can offer to an employer to help incentivize them being hired.

You know, it is also -- the other thing that trade adjustment assistance doesn't connect you is to registered apprenticeships. And, again, I want to say thank you to Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Patterson for really bringing that up because my original education is from a registered apprenticeship. And, you know, by connecting, or finding a way to connect, or have a smoother path for support for someone to attend a registered apprenticeship, that opens a lot of doors, and that was my first connection to post-secondary education. I did not -- I was put off by college because I did not think it was a place for me. Time has changed for me, and I've had different supports.

And, so, when looking at the policies and things that could change, the health coverage tax credit that covers 72.5 percent of a person's healthcare premium, that went away, that's no longer offered.

So, then if someone is trying to do either a registered apprenticeship, or if they're trying to accomplish some kind of training, work force training that's going to help get them, or find that next best step for the household, that can really complicate their financial situation of what they're looking at, what resources they have for not just them, but their entire household.
And Cobra, from experience, Cobra is expensive to work through. You know, when I had it as an option, I hoped for the best, and just realized I couldn't afford it, but with support systems, and with the support systems there, it's really important that they're lasting longer, or they're not being reduced, and right now with that TAA 2021 reversion, windows and things have been reduced.

I also want to thank Dr. Eddinger, or Pam, for her calling out for the inclusion for -- like it's really hard stepping into a space, or to a room, and, you know, not -- if you're not greeted, not recognized, or it has been intimidating for me personally walking into a space that is very dominated by -- I did not look like the rest of the room.

So, trying to step into a college space, or step into something else, it can be very discomforting, but, again, with the right support systems we can do just about anything. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Mr. Flores. Commissioner Williamson?

MR. BISHOP: You're on mute, Irv.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Okay. Thank you. Sorry.

MR. BISHOP: You're back.

MR. WILLIAMSON: I want to touch on several things.

First regarding the role of the Commission in -- just a

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second -- in its own investigations of like under Section 201 of the importance of addressing what's going to make an industry effective.

I think in particular it's solar panels where we pointed out that, one, it was recommended tariffs, but we also said that the Administration needed to do some things to support the industry, and, of course, they didn't do that; they just put tariffs on.

And I'm hoping now that the Commission after this investigation is going to be in even a much better position in addressing -- proposing remedies in 201 to think about what impacts this would have on social -- on workers from under-served (phonetic) racial groups in the United States, and that it can even have more sophisticated recommendations in how we move forward.

So that's just -- I just put that marker out there. You know, I have some new tools, and you really need to use them going forward.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Commissioner.

MR. WILLIAMSON: The second thing is thinking about the -- and I know you were just out in Fresno, so you probably may have had more -- heard more about black farmers, was thinking about typically black farmers in the East who are actually going to be in -- more likely to be in maybe more specialized crops, and not large -- a lot of our
agricultural support programs are large commodity programs, and if you have black farmers who are going to be maybe small to medium size farmers in more specialty crops, those programs really don't benefit them.

And yet we think about -- we talk about food deserts, the need to, you know, provide better nutrition in the inner city, and black farmers could do that, but if we don't have programs to support them, and provide those kind of services, I call that into -- I call your attention to the need to think about how our export, or even our domestic support programs, are affecting different groups.

Following Ms. Wilson's comments, and also Ms. Eddinger's talking about the culture of companies, and Ms. Wilson was talking about how you had companies in the North that had a number of black workers, and you went South the companies still might have a number of black workers.

The difference is the companies in the South are going to be not unionized, and, therefore, you raise the question about how are those -- what are the prospects of the workers who are, you know, a unionized factory that are jobs -- families are better able to build wealth as those who may be in a non-unionized factory in the South, and not going to be able to build wealth.

And I particularly I think about one of the factory tours we took, and also this gets to the question of culture
of companies and investment, and you had several questions here about foreign investment, and, I think, it does depend somewhat on the culture of the company, and where it does the foreign investment.

I know we had one factory tour several years ago, a brand new spanking new factory, lots of black workers on the floor. We went up to the manager's office where we met, nary a one. It was a totally non-diverse environment. And, so when you think about attracting foreign investment, how are we going to make sure that they have a culture that's going to benefit all of our people.

And, so, I do recall one of the most significant things I heard in 12 years of commissioning hearings was the Mayor of East San Francisco, California who said he worried as much about the lack of worker rights protection in the South, and how that affects his workers, as he worried about worker rights protection in Asia, and I've never forgotten that statement. And when we start talking about foreign investment, and as far as building factories in the South, I think very much about that. So, thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay. Thank you, Commissioner Williamson. That would be interesting to look at how foreign invested firms in the U.S. compare to other firms in terms of racial equity. Thank you.

So, I'm about to run out of time. I don't know if
anyone -- we've talked a lot, I think, about community college programs, training, and the importance of that. I don't know if anyone else has anything they want to add either on how -- the impact of trade on racial minorities, or ethnicities, or if anyone has any other ideas on policy proposals.

I do know, and I have to point out, that somebody had mentioned earlier, I guess it was -- I'm forgetting who it was now, I'm sorry, but the idea -- I think it was Dr. Flores, the idea that, you know, in some situations there's kind of regulatory issues where, you know, it's more costly to produce in the United States than it is to produce in other countries either because wages are lower, or because of less of a regulatory burden.

I don't know if there's a proposal that comes out of that in terms of what should be in trade agreements, but that's, you know, one question. But, just more in general, if you all have any ideas, any further comments on how trade impacts the groups you've been talking about, or on policy proposals, before I ask other Commissioners if they have any questions. Mr. Flores?

DR. FLORES: There's a couple of things that can impact a petition to be done in a reasonable amount of time, and such as the ITC determinations that have come down that identify sometimes companies do aid in the process of TAA
petition.

Unfortunately, it is because we're in reversion it
used to bring -- prior to reversion it used to bring an
automatic certification, but it also did impact if workers --
if there was a language barrier, if they were in a digital
desert where there was no broadband for them to access the
information digitally.

The other thing is depending on the researches that
they had, workers are getting most of everything from a
phone. BIPOC communities are doing register to price your
programs, or colleges, on their phone.

So, I mean, the resources -- it's hard to say that
in a year's time does that really fit? Not always.
Sometimes it falls out of that, but it is something that we
can still point to.

In addition, the ITC right now, again, I want to
emphasize in reversion does not bring an automatic
certification, and if the ITC Commission is still operating,
then there should be some kind of cemented, or memorialized
policy that does not make that go away.

If there are trade deals that are happening, then
TAA benefits for workers should be cemented that do not cause
those benefits to go away where they have to go through what
it's going through right now, and it's coming pretty close to
the end of TAA having to sunset.
Health coverage, tax credits, should be something that is partnered into the TAA benefits, and not two separate things.

In addition, trade readjustment allowances should not be a separate thing with a short time window. Now in reversion they have an even shorter time window. Again, I want to emphasize that workers -- it's a lot of information to retain in a two-hour period. Most people retain it at first blush, probably ten percent, and I'm guessing.

So, we can maybe move away from these time windows of economic support they have to jump through, but if a TAA training plan is approved, then it should be partnered with support systems that will help with travel, that will help with, excuse me, wage support, wage supplement replacement support. In addition, maybe if healthcare is needed, or childcare. Like all those things are being partnered together, and lasting.

The other thing is with the changes in policies, they -- excuse me, I lost my thought there. I guess that will be all that I have to say. Thank you, sir.

CHAIR KEARNS: That's okay, we can always come back. Mr. Mitchell and then Dr. Biu, please.

MR. MITCHELL: As was mentioned earlier, we are in a global economy, and it's difficult to put together a good trade agreement that's going to benefit all. One of the
things that I could look at is we're always going to be chasing the bottom person as long as we're pitting worker-against-worker around the world.

And my thoughts is, if there's a global economy, then maybe we need think about a global organization for a labor union so we're not competing for the lowest-paying job in the world, and otherwise, we're going to have a hard battle to go.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you very much, Mr. Mitchell. Thank you. Dr. Biu?

DR. BIU: Yeah, I just want to add to what's been discussed earlier. Certainly we do need to look at more training and educational opportunities, but we know they're not enough. We need to address that even when folks are equally trained-up and educated and have the exact same credentials, we still see disparities that exist for various groups, including black workers, which suggests discrimination.

For example, my colleagues have done some research on apprenticeships and CTE training and seeing lower wages within non-service and service apprenticeships, for example, or even CTE programs and despite having equivalent levels of education, seeing Black workers being paid less coming out of those programs.

And I would also add that we need to address making
all jobs tenable so if manufacturing is going down and people are ending up in service, which pays less, how do we make this a more supportive job, even if it's not manufacturing? I believe it was Michelle Burns who talked about the fact that even if people are prepared and trained up to compete in the global economy, there has to be a job for them to enter into and one that pays a supportive wage and has supportive benefits. So, that's what I would add.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Dr. Biu. I'll turn it over to other Commissioners. I don't know if anyone has any questions they would like to ask? I have more I can always come up with, but Vice Chair Stayin, you've got your hand up?

VICE CHAIR STAYIN: Yes, I appreciate all of your comments and your suggestions today, your well thought-out presentations, and we've talked a lot about losing jobs, jobs going overseas, where a manufacturer or other kind of a business closes down its shop and moves overseas and leaves all those workers -- trained, capable workers.

And my question is to what extent have your State Government have programs where they try to incentivize foreign companies to come to the U.S. and to produce products?

I know it has happened successfully in some states, and I would really like -- not know because we're running out of time -- but please submit anything you can in writing as
suggestions of where there's been success in bringing a foreign company to the U.S. to create jobs and produce here.

So, I look forward to that, and thank you all, again. You're really right on. What you're saying is what we're dealing with, and we at the Commission, one of our major responsibilities to deal with, unfairly traded imports, imports that have been subsidized by another country and then sold in this market.

We don't subsidize our production, and so they come in at values that are below ours, and they're unfairly traded. Of course, you see others just dumping it in the U.S. market at such low prices. All of these things, dumped, subsidized, they destroy U.S. industries, U.S. producers, and create job losses.

We at the Commission, this is our job to stop the imports of subsidized and dumped products. So, I think you all may know this, and I might be telling you something you already know, but it's always very important to us in letting you know that we are there for you in dealing with those particular issues. Thank you very much.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Vice Chair Stayin.

Commissioner Karpel?

COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Yeah, thank you. This has been a really rich discussion. I'm so glad all of you have been willing to share your research, your experiences. It's
been a really excellent conversation. I did have a question for Dr. Wilson, if she's still available, but if not, others might be able to speak to this too.

And I was interested in what she had noted about wage gaps between white and minority workers growing as the availabilities of jobs decline. And I just wanted to understand the reason or what she thought the reason was for that or what the study that she has been working on has shown.

Is that discrimination among employers, sort of, intensifies as the availability of jobs goes down, or are there other additional factors at play, like maybe access to resources and disparities with access to resources also intensifies as jobs decline in an area or as a result of whatever economic shock, you know, contributed to those decline in jobs?

Maybe she wasn't able to stay, as we've gone over our time, but if anyone else would like to speak to that, I'd welcome that. If not, we can stop there.

MR. BISHOP: Dr. Wilson did have to leave us for another meeting, Commissioner, so if others would like to chime in, that would be awesome.

CHAIR KEARNS: I thought I saw Dr. Biu's hand go up there.

COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thanks. Dr. Biu?
DR. BIU: Sure. Not speaking necessarily to manufacturing specifically, but there's research on the impact of business cycles and the widening black-white wage gaps. I think that probably the competition, as you suggested, plays a role in that.

I've done some research on that with professional-class and working-class workers I can share after this, if that's helpful, and the widening black-white wage gap.

COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Yes, thank you. Mr. Salmeron?

MR. SALMERON: Thank you for the opportunity, everyone, and I would like to add that I would like to expand to El Salvador. My parents are originally from there; they fled the war.

And so, in a way, it has, how do I say, a bad -- it has been, like, tainted in a way, and I would like to see if we could revisit Central America as far as the policy, and maybe we could, you know, create a program or businesses that would also like to expand in, you know, Central America, El Salvador and whatnot. I just wanted to throw that out there.

COMMISSIONER KARPEL: So, you're talking more on the export side, or opportunities that could be created by greater trade with Central America and more support or resources for businesses being able to take advantage of
that?

    MR. SALMERON: Yes, ma'am.

COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Okay, thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Dr. Eddinger, did you want to respond to that question too?

COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Sorry, I didn't see you, Ms. Eddinger.

DR. EDDINGER: This is a point of information because the idea of registered apprenticeships in manufacturing have been on our mind so much. The U.S. Department of Labor, its Office of Apprenticeship is carrying on -- well, actually there's an advisory committee on apprenticeship that has been revived by President Biden, and it's doing its work right now.

    And the preliminary report coming out of the advisory committee is going to be available mid-April and then a final report a year-and-a-half from now. And part of its work is to look at the diversification and the EI issues within apprenticeships and to modernize those apprenticeships to move it across professional fields beyond the traditional trades.

    So, that might be an area of interest for this particular body to look to because there will be policy recommendations coming out of the advisory study. So, just a point of information.
COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Thank you very much.

CHAIR KEARNS: Commissioner Johanson?

COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: Yes, I'd like to thank all of you for being here today, and in particular it's good to see Irving Williamson again -- good to see you, Irving. I'd like to address a question specifically to the community college representatives, but any participant is welcome to answer.

My question is, what are community colleges doing to prepare students for careers that specifically relate to international trade?

I'm asking this question as two participants in the Commission roundtable of last week were based in Miami, and they stated that companies in South Florida involved in trade were having a difficult time finding employees. One of the participants was with a customs brokerage firm. Would any of you like to respond to this?

DR. EDDINGER: So, I'm looking -- there you go, Chris.

MR. LEWIS: Okay, I'll just start off. We do have one of our more popular sectors in career education is business and entrepreneurship, and some of our students definitely train to enter international trade sectors. I wouldn't say that's the main focus of our business programs, but we definitely pay attention to those opportunities for
students.

And I know there's even actually one of the regional joint ventures in our area focuses on, you know, business opportunities in international trade. My college isn't that closely involved with that, but we definitely have an awareness, and colleges in the area -- different colleges have different focuses, and some of them are more focused on international trade.

DR. EDDINGER: Right. So, I'm going to try to break this down a little bit. We have a relatively large international student population. We've got about 600 students from 101 countries with 75 languages.

So, we have the presence of students coming from abroad and studying with us and going back to their country and carrying that knowledge of the American system. We also do a great deal of work on the first two years of a four-year education, laddering into U-Mass Boston, which is our system university, and they have international business and international relations.

And I believe they're working on international supply chain logistics, as part of their work. So, we send students, and we transfer them. Other than training students in fields to understand IT in a global context and those types of training, we don't have, like, an undergraduate associate degree on international trade.
Our work does not get advanced enough to be helpful, so we make sure that we do transfer students to the four-year colleges. Other than that, you know, we try to train, actually, foreignly-trained professionals who have now entered the United States and looking for a career so they can help their communities to support those businesses that are involved.

We had contacts actually the week before last with the German consulate that is in the greater Boston area, and they're interested in apprenticeships, using our students and students from the community colleges. So, I think apprenticeships is one way to support international companies who are doing business in the United States. So, I don't know if that helps.

COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: It does, thank you. Mr. Williamson, Irving? You are on mute.

MR. BISHOP: You're on mute, Irv.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Thank you, Commissioner Johanson. I had mentioned it earlier, and while these community colleges are not four-year colleges, I think they do give an example of how, in a particular region, there are schools that are focused on trade jobs in that region.

You know, I'm particularly thinking of the Fashion Institute of Technology and their International Trade and Marketing for the fashion industry program, which I think has
received awards. Then, Baruch College I had mentioned, which has a large business and international business program.

And given those companies are located in New York, I think these types of programs are very much suited to helping students get involved in international trade. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER JOHANSON: All right, thank you for your responses. I appreciate them.

CHAIR KEARNS: If Commissioners don't have any more questions, I had one more. And Mr. Mitchell, I think you may have answered this question for me before -- I'm trying to remember if it was you or one of our other participants.

And I know Mr. Patterson is with us as well, and maybe he can answer. I'm thinking of, you know, those who have worked on factory floors, and I'm curious, you know, one of the things we're trying to understand is the extent to which workers are impacted by trade versus other things like technology, automation, that sort of thing.

So, I'm curious, you know, if, from your perspective, when you all may have been seeking, you know, higher wages or, you know, other forms of negotiations with management, what do you hear? Do you hear that wages are already too high and if they get any higher we'll have to automate, we'll have to get more robots?

Do you hear that if wages go any higher we'll have
to look for workers overseas? Or can you tell us anything more about, you know, how you've seen it kind of on the shop floor how trade and other factors have impacted working conditions in the U.S.?

MR. PATTERSON: Was that directed at me?

CHAIR KEARNS: Yes, please, if you would. You, Mr. Mitchell, or anyone else who can speak to it.

MR. PATTERSON: Well, yeah, I'd just like to say, typically in our plants and the steelworkers, we didn't hear so much about, you know, I mean, we're going to have to get more robots or, you know, I'm going to have to resort to automation. They just, kind of, slowly just infused a little bit of automation into our processes.

But what we hear more about is product quality and speed and production. Those are the things that they say, you know, that we're losing our footing because foreign entities are cheaper and they work harder, they work longer, you know, but not necessarily the robotics end of it. It's usually about, you know what I mean, the competitiveness of production.

CHAIR KEARNS: That's really helpful, and it makes me think -- and I see Dr. Biu nodding, and this is something that we've talked about the Commission. My understanding of the literature here is that, you know, I think in the past there was more of a hypothesis that automation was costing
jobs whereas now I think there might be more thinking that, actually automation doesn't cost jobs -- and we heard that recently at one of the other roundtables, that it may be creating jobs or at least keeping jobs neutral but maybe it has more of an impact on wages.

Do you, Dr. Biu, or does anyone else on this panel have anything that can speak to that? Do we know kind of how automation is impacting workers in the U.S.? I know that's not exactly your specialty, but.

DR. BIU: Yeah, definitely seen the debate about it could go either way, where the automation substitutes for workers, or it's a complement; it creates another opportunity for a new role, like the ATM machine now creating opportunities for financial advisors to work one-on-one with people.

One thing I would add is it's not entirely clear which occupations really could be at risk of automation, or even if they are, I think different people tried to estimate that, but I don't think there's necessarily consensus on how much automation might impact employment.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, thank you. Commissioner Williamson?

MR. WILLIAMSON: I'm just recalling what Mr. Sprigs said at the last hearing where he talked about, in the '60s, maybe early '70s, there was a lot of technological change,
but the workers' salaries did not go down, and with the weekly influence (phonetic) in the '80s you had a technological change, but I think employment (phonetic) also went down.

CHAIR KEARNS: You mentioned that when we were talking about this with my aide this morning, that came up again too, so I think that's something we'll want to point to. Thank you. Mr. Flores?

MR. E. FLORES: You know, how this impacts with the global economy and these jobs are shifting, we're looking at, you know, what is being incentivized to bring more entrepreneurship with trade or bringing businesses in, it's accessibility to training.

You know, even though there are these jobs that are created due to automation, who's going to get that training? Is there a clear pathway or something that's going to lead a person to training or make a person feel inclusive enough that they're going to reach out and receive the assistance that they need to access that training?

Some people have the economic stability. Again, as we've been talking about, not everyone has that economic stability, and BIPOC communities are heavily impacted. Speaking from my own experience in construction, even imports, manufacturing is impacted, so is in construction, so is in one of our biggest employers in Washington, so is
Boeing.

Even though they bring in these things that are manufactured outside of the States, as an electrician, we would still have to pull it apart, fix something that was messed up, and then put it back together, and it would've saved more time or brought more money for other electricians or myself to stimulate my local economy.

But also, in addition, it was just the training. If I didn't have the training or continuing education that was offered to me as an electrician or required of me as my State Certificate would go, it probably would have never happened. It would've been something that fell into someone else's lap or someone else's opportunity who had those resources.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, thank you. Mr. Salmeron?

MR. SALMERON: Yes, sir. So, automation will impact us in a positive way. I just would like to see, like you said, training. You know, I'm in two industries at the moment. I'm in supply chain, also security, and the robots are coming, and we're going to welcome them.

I would like to see some type of training, some type of introduction and a pathway to an opportunity to be able to service them or code them. Just like we have sexual harassment trainings all the time, I would like to see some type of training for what's to come, maybe some type of
transparency, like, hey, you know, the robots are coming, let's get you situated and, you know, get you prepared for the future.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, thank you. Commissioner Williamson?

MR. WILLIAMSON: I just want to go back to a question Commissioner Karpel had, even though Ms. Wilson's not here. But I think one factor may be, you know, when you have the downturn the wage gap with black workers grows could be that they're the last to be hired, they're going to be the first to let go, and that would contribute to this phenomena. And so, that may be a partial explanation that she would have provided.

COMMISSIONER KARPEL: Yeah, and I was trying to get at, sort of, maybe what's driving that. Is that the discrimination at the employer level, or are there additional things that are maybe reinforcing that, or are there access to resource issues that are also, sort of, contributing to that and that access to resource issue gets tougher as you also have that downturn. Yeah, but I appreciate that.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Okay, not sure, but it does, sort of, stress the importance if a firm is attached, diversity is important to it. They may find more ways to deal with this than just letting the last person go.

MR. BISHOP: Lindsay, you're on mute. Did you want
to speak? You're on mute. No? Okay, thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Mr. Lewis?

MR. LEWIS: Oh, okay, thank you. I just wanted to speak quickly to Amy's point or question there about, you know, I can't speak about the individual industries and their practices in terms of, you know, sort of overt discrimination, but definitely our students -- I mentioned this in the beginning and I want to emphasize it -- are affected both by, you know, the immediate effects on trade that affect, you know, the industries themselves or the sectors and the job opportunities.

But as cost of living increases, as resources become more scare and so on, our students, who are already fairly marginalized, find it more difficult to successfully navigate college. They don't have -- as much as we tried to provide, you know, as many wrap-around services and financial aid opportunities as we can, the majority of them still need to work to be in college.

And the increased costs and the sort of environmental challenges of getting into and succeeding in college have a big impact, and they definitely disproportionately affect those who are with fewer resources to start with.

So, you know, whatever the cause originally was, it's not going away as quickly as we would like. And I
appreciate all of the resources that we get at the college, but there's still a lot of restrictions on what we can do with a fair amount of that money, and we're left pretty much at our own devices, down to even the college level, on how we're going to and who we're going to interact with at the community and even regional level. And making those partnerships work I think is one of our biggest challenges.

CHAIR KEARNS: All right, thank you. I may just have one more question. I'm not sure if anyone can answer this. I think Dr. Wilson would've been able to, and maybe you, Ms. Burris, but why is manufacturing so important to achieving racial equity, and how can trade policy affect that? Does anyone have any thoughts on that?

MS. BURRIS: Yes. I think as my previous colleagues spoke about, manufacturing is really a pillar of the black community, particularly for those who did not obtain a traditional four-year degree.

And so manufacturing was that entry, particularly for the middle-class to be upscaled to leave the kind of horrors that were experienced in the South. And that impacts trade policy because, when we look at the economic data on the impacts of trade by race, we see that black people are the most negatively affected, particularly black and brown workers.

And so, it is really imperative to rebuild that
because it was such a pillar, and we have to change this paradigm shift. You know, when we speak with community colleges, some students still see manufacturing and trade-related work as kind of the low-skill, low-wage job and do not see it yet as a vibrant and thriving career for them and their families.

And so, it's very imperative that we really revitalize this entry into the middle class if we really want to make efforts narrowing the racial wealth gap.

CHAIR KEARNS: That's great. Okay, thank you very much, Ms. Burris. Does anyone else have anything they'd want to share? I think we may be out of questions, but if others have things that they'd like to say that they haven't had a chance to do so yet, be happy to hear from you.

MR. PATTERSON: Well, yes. So, I think that everything that was said today was important and, in my opinion, was spot-on. I've been in manufacturing for 30 years, but I just see that some of the things that we don't talk about enough is systemic racism, and I think over the years, you know, we become crippled with the racism that people have grown up with and have lived with.

So, if our schools can't educate, if our jobs don't promote -- you know, when we end up with trade policies that are not conducive to our progress, we end up being stuck. And I think that there's not enough emphasis on how we got
here and how do we get out of here, you know?

Because basically, like some of the guests said earlier, we're repeating the same cycles over and over again because, you know, over time, new management is just like the old management.

They're just the sons and daughters of the old regime, and we have to change how we approach it so when we have these trade policies that don't keep our jobs in our neighborhoods that don't keep our jobs in our communities, we have to have someone in the administration, we have to have someone in Congress and in the Senate, and we have to have someone in upper management that can see the value of the workers that were left behind.

And I don't know that there's a one-word answer, but we have to reach back and save those workers. And for black and brown people, we were the middle class. We built the middle class. We were the ones that were coming to the table, work the late-night shifts, work the early-morning shifts, work with our hands to do whatever we had to do to get to the next level.

And so now, I think with these bad trade policies we're being left behind, and there's definitely some policies that need to be put in place to help us regain that foothold and reenter the middle class and stay focused on that.

CHAIR KEARNS: Thank you, Mr. Patterson. I have to
say, I used to work for a member of Congress from the Detroit area, and I met with a lot of auto workers, and a lot of what you all have said today kind of resonates with me from those many meetings I had with them, and I enjoyed talking to them. I think next up is Mr. Mitchell?

MR. MITCHELL: Yes, in order to accomplish that, I think we not only need to be at the table, we need to be making the decisions at the table.

CHAIR KEARNS: Yeah. Okay, thank you. Mr. Odularu?

DR. ODULARU: Yeah, thank you. I think I agree with most of what my colleagues have said so far. Also looking at it from a more systems perspective because trade policy is not just a one-policy impact. It's a more systems central (phonetic) intervention as a policy.

Because it cuts across the food systems, it cuts across the health systems, and trade systems (phonetic). And if you feel to propose this (phonetic) then it will undermine racial justice, it will create more unemployment for the colored people, and it becomes more so as our economy becomes more digitalized.

We now have large firms -- large, sales (phonetic) driven firms like the companies of social media that are driving everything that we do in our lives. And as they drive it in a more adverse manner for the colored and for the
racial communities.

So, I like that the Department of Commerce is doing some things about, like, anti-trust policy, but I think there's more that needs to be done. Because these firms, these large, 21st century, digitalized industries and firms are service-driven. They're driving these trade policies, not only nationally, but internationally.

So, looking at that from that perspective really helped to see how trade policy could help to shape policies for creating employment for the racial communities and the underserved members of our community. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Okay, thank you. Mr. Flores?

MR. E. FLORES: Thank you. So, one of the things, just a barrier just to break down, is, as Dr. Eddinger talked about inclusivity or just kind of connect people with skills upgrade, because education doesn't just come from colleges. It comes from registered apprenticeships, on-the-job training. It comes from so many different areas in our lives.

But unfortunately, not everything is recognized. But recognizing an individual as a skilled worker and not looking at training or post-secondary but as a skills upgrade. As an electrician, I have to do my continual educational upgrades or skills upgrades to keep my license current.
So, if an individual is impacted by trade, US DOL finds a certification for the petition, and the individual has to jump through all these hoops just to prove that they have an inherent need for trade. And that's not talking about the lack of resources, computer technology, or all of these other things that can impact.

And yes, even their outward appearance, their race, their color, can impact their access to these benefits. But if it's just looking at a skills upgrade, just annihilating all of the barriers -- New Mexico just submitted a bill and passed a bill recently for making college accessible to everybody.

And if we invest into our workforce in that way, then, you know, maybe there would be a stronger reduction in priority populations that people would not be falling through the cracks, people would not be struggling trying to figure out how to access or the right framing of words that they need to use, and more importantly, unions do help very significantly to help break these barriers, to help create pathways. Colleges have helped with that. Conversations like this have helped with that.

But overall, just creating space for high-skill (phonetic) jobs that will give paths to people and equitable paths for everybody, that they can access these skills upgrades and still continuously move on the social economic
ladder when impacts do happen. Thank you.

CHAIR KEARNS: Great, thank you. Does anyone else have anything they would like to add? All right. Well thank you all very much. You've been very generous with your time, and I think it's been a very helpful conversation.

We appreciate all of your input, and as I said, we're going to keep this going. We've got, I think, four more roundtables to go. We've got an academic symposium, we've got a hearing, and then we've got a lot of thinking to do to prepare a report that'll come out in October. So, thank you all for contributing today.

If you have anything you want to add, please do write to us. We'd love to hear what you have to say. Thanks again.

(Whereupon, at 3:35 p.m., the roundtable in the above-entitled matter concluded.)
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