



Congressional “Future Of Work” Initiative May Have Bipartisan Future

Insights

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We’ve written about [the “Future of Work” efforts](#) recently undertaken by Congress – a series of hearings aimed at discussing various issues that we can expect to impact workplaces in the near future. And according to [a recent report by Bloomberg Law’s Jaclyn Diaz](#), it appears that both political parties could be aiming to bridge their philosophical differences to find common ground when it comes to issues impacting the gig economy.

The House of Representatives just formed The Congressional Future of Work Caucus, a bipartisan group headed by Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-Del.) and Rep. Bryan Steil (R-Wisc.) and comprised of nine Democrats and three Republicans. While the group will look to create recommendations on a series of matters, including AI and robotics, [it has identified the gig economy as an area for exploration](#).

When it comes to areas within the gig economy where it appears that both political parties may have shared interests, the main focus usually centers on portable benefits. [And according to Diaz’s report](#), Blunt Rochester indicated that is just one such topic that is up for discussion. As we have frequently noted on this blog, a portable benefits plan would benefit both workers and gig businesses. Currently, businesses cannot offer traditional benefits packages to independent contractors for fear that such action would raise the specter of a misclassification claim. If, however, a mechanism were to exist permitting workers to latch onto a benefits package that could move with them from one job to another – or even from one gig or task to another – that could induce a greater number of workers to fully commit to an independent path for themselves and jettison the traditional employment model. And, of course, gig businesses would be happy to see a greater number of workers join the pool of available workers, as increased participation would see higher skilled workers in the mix to perform critical services.

While it is unclear whether the caucus would develop draft legislation on any topic, including portable benefits proposals, it’s a good sign that the group will be addressing the matter. For now, the group is planning on meeting at least four times per year. We’ll monitor their progress and report any interesting developments.

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