

Industrial & Labor Relations Review
Call for Papers

*Special Issue and Conference Celebrating the Centennial
of the US Department of Labor*

The *Industrial & Labor Relations Review* is calling for papers for a conference and subsequent special issue devoted to the commemoration of the Centennial of the U.S. Department of Labor. Scholars interested in participating should submit a paper to the Journal by **March 15, 2012**.

Authors whose papers are accepted will be invited to a conference hosted and funded by the U.S. Department of Labor in the Fall of 2012. Papers presented at this conference should be suitable for immediate submission to external reviewers. Based on discussions at the conference and reviewers' recommendations, a subset of the authors will be asked to undertake revisions with the expectation that their papers will be published in the special issue.

BACKGROUND

On March 4, 1913, President William Howard Taft signed a bill establishing the U.S. Department of Labor as a cabinet-level Department. In recognition of the Department's 100 years of service to American workers and their families, the Department's centennial commemoration will take place from March 2012 to March 2013.

As part of its year-long commemoration, the Department will host an academic symposium in the Fall of 2012 to discuss how the Department can improve the lives of American workers in the future through its worker protection enforcement strategies and regulatory activities.

The Department's labor law enforcement activities account for approximately \$1.5 billion allocated among the following seven agencies: the Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), the Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Office of the Solicitor (SOL), and the Wage and Hour Division (WHD). Half of the Department's 18,000 employees are engaged in enforcement activities. These employees are responsible for more than 150 million American workers and eight million worksites. As a result, the Department is interested in papers that point to new, innovative approaches that effectively impact the behavior of a wider set of employers and that indicate how to improve the quality of workplaces (especially with respect to characteristics that the Department regulates). For example, such approaches may include enhancing targeting strategies, improving employer education, empowering workers or using media differently. Papers can be theoretical or empirical.

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**ILLUSTRATIVE COMPARATIVE
PAPER TOPICS**

The Department prefers papers on topics such as, but not limited to, the questions described below:

- I. Although the Department's enforcement agencies are responsible for the entire universe of entities they regulate, the resources available to most of these agencies allow them to reach only a fraction of these entities annually.¹ Given this discrepancy between resources and responsibilities, what strategies can the Department's worker protection agencies adopt that aim to effect change beyond the employers the agencies touch, especially in terms of compliance with the laws the Department enforces?
- II. The enforcement responsibilities of the Department have developed over time. Considering the varying scope of authority of the Department's worker protection agencies over the past century, what should the Department's structure look like in the future? What worker protection agencies should be retained or added to the Department, and under what statutory or regulatory authority should they operate? What emerging issues or phenomena might affect the Department's worker protection responsibilities and the way it operates in the future?
- III. During its first century, the Department's enforcement agencies functioned using certain tools, such as legislation, regulation, guidance, enforcement, litigation, education, and outreach. What tools have been most effective for the Department? How is that likely to change going forward? What new tools could be used? How should investigators be hired, trained, and deployed? What knowledge, skills, and abilities may the Department's inspectors need to function in the future work environment? How should effective inspector training be implemented?
- IV. What existing or emerging technologies could be useful to the Department's enforcement work? How could their use impact the Department? How could their use impact workers? What new questions will their use raise?
- V. How may globalization and an increasingly more diverse workforce affect the Department's mission, policy, and enforcement strategy? How might the Department's role change as an increasingly global labor market? How might developments in foreign labor markets affect the needs of U.S. workers and their demands of the Department?

To submit your paper for consideration, please visit: <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/ilrreview>. Click on the "Submissions" link at the top of the page and follow our on-screen instructions.

¹ MSHA is legally required to inspect all covered employers annually.