

LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT RECORDS, A PATHWAY FOR RESTORING AMERICA'S WORKFORCE

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(adapted from [full article](#))

In July 2018, President Trump [established](#) the National Council for the American Worker and the American Workforce Policy Advisory Board (AWPAB). He charged them with identifying a pathway to increased data transparency that would support informed decision-making among American students and workers. The Data Transparency Working Group identified Learning and Employment Records (LER's) as an essential way to communicate skills between workers, employers, and education and training institutions.

COVID-19 caused massive disruption to the workforce, spurring changes in business models and consumer behavior. It was estimated in a [2021 report](#) that 17 million workers may need to completely change occupations by 2030. With the changing needs of employers, people will need to depend on experience and training rather than just their educational credentials to sharpen their technical skills.

THE BASICS OF LER'S

- An [LER is a learning record](#) that is verifiable information about a person's achievements in education, training, and workplace experience.
- A micro-credential, sometimes called a mini certification, is shorter than an award course and can represent from 1 to 100 hours of learning.
- The private sector should lead the coordination of LER development and implementation.

FLORIDA PUTS DIGITAL CREDENTIALS IN ACTION

Recently, a tragedy struck the Florida coast when the Surfside Condominium collapsed in Miami, Florida. One company, [Merit](#), which specializes in digital credentials, partnered with the Florida Division of Emergency Management to enable healthcare first responders to obtain certified credentials that allowed them to quickly be able to assist in response and recovery. They managed the operations of all personnel through their electronic verification system.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Laffer Associates [researched](#) the economic benefits that can occur by shortening the time it takes when a worker loses their job and starts new employment. Laffer describes LER's as being a method of instant verification of credentials, which vastly reduces the costs and time it takes to fill job vacancies. Their report found that, with a full-scale implementation of a digital instant-placement program, the average unemployed worker would benefit by almost \$6,000 and the average firm would benefit by over \$21,000, translating to aggregate gains for the U.S. economy of nearly \$437.6 billion.

CONCLUSION

We are in an era of unprecedented changes to the job market. Digital credentialing presents a crucial avenue for workers to upskill and states to consider standardizing the process for helping people find jobs. The vast landscape of digital credentials offers individuals more choice and much greater affordability. American workers deserve to own a dynamic and lifelong record of

their learning and work experiences and achievements that can be instantly verified and shared directly and easily with educational institutions and employers.