

Senate Interim Committee on Labor and Business

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Committee Members,

As a former OED employee recruited to address the current staffing crisis and trained as a Claims Specialist, I would like to take this opportunity to add to the conversation.

I feel that in it's haste to relieve the pressure caused by long phone queue wait times, the department sorely miscalculated its ability to expeditiously train new hires and staff itself to handle the unprecedented demand, and in doing so overlooked some fundamental concepts in its processes.

A short, uneven training period conducted by staff members and exacerbated by outdated and often inaccurate training materials (which we were regularly directed to as a primary resource) left much to be desired. Then, after 2 short months of training, being directed to take inbound calls in phone queues with long wait times and with very little technical support and guidance. The added pressure of trying to identify and resolve claimant's issues in real time magnified these unresolved challenges.

These challenges hampered efforts by me, and others I suspect, in fulfilling the duties assigned to this position faithfully and effectively. It became stressful to the point where I felt that I couldn't execute these duties in good faith and conscience so I resigned.

I relate these circumstances in light of the possibility that the current crisis may continue for a much longer term, and that the OEDs inability to promptly deliver services may contribute to diminishing confidence in the perception of the government's ability to distribute resources.

Respectfully,

Ernie Garcia