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## **DOL names new members of ERISA Advisory Council**

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By Editorial Staff    *Fri, Jan 3, 2025*

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*The 15-member council provides advice on policies and regulations affecting employee benefit plans governed by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).*

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The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has appointed five new members and leaders for the 2025 [Advisory Council on Employee Welfare and Pension Benefit Plans](#), also known as the ERISA Advisory Council or EAC.

The 15-member council provides advice on policies and regulations affecting employee benefit plans governed by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974.

By law, members serve for staggered three-year terms representing nine fields. Three members represent employee organizations, three represent employers and three represent the general public. The accounting, actuarial counseling, corporate trust, insurance, investment counseling and investment management fields are each represented by one member.

Assistant Secretary for Employee Benefits Security (EBSA) Lisa M. Gomez announced appointments in these fields:

- **Actuarial Counseling:** Christian Benjaminson is a vice president and principal consulting actuary at Cheiron Inc. primarily advising multiemployer plans in the trucking, manufacturing, construction, communications and grocery industries. Benjaminson has more than 25 years of experience as an actuarial consultant and a Society of Actuaries' Fellow, and an enrolled actuary and member of the American Academy of Actuaries.
- **Employee Organizations:** Wendell Young is the President of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1776 Keystone State as well as Vice President of the UFCW International Union. Young serves as a trustee overseeing health and pension benefit trust funds for the union's 35,000 members. He also serves on the Strategic Initiative Steering Committee for the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans.
- **Employers:** Jay Dorsch is the chair of the Employee Benefits and Executive Compensation practice of Cozen O'Connor, a law firm representing clients in all aspects of employee benefits and executive compensation matters and related fiduciary and tax concerns. Dorsch represents clients before the IRS, the Department of Labor and the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp.
- **General Public:** Elizabeth Hopkins is a senior partner at Kantor & Kantor LLP and head of the law firm's pension practice. Hopkins joined the firm in 2018 after a long

career at the DOL Department of Labor where, for 15 years, she served as head of the ERISA appellate and amicus program. In that role, she oversaw nationwide litigation designed to advance the interests of workers and their families with regard to their employee benefits.

- **Investment Counseling:** Craig Wright is a founding partner at Strategic Financial and has 15 years of experience as a financial advisor. Wright received a master's degree in business administration from Southwest Baptist University. He is a Certified Financial Planner and has holds a Chartered Financial Consultant designation.

Continuing as Council Chair for 2025 will be current member Mayoung Nham, a principal with the law firm of Slevin & Hart PC with 15 years' experience in employee benefits law.

Current EAC member Anusha Rasalingam will serve as the council's Vice Chair in 2025. A partner at Friedman and Anspach, Rasalingam has 20 years of experience in employee benefits law. She advises on healthcare and retirement benefits issues for single and multiemployer plans, and counsels on compliance with multiple areas of ERISA.

Outgoing members are Tonya Manning, U.S. Defined Benefit Consulting and Administration Practice Leader and Chief Actuary at Gallagher; Shaun C. O'Brien, Policy Director at the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; Holly Verdeyen, partner and U.S. Defined Contribution Leader at Mercer; Jeffrey Lewis, partner at Keller Rohrback LLP; Beth Halberstadt, senior partner and U.S. Defined Contribution Investment Solutions Leader at Aon Investments USA Inc.

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