# NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD SOLE SOURCE ANNOUNCEMENT IN GRANTS.GOV

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) intends to award a cooperative agreement to the Center for Employment Security Education and Research (CESER) for continued support of the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Integrity Center of Excellence (Integrity Center).

This sole source award is statutorily mandated in ETA's Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 appropriation. The Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, 2019 and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2019 (P.L. 115-245)[1] provides "*… $9,000,000 for continued support of the Unemployment Insurance Integrity Center of Excellence…*" The accompanying congressional explanatory statement[2] further states that, "*The conferees include $9,000,000 for the Unemployment Insurance Integrity Center of Excellence (UIICE). The conferees provide $6,000,000 for the benefit of States to the entity operating the UIICE.*" The competitively awarded cooperative agreement between ETA and the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) for the operation of the Integrity Center specifies that CESER is the lead organization responsible for the operation of the Integrity Center. ETA interprets the language included in the congressional explanatory statement as requiring a grant award to CESER as the entity operating the Integrity Center.

The primary mission of the Integrity Center is to provide training and technical assistance to states to improve UI program integrity; develop, disseminate, and promote innovative new tools and products that are transferable and scalable for all states to prevent UI improper payments and enhance fraud prevention solutions; and enable rapid alerts to states on new improper payment practices and fraud schemes as they are identified. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2012, ETA competitively selected NYSDOL for a cooperative agreement to establish the Integrity Center. In 2014, NYSDOL contracted with CESER for the completion of the Integrity Center's scope of work established in the cooperative agreement.

CESER, a 501(c) (3) entity, incorporated in August 1994 as an arm of the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA), is a leading provider of information technology, education, and research support for UI, workforce development initiatives and activities. NASWA serves as the collective voice of state agencies on UI matters, and through its subsidiary, CESER, fosters and supports relationships to help ensure program integrity and quality performance of the UI system nationwide. NASWA/CESER also serves as a liaison between state workforce agencies, ETA and other Federal government agencies, Congress, business, labor, and intergovernmental groups.

CESER is uniquely qualified to provide a forum for states to exchange information and ideas related to program requirements and peer-to-peer collaboration to help ensure the integrity of UI program operations. The continued funding of the Integrity Center is essential to CESER's completion and expansion of presently funded project deliverables. The Integrity Center, operated by CESER, completed several of its core strategies over the past year and continues to develop and implement others. Providing these resources to another entity would lead to duplication of work at a cost to the Government; a major disruption of the ongoing work of the Integrity Center; and a significant delay in the availability of products and tools needed by state workforce agencies to prevent, detect, and recover improper payments in the UI program.

[1] https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/hr6157/BILLS-115hr6157enr.pdf, p. 71.
[2] https://www.congress.gov/115/crpt/hrpt952/CRPT-115hrpt952.pdf, p. 517.