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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations - you have decided to become an advocate! Welcome to the community of individuals, organizations and agencies dedicated to working for positive social change. Being an advocate is a lifelong job; a process that takes patience and determination. Advocacy is about recognizing what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, “Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter”. In recognizing our individual gifts and talents, we have the capability of changing our world. As advocates, we can create change and call for a more inclusive environment for not just persons with disabilities, but everyone.

Of course, advocacy goes beyond just recognizing the need to speak up. It goes beyond just thinking to include action - standing up for something. Writing letters to legislators is a very powerful and effective way of getting across ideas and concerns you may have as an advocate. It is important that we recognize the power of the pen (or keyboard) as well as personal conversations and develop connections with our representatives. As a government for the people and by the people, we must assert our right to be active advocates!

APSE is the only national organization with an exclusive focus on integrated employment and career advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities. APSE envisions “People with all types of disabilities are employed, pursuing careers and building assets just like people without disabilities.” Its mission is: “Through advocacy and education, APSE advances employment and self-sufficiency for all people with disabilities.” APSE’s goals are to support the following:

- **Real Jobs for All:** Ensure that every individual with a disability has the opportunity to be part of the general workforce and earn a living wage, without regard to their level of disability.
- **Employment First:** Public policies of federal, state, and local governments should be based on the concept of Employment First - that employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome in the provision of publicly funded services for all working age citizens with disabilities, regardless of level of disability. Over 19 states currently have Employment First Policies.
- **Shifting of Resources to the Community:** Public resources used to assist and support individuals should be shifted from facility-based and institutional settings, into the community.
- **Sufficient Resources for Employment Success:** Resources to assist and support individuals with disabilities with their employment needs must be sufficient to provide quality services, and supports as needed for long-term employment success.
- **Promotion of Employment in the Public and Private Sector:** Government should serve as a model employer for people with disabilities, setting an example for the private sector, in conjunction with efforts to promote employment in the private sector through the availability of necessary assistance and accommodations.
• Movement out of Poverty: Too often disability equals poverty. Efforts to move people with disabilities into employment will increase their ability to move out of poverty and into the middle-class, and decrease their reliance on public benefits.

• Protection of Disability Rights: The advancement of rights of people with disabilities resulting from the Americans with Disabilities Act, Olmstead Decision, the Rehabilitation Act, and similar legislation, must be protected and fully enforced.

Your advocacy work to advance these goals is critical to improving the employment and lives of people with disabilities.

Legislators have major influence over services and supports for people with disabilities, through funding and policy decisions. The job of legislators is to respond to the needs of their constituents - that means you! It’s important that legislators know that someone is paying attention to the issue of community employment for people with disabilities - otherwise they are likely to ignore the issue or only listen to the other side. Therefore it’s important that strong voices for community employment be heard. This Legislative Handbook will serve as a tool to help you become a better and more confident advocate. Remember, change can start with YOU!
Section Overview

This section defines and establishes the importance of Employment First Legislation. It also provides the background behind the initiative, ideas on how to start the Employment First discussion in your region, and resources that you may use to answer questions and raise awareness about the Employment First initiative. Employment First is an imperative initiative which is key to the APSE mission and those who work toward improving the lives of individuals with disabilities. Utilizing the information contained within this section, you should be able to improve the foundation that you and your organization have in Employment First and become better ambassadors for APSE.

Practical Tips
1. Know the history of the Employment First initiative
2. Develop an understanding of what Employment First means
3. Find out what commitment your state/organizations have made to Employment First
4. Be a resource for others on Employment First

What is Employment First?

The U.S. Department of Labor defines “Employment First” as “a concept to facilitate the full inclusion of people with the most significant disabilities in the workplace and community. Under the Employment First approach, community-based, integrated employment is the first option for employment services for youth and adults with significant disabilities.”

APSE goes further and provides greater depth and direction for individuals and groups committed to making Employment First a reality.

http://www.apse.org/employmentfirst/keypoints.cfm

Why is it Important?

Employment First is important to ending the notion that individuals with disabilities are not productive. It is important so that community inclusion happens for all individuals of all abilities. Community employment should be the first option for everyone, not just a select few. Employment First is a necessary tool if this is to happen. Every person involved from families, service providers, and legislators must be on board with Employment First in order for these changes to take place and for people’s lives to be changed for the better.

Informed Choice Argument

When deciding what options are available to an individual with a disability, it is always that person’s choice. So when discussing employment options, integrated community employment should always be the first option should the person express their desire to find employment outside of a sheltered workshop. Everyone has the right for gainful employment that is not in a workshop setting, no matter their ability.
Raising Expectations

In order for Employment First to be successful, we must raise the expectations of everyone with ties to employment services. It begins with the individuals who are being served and their families. They must have buy-in into the fact that sheltered workshops are not the ultimate destination. They must know that integrated community employment is possible for everyone and should always be the first option. Then we must raise the expectations for those organizations which operate sheltered workshops and help them transition their services to focus on inclusive community employment. Finally the expectations must be raised within our communities and with our elected officials. In order to do this, a clear and concise message must be developed. How to develop and deliver this message is covered later in this toolkit.

Additional Resources

For additional resources to further enhance your understanding of Employment and the Employment First initiative, a list of links is provided below. The resources provide a solid grounding on the Employment First Initiative.

1. APSE resources
   a. Statement on Employment First
   b. Employment First Whitepaper
   c. Employment First Policy Map
2. Senate HELP Committee
   a. July 2013 High Expectations: Transforming the American Workforce as the ADA Generation Comes of Age
3. Government Accountability Office
   a. June 2012 Employment for People with Disabilities: Little is Known About Effectiveness of Fragmented and Overlapping Programs
4. Congressional Budget Office
5. National Governor’s Association
   b. A Better Bottom Line: A Blueprint for Governors
6. State Employment Leadership Network
   a. Employment First State Policy Resource List
LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

“All Legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.”
(Article I, Section 1, of the United States Constitution)

Section Overview

Before getting started, it is important to fully understand the legislative process. Although the United States Congress considers thousands of bills each session, only a very small percentage will ever make it to the president’s desk for final approval or veto. Before reaching the White House, bills must go through a variety of committees and subcommittees, debates, and amendments in both chambers of Congress.

Disability Rights Timeline

Please view the link from the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Independent Living Management for a select list of national and international milestones highlighting people, events and legislation that effect disability rights: http://bit.ly/1eTalRV

Key Federal Laws Impacting the Disability Community

There has been significant progress and increased opportunities for people with disabilities through the disability rights movement. For more information on landmark legislation that has created meaningful change for people with disabilities and opened doors to employment opportunities please view the Arc’s guide to “Where Your Rights Come From” found at: http://bit.ly/MeEAMr

Additionally, the Americans with Disabilities Act has provided great opportunity by making it illegal for employers discriminate based on disability. The ADA Employment Pocket Toolkit can be a good resource. It can be found at: http://bit.ly/1eQNWoX

Importance of Understanding the Process

Understanding the legislative process is a crucial component of being an effective advocate for Employment First policies and practices. Both advocacy and lobbying are effective way to create awareness about how a community is impacted by public policy. However, there is an important distinction between the two that is helpful to understand. The Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest clarifies by stating:

“When nonprofit organizations advocate on their own behalf, they seek to affect some aspect of society, whether they appeal to individuals about their behavior, employers about their rules, or the government about its laws. Lobbying refers specifically to advocacy efforts that attempt to influence legislation. This distinction is helpful to keep in mind because it means that laws limiting the lobbying done by nonprofit organizations do not govern other advocacy activities.”


The key to influencing public policy is to build relationships with elected officials in order to educate and influence their viewpoints on critical issues and legislation.
**Federal Government**

The United States Congress is the bicameral (two legislative chambers) legislature of the federal government of the United States of America, consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Each Congress lasts two years and is comprised of two sessions. On January 2014, the 112th Congress convened its second session.

Both US Senators and Representatives, make up the US Congress, and are chosen through direct election. Each of the 435 members of the House of Representatives represents a federal district in a state and serve two-year terms. House seats are apportioned among the states by population. In contrast, the 100 Senators serve six-year terms. Each state has two senators, regardless of population.

**State Government**

As you know, individual states are commonly faced with legislation that may have an important positive or negative impact on the future of integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Every state except Nebraska has a bicameral legislature, which means the state legislature consists of two separate chambers. In all bicameral legislatures, the smaller chamber is called the Senate and is usually referred to as the upper house.


**House and Senate Committees**

The House and Senate each divide the issues they work on among committees of jurisdiction. These committees decide which bills and resolutions move forward to consideration by the House and Senate as a whole. Committee chairmen have enormous influence over this process. In terms of disability employment, the major committees with jurisdiction are the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee and the House Education and the Workforce Committee.

**How a Bill Becomes a Law**

Although anyone may draft a bill, only members of Congress can introduce legislation, and by doing so become the bill’s sponsor(s). There are four basic types of legislation: bills, joint resolutions, concurrent resolutions, and simple resolutions. The official legislative process begins when a bill or resolution is numbered, referred to a committee and printed by the Government Printing Office. “H.R.” signifies a House bill and “S” a Senate bill. Useful resources to learn more include:

- Watch a video from the Library of Congress about the Legislative Process [http://1.usa.gov/1jdcn4L](http://1.usa.gov/1jdcn4L)
The Role of APSE

APSE plays an important role as the only national organization with an exclusive focus on integrated employment and career advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities. APSE speaks as a unified voice in the Employment First movement representing human service professionals, people with disabilities, educators, employers, family members and other stakeholders. It is important to use this opportunity to tell your Members of Congress about the impact APSE and your state chapter has on your community, and the importance of expanding equitable employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities!

Additional Resources

- **How Our Laws Are Made**
  - In the House: [http://thomas.loc.gov/home/lawsmade.toc.html](http://thomas.loc.gov/home/lawsmade.toc.html)
  - In the Senate: [http://thomas.loc.gov/home/lawsmade.toc.html](http://thomas.loc.gov/home/lawsmade.toc.html)
- **House and Senate Floor Schedule/Calendar**
  - House Calendar: [http://1.usa.gov/1qcpT1U](http://1.usa.gov/1qcpT1U)
  - Senate Floor Schedule: [http://www.senate.gov/](http://www.senate.gov/)
  - Senate Calendar: [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/calendars/senate/browse.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/calendars/senate/browse.html)
- **Legislative Contact Form**
  - Contact your Senator: [http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm](http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm)
LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY APPROACHES

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” - Margaret Mead

Section Overview

Legislative advocacy is about making your voice heard and taking action that involves acting on behalf of yourself or others. Legislative advocacy can involve anything from working personally with legislative staff members on the wording of a bill, to mobilizing hundreds, or even thousands, of supporters to bombard legislators with phone calls, letters, or tweets about a particular issue. Legislative advocacy involves educating legislators, supporters, and the public about the issue; working with the media, seeking out allies, and being persistent with your message over long periods of time.¹

Practical Tips

This section is designed to assist you in conducting particular advocacy activities in the field of disability rights and to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities. We specifically hope this toolkit can prepare you with information to help your cause gain support from local, state, and national officials. In general, there are several different types of advocacy that a person can take when working with elected officials:

- **Self-advocacy**: taking action to represent and advance your own interests;
- **Peer advocacy**: taking action to represent the rights and interests of someone other than yourself;
- **Systems advocacy**: taking action to influence social, political, and economic systems to bring about change for groups of people; and
- **Legal advocacy**: taking action to use attorneys and the legal or administrative systems to establish or protect legal rights. *(Advocacy Training Manual, Wisconsin Coalition for Advocacy (1996), p. 1.)*

Although there are a variety of ways a lawmaker can support your cause, this support normally takes one of the following forms:

- A bill with funding attached;
- A bill with wording that supports a particular philosophy or helps to legitimize your issues;
- A bill with regulations that benefits people with disabilities;
- A local ordinance that supports your cause;
- Budget advocacy;
- Simple political, intellectual, and moral support; and
- Link with other contacts.

Building an Advocacy Strategy

There are a handful of key reasons to participate in legislative advocacy:

• To gain powerful allies;
• To create positive publicity;
• To lend focus to your issues; and
• To effectively bolster a cause.

Before beginning your advocacy efforts consider the following questions: What is the problem? What is your goal? What facts support your position? These three questions should help guide your advocacy efforts and assist you in identifying solutions and outcomes in accordance with the circumstances of your situation.

Timing

When it comes to creating an effective advocacy strategy the most important component to consider is TIMING! Since many of us have limited time to continually push for pro-employment policies, deciding when to mobilize a real push can be the crux to your success! In today’s fast-paced world, it is important to know when the time is right to make a push for your cause.

Some consideration for timing includes:

• When the lawmakers are about to take up something crucial to your issue;
• Just before and during budget time;
• When your issue or target population is drawing attention;
• When a vote on a crucial bill is likely to be very close;
• When a bill—or the veto of a bill or budget—that hurts your cause has just been passed or signed, but can still be changed by an amendment, a veto, or an override;
• When it’s important to make legislators aware that your issue exists.

Click here for more information concerning establishing a Step by Step Informal Advocacy Plan.

Tactics and Tips and Working in Coalitions

For more information on working with and developing coalitions, review the information here on Advocacy Tactics. For additional tips refer to pages 17 and 18 on this resource for information on Six Practice Tips. Refer to additional Toolkit section for more information (e.g. Employment Topical Information, Organizing People and Planning Change, and Legislative Process)

Identifying Your Representatives

Effective advocacy requires you to know who represents you in the various areas of government. These leaders work for you and you should be able to identify them. Go to the websites below to identify the people that represent you.

U.S. House and Senate

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2 http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/advocacy/direct-action/legislative-advocacy/main
United States Senate: http://senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators.cfm.cfm

State Government
State Legislator: http://thomas.loc.gov/home/state-legislatures.html

Letter Writing and Email
You probably have written many letters before to friends, family, or long-distance pen pals; however, writing to a legislative member is a bit different. There are important things to keep in mind while drafting your letter such as length, format, etc. The more well-written your letter is, the more likely your message will be seen as powerful and lasting. Here are some suggestions to think about as you write your letter.

Identify Who You Are
Let your representative know who it is that is sending them the letter. It’s important that you let him or her know that you are a constituent from their region or district. Of course, organizations and agencies can write to representatives as well, but always remember to include your name, address and telephone number, so he or she can contact you.

Address Letter Appropriately
Always address your letter to “The Honorable” (fill in name). Depending on who you are writing, you will use a different salutation to begin your letter. For the United States Congress, use “Dear Representative *Last Name of Member*” if you’re writing to a member of the House of Representatives. Use “Dear Senator *Last Name of Member*” if you’re writing to a member of the Senate. Follow similar rules when writing to a member of your State Legislature.

Resources

Sample letters

Meeting Policymakers, Personal Visits, Day at the Capitol
Constituent communication with Congress is an essential part of the legislative process. As a constituent, you have an important role to play in the legislative process. Elected officials rely on outreach from constituents to help form opinions on issues, so it is important we are at the table!

How the Congressional Office Works
Members of the House of Representatives may hire up to 18 permanent employees for their congressional and district offices. Senators do not have a limit on the amount of staff they can hire. There is a distinct hierarchy in the Members’ office, which are located in one of three Congressional Office Buildings.
The following is a description of key staff positions in the Member office:

- **Chief of Staff/Administrative Assistant:** The Administrative Assistant reports directly to the member of Congress. He/she usually has overall responsibility for evaluating the political outcome of various legislative proposals and constituent requests. The Administrative Assistant is usually the person in charge of overall office operations, including the assignment of work and the supervision of key staff.

- **Legislative Director:** The Legislative Director (LD) is usually the staff person who oversees the legislative agenda for the office and makes recommendations regarding the pros and cons of particular issues. The Legislative Director usually handles the one or two major issues for a particular member, or often handles the key committee assignment for a member. The Legislative Director manages the Legislative Assistants and Legislative Correspondents.[2]

- **Legislative Assistant:** The Legislative Assistant (LA) specializes in a specific legislative field or fields and crafts and monitors legislation; devises strategy to pass specific legislation; and (in a Senate office) oversees the legislative correspondent working in the same legislative field.

- **Legislative Correspondent:** The Legislative Correspondent (LC) in a Senate office works in a number of specific legislative fields providing research for a Legislative Assistant while primarily writing letters to constituents concerned about issues in the specific legislative fields in which the LC specializes. In a House office, the Legislative Correspondent writes letters exclusively.

- **Press Secretary:** The Press Secretary fields call from the media, writes press releases, and acts as the spokesperson for the Member.

- **Staff Assistant:** The Staff Assistant answers phones and e-mail in the Member office, greets visitors, sort mail, and provides tours of the Capitol.

**Scheduling a Meeting with a Member of Congress**

There are several ways to communicate with your members of Congress including personal visits, days on the Hill and inviting your legislators to your workplace. There are a variety of ways to schedule a meeting with your member of congress but there are a few standard practices:

- Tell the receptionist that you are a constituent, you live in [city, state], and you would like to meet with Representative X or Senator Y to discuss issues related to the employment of people with disabilities.

- The receptionist will either give you instructions on how to submit your formal meeting request or will put you in touch with the member’s scheduler.

- When you speak with the scheduler be sure to say you represent your state’s APSE chapter, answer questions politely but be sure to make it clear you would like a meeting with the member.
• Many times you will not be able to meet with your member of congress in person but you will be able to meet with their legislative staff.

• After filing your formal meeting request, the key to successfully scheduling a meeting is follow-up. Be persistent. Ask the scheduler or staffer when you can follow up. Most schedules are not made up more than one week in advance, so it is important for you to remain flexible. You will be successful if you are persistent and friendly.

**Take Your Legislator to Work Day**

As part of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, National APSE and our APSE State Chapters will be conducting a state-led Take Your Legislator to Work Day campaign. The objective of this campaign is to raise awareness and the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities and the belief that employment and careers should be the expected and preferred outcomes of all publicly funded services for individuals with disabilities, i.e. Employment First! Essentially, we want to show our state legislators “Real Jobs with Real Wages!” For more information on this approach, check out [Take Your Legislator to Work Day Campaign Toolkit](#).

**Additional Resources**

- **General**
  - APSE Day on the Hill PowerPoint: [APSE Day on the Hill PowerPoint – June 2012](#)

- **Sample Questions to Legislators**

- **Telephoning Policy Maker**

- **Sample Scripts and Action Alerts**

- **Testifying at Committees**
COMMUNICATION

Section Overview

Effective communication strategies are critical to advance the APSE mission, values, and positions at all levels of public policy advocacy. To effectively communicate for legislative change, it is necessary to have a targeted message, aimed at influencing a specific audience, with instructions on what they can do to influence the outcomes. This section provides information, advice, and resources to assist in considering different communication strategies, developing a communications plan, and implementing specific communication approaches.

Practical Tips

1. Articulate a positive message.
2. Develop a communication plan.
3. Understand the strengths and weaknesses of different communication strategies.

Different Communication Mediums

There are many ways the APSE message can be shared including print, electronic and social media. Each medium has different strengths and weaknesses. You will need to choose the effective medium which will depend on the message you are sharing, the audience you hope to touch, and the purpose for communicating.

For more information about different strategies and the strengths and weakness, see the section titled, “Communication Strategies” and refer to pages 42 to 44 in the following resource:

Website: http://bit.ly/1J5Uvga

Messaging

As an APSE leader advocating for policy changes, it is important to have a clearly articulated message about the problem and proposed solution. Written information helps keep a coalition on message. Creating and agreeing on a message allows you and your allies to use the same language to describe and promote your position. Consistency will provide policymakers with a more consistent message from advocates. Not only does this help policymakers understand the issue as framed by APSE and its allies, it also makes the message more meaningful by showing the broader appeal as other constituency groups use the same message.

For more information on how to develop a message using the “Five W’s;” who, what when, where, and why, refer to page 30 in the following resource:

**Communication Plan**

Having a communication plan can provide an effective structure to design and implement communication strategies. There are many ways a plan can be structured. Specific areas to address in a communication plan may include:

- **Target audience**: Identify the primary target for the message.
  - For example, you may be targeting communication to APSE chapter members to advocate for Employment First policy. The target audience would be APSE chapter members.
- **Concrete actions for the audience**: Identify what you are asking the target audience to do.
  - For example, you may be asking APSE chapter members to contact their legislator to pass a specific bill.
- **Mode(s) of communication**: Identify how the target audience will be reached.
  - For example, you may opt to use email and social media to reach out with APSE chapter members on a matter that requires immediate attention.
- **Allies and supporters**: Identify other advocacy groups, people, and allies with overlapping missions and beliefs that might support your advocacy efforts.
  - For example, an APSE chapter seeking to advance employment policy might benefit from teaming up with a poverty advocacy organization. Often times, more support is better.
- **Responsibilities and tasks**: Identify specific tasks that need to be completed to achieve the communication plan, with deadlines and people responsible for completing them.
  - Specific tasks may include writing/developing the communication, disseminating the message, fielding questions, soliciting help from allies, etc.
- **Schedule of communication**: Identify when communication will be initiated and frequency.

**Tips for Working with the Media**

Communicating with media outlets is one way to reach a wide audience with a focused message. Television news stations, local newspapers, and news related websites may be worth considering. The following resources provide good insights and suggestions about how to work with the media.

- Sample Take Your Legislator to Work Day Press Release

**Communication Strategies**

There are many different communication strategies that you can use as an APSE leader. Choosing the most effective strategy or strategies will be important as you pursue
your advocacy work. Below is a list of approaches and resources to assist you in developing you communications.

**Email & Social Media**
Electronic communications can be efficient mechanisms to connect and rally advocacy allies in short time. More information about effectively using electronic mediums and social media can be found here:

Using Social Media for Advocacy: [http://bit.ly/1aS8We2](http://bit.ly/1aS8We2)

**Press-release**
A press-release can provide your allies and general public a brief synopsis of important information. Since press-releases are intended for a wide audience, it is important to avoid jargon and prioritize information. Press-releases can be distributed widely to media outlets, as well as your allies for distribution within their networks.

For a detailed tip sheet and template press-releases, see pages 31 to 34 in this resource


**Newsletters, opinion pieces, interviews, and white papers**
Other strategies to spread the APSE message and vision are through newsletters, opinion and editorial pieces (also known as op-ed), and white papers. Interviews by interested media outlets or groups are also possible. Together, these mechanisms provide avenues to challenge the status quo, draw attention to important topics, and suggest solutions to present day issues. See the following resource for more information about these strategies.

Section Overview

Effective legislative advocacy requires knowledge about specific topics which can be difficult to understand. APSE has developed a number of tools for advocates and allies to better understand the issues, to disseminate information to decision makers, and to understand APSE’s position on these topics. The following sections provide issue specific details.

About APSE and Broad Policy Agenda

APSE, the Association for Persons Supporting Employment First, is the only national organization with an exclusive focus on integrated employment and career advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities. APSE is a 3,000+ growing national non-profit membership organization, founded in 1988. Our members include individuals with disabilities, families, disability professionals, and businesses.

The organization has specific goals and policy agenda to support and advance legislation to improve employment for people with disabilities. The following fact sheet resources provide detailed information APSE and it’s areas of focus.


Transition and Education

Currently many of our nation’s students are leaving school without any significant work experience or a clear career plan. This problem is even more significant for students with disabilities. Youth with disabilities are more likely to drop out of high school, not receive adequate job training, become involved in the juvenile justice system, and remain on government programs resulting in a life of poverty and cyclical dependence. The following fact sheet is useful resource to understand the issue:

1. APSE Fact Sheet—Transition

Sub-Minimum Wage and Sheltered Work

APSE has clearly stated its view that sub-minimum wage is unnecessary to promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities. As detailed in APSE’s 2009 policy statement on sub-minimum wage:

1. Bad job matches are the real issue;
2. Productivity rate is not a fair basis for wage;
3. The productivity standard is discriminatory toward people with disabilities;
4. Sub-minimum wage is at odds with national disability policy; and,
5. Sub-minimum wage is being used to support a more costly service delivery model.

Additionally, sheltered workshops needlessly segregate people with disabilities, keeping them out of the community. The following sections provide resources to assist your advocacy efforts to eliminate sub-minimum wage and sheltered work.

APSE and WIA 511 Sub-Minimum Wage Language Fact Sheet

1. Background—APSE and 511
2. Call to Phase Out Sub-Minimum Wage
National Council on Disability

Converting Sheltered Workshops
1. Deconstructing the Workshop: A Colorado Experience

Olmstead and Sheltered Work
1. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services: CMS Guidance on Olmstead and Employment
2. U.S. Department of Justice: DOJ letters, findings to the State of Oregon re: Olmstead and Employment
4. Implementing Olmstead at the Community Level - A Local Disability Advocacy Campaign: Californians for Olmstead Advocacy Toolkit

Best-Practices in Employment Support

Employer Relationships
1. Developing Relationships with Employers

Employment and Disability Research and Data
Data and research can be effective tool in legislative advocacy efforts. Many resources exist to provide access to such information. Follow the links below to search disability-related data resources.
   U.S. Census Bureau
   Social Security Administration
   Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
   Statedata.info
   Cornell University, Disability Statistics

Additional Resources
1. US Library of Congress (THOMAS) - www.thomas.loc.gov
2. PACER Center - www.pacer.org
3. www.ADA.gov
6. Universities
   a. Virginia Commonwealth University- http://www.vcu.edu/
   c. Research and Training Center on Community Living, University of MN- http://rtc.umn.edu/rtc/