

Engage with your Members of Congress During National Disability Employment Awareness Month!

This October, celebrate **National Disability Employment Awareness Month** (NDEAM) by engaging with your Federal legislators during their Congressional recess and advocating for competitive, integrated employment for people with disabilities!

▲ Share your personal stories!

- Don't forget to provide your name and city where you live.

▲ Briefly share your thoughts on the issues that matter to you!

- Ask your legislators where they stand on these issues?

Need talking points, or ideas for questions you can ask? We've got you covered!

INCREASING THE RATE OF EMPLOYMENT

There is currently a 41% employment gap between people with and without disabilities who are of working age.¹ Too many people with disabilities who want to work are unemployed or underemployed!

In what ways do you work to intentionally address the low rate of employment for people with disabilities?

Your Members of Congress want to hear from you, because you are the only expert of YOUR story!

1. Send a Tweet or a Facebook Message to to your Members of Congress
2. Call your Members of Congress (U.S. Capitol Switchboard: 202-224-3121 or Google the phone number for local offices)
 - Ask to speak with their disability policy staffer, if possible
3. Attend a Town Hall meeting or other event where your Members of Congress will be appearing
 - Make sure to connect with their disability and/or labor policy staffer and offer to answer their questions
4. Schedule a one-on-one meeting with your Members of Congress when they are home in their districts
 - Ask to meet with their disability and/or labor policy staffer if your legislator is not available

Helpful resource: 2018 Disability Compendium.¹ <https://disabilitycompendium.org/sites/default/files/user-uploads/Final-Annual-Report-2018.pdf>

Additional Talking Points & Questions for Legislators

ADVANCING COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT (CIE)

The 2014 passage of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) established a clear directive for state education, workforce development and vocational rehabilitation systems to work together to advance competitive, integrated employment (CIE) outcomes for people with disabilities.²

What are your thoughts on how to ensure that WIOA implementation effectively advances competitive integrated employment outcomes for people with disabilities?

Helpful Resource: National and State CIE Data Sheets.² <https://apse.org/competitive-integrated-employment-data-sheets/>

What is CIE?

Competitive

Employees with disabilities are paid at least minimum wage and earn the same as their coworkers without disabilities

Integrated

Job opportunities are available in the community in settings that are inclusive of both people with and without disabilities

Employment

A person with a disability is able to apply for available jobs and is hired to work in the general labor market.

ENSURING REAL WAGES FOR REAL WORK

Since 1938, the Fair Labor Standards Act creates a legal avenue for people with disabilities to be paid less than the Federal minimum wage through the use of 14c certificates.

In 2019, there are two pieces of legislation aimed at eliminating the continued use of 14c, including the Raise the Wage Act³ (HR 582/S 150) and the Transformation to Competitive Employment Act⁴ (HR 873/S 260).

*Have you co-signed these bills?
What is your position on subminimum wage for people with disabilities?*

What are your ideas for elevating wages for people with disabilities?

Helpful Resources: Congress.gov Raise the Wage Act & Transformation to Competitive Employment Act <https://www.congress.gov/search?q=%7B%22congress%22%3A%22116%22%2C%22source%22%3A%22legislation%22%2C%22search%22%3A%22%5C%22raise%20the%20wage%5C%22%22%7D&searchResultViewType=expanded>
<https://www.congress.gov/search?q=%7B%22congress%22%3A%22116%22%2C%22source%22%3A%22legislation%22%2C%22search%22%3A%22%5C%22transformation%20to%20competitive%20employment%5C%22%22%7D&searchResultViewType=expanded>

This tip sheet was developed in partnership with the Iowa Coalition for Integration and Employment.

