



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

Employment and Training Task Force  
2009 Report

In early part of 2009, task force members took part in a briefing by the Bureau of Labor Statistics on new measurements for employment of people with disabilities and met with officials of the Rehabilitative Services Administration concerning stimulus funding going to state vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs. A task force workgroup also began working on transition principles in preparation for reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

In April, the task force joined with the Social Security Task Force in sending a letter to Congress urging renewal of several expiring provisions within the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act. The task force also began to monitor developments in health care reform affecting working people with disabilities. In May, the task force presented testimony to the House Ways and Means Committee Subcommittee on Social Security at a hearing on employment support programs for people with disabilities.

After completion of the transition principles, task force workgroups began to work over the summer on supported employment policies and employment outcomes measures to be advanced during WIA reauthorization. Another workgroup began working on recommendations for improvements in Title IV of WIA which contains the Rehabilitation Act.

The task force met with Kathy Martinez, the new Assistant Secretary of the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) on September 18. The task force presented Martinez with its final principles on transition and WIA reauthorization and discussed with her ODEP's role in promoting employment of people with disabilities within the Department of Labor (DoL) and throughout the federal government. The task force was also briefed about ePolicyWorks, a new online workspace created by DoL where federal partners and policymakers can share information about disability employment issues. Several task force members participated in the beta test of ePolicy Works system prior to its public launch. Some members also took part in the ODEP listening session for WIA reauthorization that was held on October 1.

At its October meeting, the task force heard a presentation about Food Fundamentals, an Arizona Project with Industry grantee that has developed an innovative program to introduce people with disabilities to the variety of job and career opportunities in food production, marketing and hospitality industries. Task force co-chairs met in early November with White House and Office of Management and Budget officials to discuss WIA reauthorization, the

role of ODEP and how to inject greater accountability into workforce programs affecting people with disabilities.

In November, the task force met with staff from the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee to share its preliminary recommendations for reauthorization of WIA and the Rehabilitation Act. Once health care reform is completed, it is expected that Congress will direct its attention to WIA and other workforce initiatives. Should this occur, the task force expects to spend a considerable amount of time in 2010 advocating for E&T policy changes in WIA and Rehab Act reauthorization as well as continuing its work advancing other employment initiatives for people with disabilities.

The task force typically meets on the fourth Thursday of the month from 10 am to noon.

Co-Chairs

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