



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) strongly urges Congress to fully fund existing and proposed new Vocational Rehabilitation and employment new initiatives for people with disabilities. The economic downturn and the rising unemployment numbers have a disproportionate impact on people with disabilities who are already significantly underrepresented in the workforce. In January 2010, the percentage of people with disabilities in the labor force was 21.8% compared with 70.1% for persons with no disability.

CCD calls upon Congress to increase funding for vocational rehabilitation and proven strategies such as Supported Employment, Projects With Industry and other programs that assist people with disabilities to gain employment in the community. Over the past several years many of the programs authorized by the Rehabilitation Act have received level funding. Freezing the funding for these programs has meant that services have been cut even as the demand for services rise. There is a desperate need to provide new resources to these programs.

CCD supports the Administration's proposed new competitive grant program that would expand supported employment opportunities for youth with disabilities as they transition from school to the workforce. The new program is intended to address the critical shortage of funding for extended services that many youth with the most significant disabilities require to gain and maintain employment in the community. CCD is also supportive of the new Workforce Innovation Fund to foster collaboration and promote effective workforce development strategies.

CCD supports the ETA-ODEP Collaboration for Targeted Opportunities for Specific Worker Populations (Persons with Disabilities). These funds will continue the Disability Employment Initiative from FY2010 to build on promising practices from the Disability Program Navigator initiative of ETA and customized employment initiative of ODEP.

CCD supports the improved coordination between the two parts of USDOL and the continued effective deployment of Navigation type staff in selected states to improve accessibility in One-Stops and system collaboration that leverage public and private resources to increase employment outcomes.

CCD opposes proposals to consolidate the Supported Employment State Grant Program, Projects with Industry, Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers and training programs into

the Title 1 Vocational Rehabilitation State Grant program. Each of these programs serve a distinct and ongoing need. Consolidating the programs without any guarantee that the needs of the people these programs serve will be met through the Title 1 state grant is a disservice to these individuals and increases the fiscal pressures on states by imposing state match for programs that currently do not require state match.

Below are selected CCD funding recommendations for FY 2011:

- **Projects With Industry (PWI)** – \$50 million
- **Supported Employment State Grant Programs**—\$50 million
- **Supported Employment Extended Services for Youth Grant program**--\$25 million
- **Workforce Innovation Fund**--\$30 million
- **Model Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities into Higher Education**--\$11 million
- **AgrAbility**--\$6 million
- **Veterans Employment and Training {VETS}** program – \$404 million

The attached table details the CCD funding recommendations for employment and training programs affecting people with disabilities. We urge Congress to support these critical programs. If you have any questions people contact any of the CCD Employment and Training Co-Chairs:

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On Behalf of:

American Network of Community Options and Resources
APSE
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Burton Blatt Institute
Center for Workforce Development, Institute for Educational Leadership
Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation
Easter Seals
Goodwill Industries
I-NABIR
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Council on Independent Living
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Rehabilitation Association

National Spinal Cord Injury Association.
Paralyzed Veterans of America
The Arc of the United States
The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
United Cerebral Palsy
United Spinal Association
VetsFirst

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