



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

**POVERTY REDUCTION AND DISABILITY PREVENTION**

A briefing was held at the Center for American Progress by the “Half in Ten” (cut poverty in half in ten year) organization on “Strategies to Cut Poverty and Build Lasting Economic Stability”. Presenters at the forum were a labor economist, a representative for women, a workplace director, and a low income worker.

**Summary**

Minorities are disproportionately unemployed which contributes to poverty. For instance the rate of unemployment for some minorities is 50% greater than non Hispanic whites, and earnings and employment of people with disabilities have declined during the last two decades. even in the economic upsurge of the mid and late 1990s. Wages for average workers have been flat over the past decade.

Four themes emerged from the forum that contributes to poverty. They were 1) a need for effective education and training, (i.e. 90 million illiterate people, 2) increase of low wage jobs which has reached 50% with middle class jobs hollowing out,) 3) women are disproportionately compensated when compared to men (i.e. wages are 77% of those of men and 4) an inadequate infrastructure for employment placement.

**Disability Prevention issue**

Poverty is a public health issues that can diminish health and contribute to disability.

There are public health social determinant associated with employment that result in poverty. First, in as much as health insurance is linked to the work place, lack of access to health care is a public health issue. Most of the low wage jobs and unemployment do not carry adequate health insurance. Also, the disproportionate prevalence of minorities without jobs and health insurance contributes to the public health issue of health disparities. In addition, unemployment and job loss are contributors to mental health disorders, and generalize to children in these vulnerable families. Most of the low wage jobs may have higher risks of injuries that can diminish health. Thus, inability to access jobs that are safe and with health insurance of vulnerable populations contributes to mental health disorders that may be associated with diminished health and disability.

**Activity**

Discussions were held with full employment advocates of whom their initiatives would ameliorate many of public health issues that contribute to disability.

**Principle**

There should be full employment with health insurance associated health protections that prevent diminished health and disability.