



## Commemorating 40 Years Of Disability Advocacy 1973-2013

June 3, 2014

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Health, Education,  
Labor & Pensions (HELP)  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Health, Education,  
Labor & Pensions (HELP)  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Member  
Senate Committee on Health, Education,  
Labor & Pensions (HELP)  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Johnny Isakson  
Member  
Senate Committee on Health, Education  
Labor & Pensions (HELP)  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Harkin, Alexander, Murray, and Isakson:

The undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Employment and Training Task Force strongly support the recently announced bi-cameral, bi-partisan Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) reauthorization legislation. We applaud the cooperative effort that produced the bill and hope the Senate and House will continue this productive approach as the bill moves to the floor of both chambers.

CCD is a coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for national public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration, and inclusion of the 57 million children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. . The Employment and Training Task Force follows issues affecting employment opportunities for working age individuals with disabilities.

The Workforce Investment Act has not been reauthorized since it was created in 1998. Your bill, a compromise between the House-passed SKILLS Act (H.R. 803) and Senate committee-approved Workforce Investment Act of 2013 (S. 1356), will improve employment opportunities and economic prospects for employment for all Americans, including those with disabilities.

We are especially pleased with the strong emphasis on integrated and competitive employment of people with disabilities and providing training and other supports and services for youth with disabilities transitioning from school to work or postsecondary education. The unemployment rate of people with disabilities remains stubbornly high and many youth exiting school currently lack the supports needed to help them be successful in finding and keeping good jobs. The bill raises expectations for youth with disabilities and assists states to provide them with the supports they need to ensure success.

We believe this compromise bill is a step in the right direction and should be supported. Thank you for your strong bi-partisan work on this effort. The task force looks forward to working with both houses of Congress to move this legislation in a timely fashion.

Sincerely,

ACCSES  
American Foundation for the Blind  
American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR)  
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Easter Seals  
Goodwill Industries International  
Institute for Educational Leadership  
Lutheran Services in America Disability Network  
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities  
National Association of State Directors of Special Education  
National Council on Independent Living  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
SourceAmerica  
The Arc of the United States  
United Cerebral Palsy  
United Spinal Association