

May 25, 2017

Dear Ranking Minority Member Bobby Scott,

On behalf of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), I write in strong support of the Raise the Wage Act being introduced today. This bill will raise the minimum wage incrementally to reach fifteen dollars an hour by 2024. In our prosperous country, no one should have to work full-time and live in poverty. This policy change will help to build our economy and help everyone, including people with disabilities, become self-sufficient, tax-paying citizens.

AUCD is especially pleased with Section 6 of the bill that phases out the use of subminimum wage certificates for workers with disabilities. Specifically, the bill allows for a transition period of six years before eliminating section 14 (c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 214 (c)(1)). The use of the subminimum wages has been too often overused, improperly used, and abused over the many years of use. This provision has trapped too many people with disabilities in poverty and often in segregated settings with no way out.

AUCD further urges Congress to pass legislation that helps to build systemic capacity to increase competitive, integrated employment for people with developmental and other disabilities and thus help make the transition from subminimum wage settings smoother. The Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities established under by Section 461 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides substantive recommendations on ways to increase employment participation of individuals with disabilities. AUCD hopes that this Congress will work to implement the committee's recommendations in addition to passing the Raise the Wage Act.

Again, thank you for your leadership in introducing the Raise the Wage Act today. AUCD stands ready to assist you in moving this bill through Congress as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



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