



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

August 6, 2019

The Honorable Seth Moulton
The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Moulton and Representative McMorris Rodgers:

The undersigned members of the Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Employment and Training Task Force are writing to express our support of H.R. 3070, the Customized Approaches to Providing and Building Independent Lives of Inclusion for Transition-aged Youth (CAPABILITY) Act. CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

We strongly support the expansion of customized employment and this legislation is vital to creating meaningful career opportunities for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The individualized focus on talents, interests and corresponding opportunities outlined in the bill are recognized as the optimal pathway to successful employment outcomes for youth and adults with IDD and ASD.

Despite reports of historically low unemployment rates in the U.S., it is important to acknowledge that the employment situation for people with disabilities has been deteriorating for years. The number of people with disabilities who are not in the labor force increased by 10 percent between 2008 and 2017. The number of people with disabilities actively looking for work declined by 36 percent from 2010 to 2016. Even more concerning is a twenty-year trend that shows the labor market activity rate for persons with disabilities declined by over 50 percent between 1990 and 2014. People with disabilities consistently maintain a labor force participation rate that is 40 percent lower than the general population, while experiencing a 15 percent higher rate of poverty. When placed in context of predictions about the future of the U.S. labor market, the situation may continue to worsen without a collective effort by the community and policymakers.

The CAPABILITY Act is an important, timely piece of legislation that will benefit the disability community. In addition, the outcomes of increased opportunity for youth with IDD and ASD contributes to the health of the U.S. economy and advances societal goals for an inclusive, prosperous future for all citizens.

The CAPABILITY Act demonstrates your continued commitment to providing opportunities for persons with disabilities to achieve their goals. We commend you for your leadership on this critical initiative and look forward to working with you to ensure its success.

Very Respectfully,

American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR)
Association of People Supporting Employment First
Center for Public Representation
Goodwill Industries International, Inc.
Learning Disabilities Association of America
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Disability Institute
RespectAbility
SourceAmerica
TASH
The Arc of the United States
The Jewish Federations of North America