



APSE Action Alert 4/1/11

APSE is urging its members to contact their congressional representatives, and request that they serve as co-sponsors of the TEAM (Transitioning towards Excellence & Achievement in Mobility through Employment) legislation. If passed, this legislation could have a very positive impact on employment of people with disabilities, particularly those with intellectual and developmental disabilities transitioning from school to adult life.

Summary and Links to TEAM Legislation Documents

- [The TEAM-Employment Act of 2011 \(H.R. 604\)](#) amends the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and strengthens the role of public Vocational Rehabilitation in supporting individuals to transition from school to integrated community employment.
- [The TEAM Empowerment Act of 2011 \(H.R. 603\)](#) amends the Developmental Disabilities Bill of Rights Act of 2000 to enhance the existing infrastructure to support youth with significant disabilities transitioning into adulthood.
- [The TEAM Education Act of 2011 \(H.R. 602\)](#) would amend the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), through strengthening the focus of transition on integrated community employment, clarifying that transition services do not include facility-based or other segregated programs, and changing the age for transition services to begin from age 16 to age 14.

APSE Member Action Requested

Please contact your member of the House of Representatives (contact information is at <https://writerep.house.gov>). Phone calls are recommended as the best method of contact. The following are suggested talking points:

- I am an (individual living with a significant disability/family member of an individual with a significant disability, or innovative provider of services for individuals with significant disabilities).

- The current rate of employment of people with disabilities is one-third that of the general population. This is unacceptable.
- Individuals with significant disabilities have shown they are fully capable of participating in the mainstream workforce, earning a living working side-by-side with their fellow citizens. This not only increases their independence and self-reliance, but makes them tax-paying citizens, reducing their reliance on public benefits.
- Our current systems of publicly-financed supports need to be changed to ensure that young people with significant disabilities have the same opportunities as all other young people to work and earn a living in the community.
- Please consider cosponsoring the TEAM legislation package, which includes the TEAM-Education Act (H.R. 602), TEAM-Empowerment Act (H.R. 603), and TEAM-Employment Act (H.R.604). This body of legislation takes a holistic approach at tackling the comprehensive systems reform necessary to improve outcomes for youth with the most significant disabilities.
- In addition, you can offer to provide them copies of fact sheets on the bills, as well as the “Dear Colleague” letter from Representative Greg Harper, who introduced these bills. Copies of these documents are on the APSE website under Public Policy.

Thank you for participating in advocacy for this very important action to increase sponsorship for progressive legislation for education and employment!