



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APSE Applauds Inclusion of Workers with Disabilities in Minimum Wage Executive Order!

(Rockville, MD) – February 12, 2014 – As a 3,000 member national advocacy organization focused on advancing employment and economic well-being for individuals with disabilities, APSE would like to applaud the Obama Administration’s inclusion of workers with disabilities in the Executive Order he signed today requiring new federal contractors to pay a minimum wage of \$10.10 per hour, instead of the current minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, starting in 2015.

“APSE is happy to see that the Obama Administration heard the concerns of APSE, our members and allies around the country about the importance of raising the minimum wage for federal contractors with disabilities now being paid less than minimum wage via 14(c) special wage certificates,” said Laura Owens APSE Executive Director. “As we stated in our [letter](#) earlier this week to the White House and Department of Labor, we believe that sub-minimum wage is a fundamental violation of the rights of citizens with disabilities that perpetuates low expectations and financially exploits employees with disabilities by these employers.”

The Executive Order states:

“Under current law, workers whose productivity is affected because of their disabilities may be paid less than the wage paid to others doing the same job under certain specialized certificate programs. Under this Executive Order, all individuals working under service or concessions contracts with the federal government will be covered by the same \$10.10 per hour minimum wage protections.”

APSE is strongly encouraged by the President’s affirmation that “all employees” truly means “**all employees**”, regardless of disability. As articulated in [APSE’s 2009 statement calling for the phase-out of sub-minimum wage](#), it is discriminatory to pay individuals with disabilities strictly on a rate of productivity when other individuals are not subject to such a standard. We understand the current statutory limitations in completely ending the discriminatory practice of paying Americans with disabilities sub-minimum wage. However, ending the use of sub-minimum wage for employees of federal contractors, through Executive Order, is an important step forward.

APSE Board President David Hoff noted, “The symbolism of the President’s action is huge in terms of civil rights for people with disabilities, and is another important step forward in fully including people with disabilities in the economic mainstream of our society.”



APSE will continue to work with Congress to continue our work to repeal Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act for all individuals with disabilities and a phase-out of the use of sub-minimum wage, in conjunction with ongoing efforts for a national systems change effort in support of integrated employment, aligned with Employment First. We hope to utilize this media attention to build momentum for The Fair Wage for Workers with Disabilities Act of 2013 (H.R. 831) in Congress, so that we can discontinue the practice of issuing special wage certificates and phase out all remaining special wage certificates.

APSE is extremely excited for this important step forward to advance the economic well-being of all Americans, that will help to ensure that the rights of citizens with disabilities are enforced, allowing them to fully participate in the economic mainstream.

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