



February 22, 2013

The Honorable Gregg Harper
307 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Congressman Harper:

On behalf of the Association of People Supporting EmploymentFirst (APSE), we would like to thank you for introducing the *Transitioning Excellence in Achieving Mobility (TEAM) Act of 2013* (H.R. 509, 510 and 511), which would ensure that every youth with a significant disability has opportunity, encouragement, and support to become gainfully employed in an integrated setting, pursue a post-secondary education, and contribute to and engage in community settings as they transition into adulthood. APSE is the only national organization with an exclusive focus on integrated employment and career advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities and greatly appreciates your leadership as we continue to work together to increase and improve the employment of people with disabilities in integrated employment.

- The **TEAM-Education Act** (H.R. 509) would amend the Individuals with Disability Education Act by expanding the definition of transition services to include customized employment strategies and requiring transition components to be included in Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for all IDEA-eligible students at the age of 14.
- The **TEAM-Employment Act** (H.R. 510) would amend the Rehabilitation Act to streamline public funding by requiring the VR systems to actively engage with other state entities to realign preferred outcomes for individuals with significant disabilities.
- The **TEAM-Empowerment Act** (H.R. 511) would amend the Developmental Disabilities Act to establish Transition Planning and Services Divisions within the State Developmental Disability Authorities and increase accountability by providing the Secretary of DHHS the authority to disburse assistance to states which agree to participate.

Each of the three bills, the TEAM-Education Act, TEAM-Employment Act, and TEAM-Empowerment Act, would strengthen accountability, clarify expectations, expand flexibility and align systems to ensure that publically-funded assistance is effectively utilized to promote the advancement of Americans with significant disabilities transitioning from youth to adulthood. These critical systemic changes allow for the flexible braiding of resources, coupled with a collective presumption that publicly-financed supports should focus on integrated employment outcomes.

Here at APSE, an organization with 37 chapters, representing nearly 3,000 members from all 50 states, greatly appreciates your leadership and we look forward to working with you in the 113th Congress.

Sincerely,

The Association of People Supporting EmploymentFirst (APSE)

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