



May 20, 2026

The Honorable Tim Walberg
2266 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Robert "Bobby" Scott
2328 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Walberg and Ranking Member Scott:

The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) works to create a world where individuals with Down syndrome thrive. We write today to express serious concerns with the *Restoration of Employment Choice for Adults with Disabilities Act* (H.R. 8736) and to urge the Committee not to advance the legislation. This bill amends section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act and eliminates safeguards currently in place to protect adults with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 24 from working in sheltered workshops under 14(c) certificates.

Individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities have the ability and desire to contribute meaningfully to the workforce when given equitable opportunities and support. Despite this, they are disproportionately placed in segregated work settings with little chance for advancement or integration. Research and real-world outcomes show that when subminimum wage policies are eliminated and replaced with inclusive employment initiatives, labor force participation of people with disabilities increases¹.

In lieu of H.R. 8736, we encourage the Committee to instead advance the *Transformation to Competitive Integrated Employment Act* (H.R. 4771). This bipartisan bill will phase out the use of 14(c) certificates over a five-year period and establish a technical assistance center for employers working to transform their business model. By ceasing the issuance of new 14(c) certificates, we can ensure that individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities have access to meaningful economic participation in their communities.

NDSS strives to ensure all individuals with Down syndrome are assured of their human rights and valued by a more inclusive society. We thank you for taking the time to hear our thoughts and urge you to support legislation to advance inclusion of individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities in workplaces and across the community.

Sincerely,

¹ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama-health-forum/fullarticle/2826157>



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kandi Pickard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, looping "O" at the end.

Kandi Pickard
President and CEO
National Down Syndrome Society

Cc: Members of the House Committee On Education and Workforce