



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

REPRESENTATIVE CHRISTIE M. CARPINO
THIRTY-SECOND ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 4200
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591

CAPITOL: (860) 240-8700
TOLL FREE: (800) 842-1423
Christie.Carpino@housegop.ct.gov

HOUSE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS CHAIR

MEMBER
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
REGULATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE Public Hearing February 19, 2019

Testimony in Support of House Bill 7093 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO INCREASE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie; Ranking Members Senator Logan, Representative Case; distinguished members of the Human Services Committee for raising House Bill 7093: An Act Establishing a Task Force to Increase Employment Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

I submitted this concept to start addressing a real problem in Connecticut and in other states across the country—people with disabilities are underrepresented in the workplace. Disabilities do not define an individual and yet they seem to limit employment opportunities. We can do better.

Employment drives financial stability, social interaction, and self-worth. It is well documented that many people with disabilities struggle with obtaining meaningful and experience appropriate employment. It is also something I've heard first hand. A well-educated man that struggled with a health emergency in college and has spent years seeking an opportunity, individuals with intellectual disabilities that have skills and passion they want to share, a young woman unable to drive due to her disability that lacks any prospects, and residents with unseen disabilities require a bit of support to succeed. These are real people here in Connecticut that deserves an opportunity to contribute to the workforce and provide for themselves and their families.

While there is some support in Connecticut, residents have stated it's difficult to coordinate individual programs across agencies, opportunities differ between regions, assistance is limited, and barriers exist. There is no simple solution, but the right people can put together a menu of options for addressing this problem.

In addition, I suggest an adjustment to the proposed makeup of the task force. We have amazing nonprofits with proven track records of success in this arena as well as local and statewide business organizations that have expressed a desire to help tackle this issue. Both groups should be added.

Thank you for raising HB 7093. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.