

State of CT Testimony for HB 7093

My name is Karl Mitchell. I am a resident of Cromwell, CT and am here to support HB 7093 An ACT Establishing A Task Force to Increase Employment Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. As a registered Republican. I am a firm believer in Personal Responsibility and that philosophy had served me well, through out high school.

I attended Xavier High School in Middletown ,CT and was nominated to the United States Air Force Academy by now retired senator Christopher Dodd. I believe I scored an 1160 on my SAT's and graduated with a 3.7 GPA, while playing in 3 sports all 4 years.

However, on February 25, 2000 my life was unfairly and abruptly thrown away. I was diagnosed with Juvenile pilocytic astrocytoma(brainstem tumor) I was in my junior year at Massachusetts Maritime Academy and was within 3 semester from Graduating as a Marine Engineer and pulling in a Median \$65k a year to start. I underwent 6 brain surgeries and ultimately lost my balance, due to " BAD LUCK."

After returning and graduating as a Facilities & Environmental Engineer in 2005. I was frequently denied employment as an Engineer due to my gpa being below 3.0 . I was put on SSDI, because I was only suppose to live 5 years. And have only had 4 jobs in the last 18 year's. I would love to be able to blame drugs or Alcohol for me not keeping a job, but I can't. The simple true is that Social Security Disability Insurance screwed me and now nobody wants me or the applicant with multiple periods of unemployment.

In my opinion, becoming disabled is highly undesirable and private companies are not interested in being socially responsible. It is going to have to be the federal government or the State government that helps their citizen's be employed. Please take my advice and vote yes for HB 7093.

-Karl Mitchell