

Honorable Members of the Human Services Committee,

I am writing to express my support for HB 7093 - An Act Establishing a Task Force to Increase Employment Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. As the parent of a young adult with an intellectual disability and as the Director of Administrative Services for the Bristol Adult Resource Center (an agency that works to provide residential supports and employment opportunities for the intellectually and developmentally disabled), I am acutely aware of how difficult it is to find employment opportunities for the those with disabilities. At least one credible statistic that I have seen is that the employment rate among this community is at <15%. The irony of the situation is three fold.. First, we are in a booming economy where the cry from businesses small and large is about the need to find people to fill open positions. Second, we are a State with an enormous deficit problem that needs to identify every opportunity to help people become more self sufficient and less dependent on state aid. Third, every business I have observed that has hired folks with intellectual disabilities has found themselves enriched through their stellar work ethic, their enthusiasm and energy that they bring to the job. This is a pool of ready willing and able workers who want nothing more than a chance to show what they can do, to advance their own life's dreams and to be contributing members of their communities.

Please support this bill. We are in desperate need new and creative strategies to include everyone in the workforce, regardless of disability.

Sincerely,

Francis Traceski