

# COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT ALLIANCE

**To: Conference Committee for the 2011-2013 Biennial Operating Budget**

**Adopt the Senate Provisions and Budgetary Allocations for Supported Employment and Day Services.** Given the severe revenue conditions, the Senate makes relatively modest cuts to these services everyone agrees are vitally needed for nearly 10,000 people with developmental disabilities. Without further change, we urge the adoption of the Senate appropriations in the final operating budget.

**Preserve the Progressive Policy of Including People with Developmental Disabilities in the Workplace.** The Senate budgetary language revises the Working Age Adult Policy that is critically important to all of the advocacy community for people with developmental disabilities.

- For this reason, every single Stakeholder who testified at both the House and Senate budgetary hearings opposed the original House and Senate language.
- Supported employment services provide people with developmental disabilities the satisfaction and benefits we all take too often for granted. Having a productive job, a workplace with colleagues, a way to contribute one's talents, and achievement of financial independence.
- The State receives a positive financial return on its investment. In fact, Washington State is a leader in achieving integrated employment outcomes for people with developmental disabilities.

**Reject the Creation of Regressive Day Programs.** We absolutely oppose the House's notion of a new Day Program because it threatens the central value of community inclusiveness. Especially if done with inadequate funding, as present fiscal conditions would require, such an approach opens the door to the creation of congregated, segregated day care centers – another form of institutionalization. A major step backwards in terms of how people with developmental disabilities are best served.

- Given present fiscal realities, this clearly is not the time to be creating new programs. Forecasted savings are not likely to be achieved in the first year if ever.
- Parents, and other caregivers, already have a non-employment option called Community Access. There is no need to create a redundant alternative program.
- Unlike Day Programs, Community Access honors the policy of inclusion. The Senate wording specifically directs the Department, Counties and Stakeholders “to strengthen and expand the existing community access program. The program must emphasize support for the client so they are able to participate in activities that integrate them into their community and support independent living and skills.”
- We expect that future Legislatures will provide additional funding for Community Access alternatives, as well as for maintaining or enhancing supported employment services.
- If there are issues with the manner in which the Department advises people of their service choices, those issues should be addressed directly with the Department during the interim.

**Honor the Stakeholder Agreement to Maintain Funding for Employment Services.** In March, the DD stakeholders (parents, state-wide advocacy organizations and self-advocates) held a day-long meeting to discuss various issues regarding supported employment policies and the need for community access alternatives. The DD stakeholders agreed to advocate for no reductions in employment/day programs, and to encourage people to try an employment pathway for 12 months. They also agreed to work during the interim to develop specific recommendations for how to best structure community access services for people not choosing an employment pathway.

**Respectfully Requested by the 10,000 People with Disabilities Being Served by:**

Able Opportunities	Hansville
ARC of Spokane	Spokane
AtWork!	Bellevue
Cares of Washington	Seattle
Cascade Vocational Services	Bellingham
CenterForce	Lakewood
CCER / U of W	Mountlake Terrace
Chinook Enterprises	Mount Vernon
Columbia Industries	Kennewick
Diversified Industrial Services	Mukilteo
Eastside Employment Services	Bellevue
ENSO	Tukwila
EnTrust Community Services	Yakima
Goodwill Industries of the Columbia	Kennewick
Highline College Employment Services	Des Moines
Holly Ridge Center	Bremerton

Life Works	Longview
Mainstay @ SCCC	Seattle
Morningside	Olympia
NISH Northwest	Seattle
Northwest Center	Seattle
Nova Services	Spokane
O'Neill & Associates	Seattle
ORION	Federal Way
Palouse Industries	Pullman
Peninsula Services	Bremerton
Pierce, Jones & Associates	Sequim
PROVAIL	Seattle
Puget Sound Personnel, Inc.	Bellevue
Reliable Enterprises	Centralia
Service Alternatives, Inc.	Everett
Sherwood Community Services	Lake Stevens
SKCAC Industries and Employment Services	Kent
Skills, Inc.	Auburn
SKILS' KIN	Spokane
Skookum Educational Programs	Bremerton
S. L. Start	Spokane
Tacoma Goodwill	Tacoma
Tahoma Associates	Tacoma
Tangible Systems	Milton
Trillium Employment Services	Auburn
Timberland Opportunities Association	Aberdeen
Vadis	Sumner
Washington Vocational Services	Mountlake Terrace
W.i.S.e.	Seattle
Work Opportunities	Lynnwood

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