



July 10, 2013

Representative Gregg Harper
307 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 21505

Dear Representative Harper:

As the nonprofit membership organization for the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy Systems (P&As) and Client Assistance Programs (CAPs) for people with disabilities, the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) is writing to thank you for introducing H.R. 831, the Fair Wages for Workers with Disabilities Act of 2013.

NDRN has long supported the end of subminimum wage for people with disabilities found in section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Protection and Advocacy and Client Assistance Program agencies encounter many people with disabilities around the country who want an opportunity to work in competitive, integrated settings, but unfortunately, have ended up in positions only earning dollars or even pennies by the hour in segregated settings. NDRN documented the prevalence of sub-minimum wage and segregated employment in our report, "Segregated and Exploited: A Call to Action," available at <http://www.napas.org/images/Documents/Resources/Publications/Reports/Segregated-and-Exploited.pdf>.

Subminimum wage for people with disabilities remains prevalent. Despite federal recognition of the importance and value of people with disabilities by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the integration principles found in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, 527 U.S. 581 (1999), people with disabilities are still employed in segregated environments and paid less than minimum wage even when they are more productive than people without disabilities. The subminimum wage creates and reinforces a life of poverty and dependency on public support.

H.R. 831 takes the important step of eliminating subminimum wage and getting employers to work toward alternatives to subminimum wage employment. Many employers, such as Walgreen's, have successfully integrated people with disabilities into their workplaces, paying at least minimum wage, and shown how this can be done. When asked, people with disabilities in sheltered workshops would prefer to work in integrated settings.

We appreciate the opportunity to express our strong support for H.R. 831, and thank you for taking leadership on this important issue. If you have any questions, please contact Patrick Wojahn, Public Policy Analyst, at (202) 408-9514, x102 or patrick.wojahn@ndrn.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Curt Decker".

Curt Decker
Executive Director