



July 25, 2025

The Honorable Pete Sessions
2204 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Robert "Bobby" Scott
2328 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steve Daines
320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
730 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Van Hollen and Daines, and Representatives Sessions and Scott:

The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) empowers individuals with Down syndrome and their families by driving policy change, providing resources, engaging with local communities, and shifting public perceptions. We write today in strong support of the passage of the *Transformation to Competitive Integrated Employment Act* (S. 2438 / H.R. 4771), which would phase out the use of certificates authorized under Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act that allow employers to pay people with disabilities subminimum wages.

Despite protections and advancements made by civil rights legislation like the Americans with Disabilities Act, thousands of employees with disabilities continue to be paid less than the federal minimum wage. According to a 2020 U.S. Commission on Civil Rights report, between 2017 and 2018, the average wage of a person with a disability working under such certificates was only \$3.34 per hour, less than half the federal minimum wage.¹

Individuals with Down syndrome have the ability and desire to contribute meaningfully to the workforce when given equitable opportunities and support. Despite this, they are disproportionately placed in segregated work settings with little chance for advancement or integration. Research and real-world outcomes show that when subminimum wage policies are eliminated and replaced with inclusive employment initiatives, labor force participation of people with disabilities increases.² By ceasing the issuance of new 14(c) certificates, we can ensure that individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities have access to meaningful economic participation in their communities.

NDSS envisions a world in which all people with Down syndrome have the opportunity to enhance their quality of life, realize their life aspirations, and become valued members of

¹ <https://www.usccr.gov/files/2020/2020-09-17-Subminimum-Wages-Report.pdf>

² <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama-health-forum/fullarticle/2826157>



welcoming communities. We hope that Congress will work to end subminimum wages, and we thank you for your leadership regarding this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kandi Pickard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Kandi Pickard
President and CEO
National Down Syndrome Society