



COUNCIL OF STATE ADMINISTRATORS OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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May 10, 2015

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Dear Ms. Shuart,

On behalf of the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) I am writing to endorse HR 2135 Promoting Opportunity for Disability Benefit Applicants as introduced in this 114th Congress. We wish to thank Representative Johnson for his leadership in introducing this legislation which we feel if passed will result in more individuals with disabilities returning to work and contributing to our national economy as taxpayers rather than ending up on benefits and being tax users.

The Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation is composed of the chief administrators of the public rehabilitation agencies serving individuals with physical and mental disabilities in the States, District of Columbia, and the territories. These agencies constitute the state partners in the State-Federal program of rehabilitation services provided under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The Council's members supervise the rehabilitation of some 1.2 million persons with disabilities. State vocational rehabilitation agencies continue to be the leaders in assisting Social Security beneficiaries to return to work.

Our members know from experience that the sooner an injured worker after their injury becomes engaged in vocational rehabilitation and other activities focused on returning that person to work, the greater the chance that will happen. Further, it will often be at a more reduced cost than if the individual has pursued Social Security benefits. Allowing for the referral of applicants to vocational rehabilitation and providing them the opportunity to make an informed choice about returning to work as early as possible can only be a win/win for the individual and the taxpayers.

Again, we applaud Representative Johnson and his co-sponsors for introducing this legislation. The public VR program and our members look forward to the opportunity to work with more injured workers as early as possible to assist them to return to work.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Wooderson
Chief Executive Officer
CSAVR

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