



H.R. 8884, *Removing Barriers to Work for Disabled Americans Act*

Background:

- Roughly 60% of Social Security Disability Insurance (DI) beneficiaries report being “work-oriented” and see themselves working in the next two to five years.
 - Despite this desire to work, **fewer than 1% of beneficiaries leave the program each year due to work activity.**
- The Committee’s September 2025 hearing, “Untapped Talent in America: Removing Barriers to Work and Supporting Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities”, examined the numerous challenges disabled beneficiaries face when attempting to return to work and potential solutions to those barriers.
 - Witnesses highlighted major hurdles to returning to the labor force, including **fear of overpayments, benefit cliffs, and confusing program eligibility rules.**
 - An expert witness recommended providing the Social Security Administration (SSA) with demonstration authority to test alternative return-to-work rules, allowing policymakers to evaluate the effectiveness of changes without unintentionally harming beneficiaries or the system.
- **SSA’s authority to conduct demonstration projects under Section 234 of the Social Security Act expired in 2022.**
 - Section 234 demonstration authority allows SSA to test different program rules designed to promote attachment to the labor force and improve work outcomes.

H.R. 8884, *Removing Barriers to Work for Disabled Americans Act*:

- **Reauthorizes Section 234 demonstration authority for five years** to allow the SSA to test alternative policies to help promote work for those who are able.
- **Participation in any Section 234 demonstration is voluntary**, and beneficiaries may remove themselves from the demonstration at any time.
- Requires the SSA to report to Congress 120 days prior to implementing any demonstration project.