



**Chair Johnson, Vice Chair Lear, Ranking Member McNally,  
and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee.**

Thank you for taking up such an important issue as employment and pay related to House Bill 225. Recently, Governor Kemp in Georgia signed a bill known as the Dignity and Pay Act which requires a phase out of subminimum wages by 2027. We are enthused about joining the other states in the country that have also invested in qualified workers with disabilities to address labor shortages. By 2033, the Manufacturing Institute and Deloitte project an additional 3.8 million workers will be needed for factory work and that the United States will be short nearly half of that number, around 2 million unfilled jobs. Workers with disabilities can fill these positions as well as those positions that exist within sectors such as logistics, long-term care, hospitality, and food service.

While the 14 (c ) certificate program has assisted some, it's time to update labor policy to address the real needs of employers and move on to supporting workers with disabilities in earning fair wages, paying taxes, and spending money in the local economies. Households in the United States with a member with an intellectual/developmental disability represent \$66 billion in annual purchasing power which will only increase as more workers are paid minimum wage.

I applaud the elected officials in Ohio for addressing what is needed for a purposeful and planned transition period related to this issue and stand ready to assist and collaborate with Ohioans as Georgians follow a similar path.

Thank you Chair Johnson, Vice Chair Lear, Ranking Member McNally, and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee for the chance to offer my support.

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