

According to ThinkWork, Institute for Community Inclusion, UMASS Boston, 17.4% of adults with developmental disabilities nationwide have a job in the community.

Look behind studies are designed to determine the impact of 14c elimination where a state has taken action to end utilization of 14c for residents of their state. The picture is not pretty.

Generally, 50% to 60% of people with developmental disabilities do not acquire community jobs for several reasons. They may choose not to. They may not have been successful and give up looking for a job. They may have been laid off – statistics show people with developmental disabilities are laid off first. They may have their hours cut - statistics show people with developmental disabilities frequently have their hours cut some even making less money at minimum wage than they made under 14c due to these cuts.

Many individuals “disappear” then from the state’s labor statistics because their family may want them in a supportive program that is activity based – but there is no opportunity to work and earn a paycheck. These individuals can earn a paycheck but end up in activity-based programs, thus losing the independence that money in their pocket gave them under 14c earnings.

In Oregon and Colorado, less than half of individuals with developmental disabilities ended up in a community job after 14c was eliminated. It is simply factual that community employment is not a fit for everyone with a developmental disability.

In Maine, after ending 14c in 2008, seven years later when the look behind study was conducted by George Washington University, there were fewer people with developmental disabilities working in a community job than in 2008 before 14c ended.

It is critical and prudent for the State of Ohio to continue to permit people with developmental disabilities and their families to have choices about their employment, the more choices the better. Work options should be increased, not decreased. One size does not fit all.

Representative Jarrells, in November, 2023 I drove to Columbus three Fridays in a row when you held hearings on this matter of 14c. You promised to submit legislation that would “make everyone happy.” Respectfully, Representative Jarrells, we are not there yet.