



It's Time to End Sub-Minimum Wages

The Community Employment Alliance (CEA) requests that Washington State end subminimum wage for people with disabilities. To date, there have been two companion bills introduced: **HB 1706** and **SB 5753** (2018). Both outlines end the practice of subminimum wage for people with disabilities.

For Washington State Employers to be successful, we feel that adding a 2-year transition period to a bill will allow for the greatest success for all parties involved. In this two-year period, the provisions authorizing the Department of Labor and Industries to issue special certificates for the employment of individuals impaired by age, physical or mental deficiency, or injury at wages lower than minimum wage would be removed.

The Community Employment Alliance encourages Washington State to align with fellow states who have successfully eliminated subminimum wage.

- As January 2020, Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont have no 14(c) certificates. Oregon, Texas, Alaska, and Virginia are phasing certificates out. This creates an opportunity to be one of the frontrunners to help lead this movement (3). In Washington, we lead the nation with an 87 percent employment rate of people with developmental disabilities who receive employment services.

The Community Employment sees a pathway for success to expedite the process:

- There are less than 400 certificates statewide.
- Many of the 400 have already or will be transitioning to minimum wage jobs or higher each year.
- Technical assistance is available from employers and agencies that have made the transition away from Sub-Minimum wage use.

Eliminating Sub-Minimum Wage aligns with the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and self-advocacy groups.

- In September of 2020, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights declared the need to end sub-minimum wage, providing the following findings, “[I]n sum, the state transitions from 14(c) evaluated by the Commission seem promising and illustrate that it is possible to pay persons with disabilities at least minimum wage.”
- The Arc, APSE, Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council, the Washington Chapter of APSE, Disabilities Rights Washington all support this effort and we will work alongside our allies to ensure eliminating sub-minimum wage happens.

For more information, contact:

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1. <https://apse.org/washington-state-looks-to-end-subminimum-wage>
 2. <https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=5753&Year=2019&initiative=>
 3. <https://www.usccr.gov/files/2020-09-17-Subminimum-Wages-Report.pdf> (pg.13)
 4. Nat'l Council on Disability, National Disability Employment Policy, From the New Deal to the Real Deal:

