

July 20, 2009

Member of Congress
Member Address

Dear Member of Congress:

I am pleased to share with you the enclosed results of an Economic Benefits Study conducted in late 2008 by LMI Government Consulting, McLean, Virginia, to assess the economic benefit of employment for people with disabilities within the AbilityOne Program. Almost 800 AbilityOne employees with severe disabilities employed by 77 Community Rehabilitation Programs across the country participated in this confidential study.

The Economic Benefits Study demonstrates that when people with severe disabilities go to work on AbilityOne contracts, America wins. As AbilityOne employees become more financially independent, government balance sheets realize increased taxpayer contributions and reduced dependence upon entitlement programs.

Individuals with severe disabilities employed in four distinct lines of business – Public Buildings Service- custodial, administrative services, food service, and grounds maintenance – completed a survey regarding their use of government entitlements both prior to and during AbilityOne employment. The seven entitlement programs included: Medicare, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), food stamps, welfare, and public housing. The study also assessed increases in the taxpayer contributions of AbilityOne employees. The positive results show that AbilityOne employment within the above four business lines:

- Saves government balance sheets between \$3,067 and \$6,918 per AbilityOne employee;
- Reduces reliance upon SSDI, SSI, and food stamps;
- Eliminates and reduces of the need for welfare benefits, public housing, Medicare and Medicaid;
- Increases annual wages 30% to 56%; and
- Results in creating taxpayers contributions to federal and state income tax.

The AbilityOne Program is truly a win-win situation. In addition to the above economic benefits, AbilityOne employment opportunities equip tens of thousands of people who are blind or have severe disabilities, including service-disabled veterans, with the job skills and training necessary to earn equitable wages, benefits and achieve greater independence and personal satisfaction at a time when opportunities for these individuals are so rare.

Thank you for your continued support of the AbilityOne Program and the employment of people with severe disabilities.

If you have questions about the study, please contact Debbie Ignatz, Manager of State Relations, at (678) 838-5171 or dignatz@nish.org.

Sincerely,



E. Robert Chamberlin
President and Chief Executive Officer

Enclosures

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