

October 9, 2013

To Members of the Legislature

From: Lisa Pugh, Public Policy Coordinator, Wisconsin's Disability Policy Partnership
Dan Idzikowski, Executive Director, Disability Rights Wisconsin
Beth Swedeen, Executive Director, Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities
Daniel Bier, Associate Director, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities,
Waisman Center, UW-Madison

Re: Disability Awareness Month Resolution – LRB 3302/1

Our statewide disability organizations, which make up the Disability Policy Partnership, ask you to sign on in co-sponsorship of Resolution LRB 3302 to recognize Disability Awareness Month. Through our collective work with individuals with disabilities and their families, we firmly believe in the following principles addressed within the resolution:

- *Whereas, Wisconsin recognizes the importance of increasing public awareness and respect for persons with disabilities and informing the public about their many contributions to their communities and emphasizing the abilities of disabled persons; and*
- *Whereas, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 was enacted to end disability-based discrimination and to promote inclusion, full participation, economic self-sufficiency, and equality of opportunity for all people with disabilities; and*
- *Whereas, since 1988, October has been celebrated as National Disability Employment Awareness Month, and the theme for 2013 is "Because We Are Equal to the Task"; and*
- *Whereas, workplaces welcoming the talents of all people, including people with disabilities, are a critical part of our efforts to build an inclusive community and strong economy; and*
- *Whereas, Wisconsin recognizes the skills that people with disabilities bring to our workforce, and is committed to improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities in both the public and private sectors; and*
- *Whereas, Wisconsin knows that employees working in integrated jobs make more financial contributions to their communities, use fewer public benefits, and experience better health outcomes; and*
- *Whereas, employing people with disabilities is good for business, as evidenced by national polls showing that nearly 90 percent of the public supports businesses that hire people with disabilities; and*
- *Whereas, people with disabilities are capable and willing to work at competitive-wage jobs with the right supports and job fit; and*
- *Whereas, by celebrating the abilities and contributions of individuals with disabilities, we enrich the communities of Wisconsin; now, therefore, be it Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That the legislature proclaims October 2013 as Disability Awareness Month throughout the state of Wisconsin, and urges all Wisconsinites to explore the possibilities of offering mentoring, internships, and employment to people with disabilities, whose many gifts and talents contribute to our state.*

Thank you for your consideration in support of these principles. We ask that you please contact Rep. Milroy at 266-0640 or Rep.Milroy@legis.wisconsin.gov by today, the October 9 deadline.

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Protection and advocacy for people with disabilities.