

**Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities  
Legislative and Budget Subcommittee  
Meeting Minutes**

Date of meeting: Monday, January 8, 2024

Start time: 12:00pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Members Participating Remotely	
1	Carl Richardson – ADA Coordinator, Massachusetts State House
2	Chris White – CEO & President, Road to Responsibility, Inc.
3	Harry Weissman – Disability Policy Consortium (sitting in for Charlie Carr)
Members Absent	
4	Angela Ortiz – Director of Business Development & Strategy, Partners for Youth with Disabilities
5	Meghan Todd – Grants Manager, City of Framingham

Action Items	Person Responsible
1 Reaching out to legislators and Barbara L’Italien regarding Disability Caucus	Angela Ortiz and Meghan Todd
2 Invite Maura Sullivan to present on legislative process resources	Carl Richardson
3 Examine <a href="#">Disability Employment Tax Credit (DETC) program</a> implementation – Invite MRC	Chris White / Carl Richardson
4 Invite legislators/ Committee chairs who have disability-focused bills to speak on their priorities	Carl Richardson

1. Welcome, Roll Call, Approval of Minutes
  - Motion to approve, approved by all.
2. Guest Speaker Representative Josh Cutler on [WorkAbility report](#) recommendations and guidance
  - Will bring disability lens in new role as Undersecretary of Apprenticeship, Work-Based Learning, and Policy
  - Registered apprenticeship model
  - Reason why the WorkAbility Report was drafted and structured is for this commission to be advocate for legislative change.
    1. Main purpose: list of legislative priorities: recognize leaders in this space in disability policy.

2. Encourage this subcommittee as a departing legislator, will look to the subcommittee as experts and see this advocacy happen in bills and legislation, including the budget.
  3. DETC tax credit has passed. This subcommittee could look at how to educate diverse stakeholders and roll out MA Disability Employment Tax Credit.
    1. The business case for hiring persons with disabilities is a smart one, it's a business-smart thing to do. There is data that shows this.
    2. Larger employers who have the infrastructure to accommodate.
    3. Smaller employers may not have the HR built-in; how can this commission help them? It is a benefit for their business.
      - ➔ Working with MA Rehabilitation Commission and the Department of Revenue to access data.
      - ➔ What angles come out from data? Geographic? Chambers of commerce? Mass Hire?
- Be an advocate and spreading your influence around, we want to hear the Commission's voice.
  - Coming up with a list of key legislative priorities, budgetary priorities.
  - Expanding regional collaboratives: add coverage to a particular area, this is low-cost relative to the budget.
  - Hurdles to employment: transportation. One benefit of COVID is removing this transportation barrier especially for rural places.
    1. Partnering with ride-share services: Transportation Pilot Program (TPP) with Lyft.
      1. Chris- three people have been able to remain employed thanks to the TPP Program.
  - Removing technical barriers, Rep. Biele [House Bill 2990](#)
  - Mitigating the cliff effect
  - PSA Campaign in encouraging folks in self-identification
  - Setting hiring goals for state contracting
  - Look at internship programs where decisions are being made regarding accessibility
  - Looking at the geographic disparities. How can we be creative to solve issues with transportation? How can the state be a better partner?
  - Support workers labor shortages

- Carl- how can this subcommittee prioritize disability focused bills?
  1. Legislators coming to this subcommittee to speak about their bills.
  2. From July to December, legislators use that time to work and craft bills and research.
    1. This subcommittee could look at bills that were filed this term and which have value.
    2. Sit with the Chair of Children and families committee, the Chair of the Labor committee for further discussion and what their priorities are.
    3. Narrow down bills between now and the end of session.
    4. Focus on bills that address the Commission's priorities.
      - ➔ Include the architectural bill
      - ➔ Removing physical and technical barriers bill
      - ➔ Disability hiring goals in state contracting bill
      - ➔ Direct Service Providers bill
      - ➔ Health Equity Compact bill
      - ➔ Voting Rights

### 3. Adjournment