



HB420/SB417 Equal Employment Act

Support equal wages for people with disabilities.

Partnering with:

Maryland
Association of
People Supporting
Employment First

Autistic Self
Advocacy Network

Maryland
Association of
Community Services

Maryland
Developmental
Disabilities Council

Maryland Disability
Law Center

Maryland Down
Syndrome Advocacy
Coalition

Maryland Works,
Inc.

National Federation
of the Blind of
Maryland

The Arc Maryland

What is a 14(c) certificate?

Special wage certificates under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act that allow individuals with disabilities to be paid less than the minimum and/or prevailing wage. In Maryland 40 non-profit organizations currently hold 14(c) certificates – allowing them to pay special wages to workers with disabilities. Almost 3,600 Marylanders with disabilities are being paid less than minimum and/or prevailing wage.

What does this bill do?

- Eliminates all 14(c) certificates in Maryland by 2019.
- Prohibits new 14(c) certificates from being authorized to any organizations that don't currently hold a certificate. Those that do currently hold 14(c) certificates will be able to extend them until 2019.
- Guarantees equal employment and equal pay for people with disabilities.
- Creates a group of stakeholders that will create a strategic plan to phase out the use of 14c certificates.

Why should Maryland do this now?

- **People with disabilities want to live, work and meaningfully participate in their communities.**
- **It's a civil rights issue.** HB420/SB417 ensures equal employment and equal pay for Marylanders with disabilities.
- **It increases self-sufficiency and independence.** Without using 14(c) certificates, people with disabilities can make more money and be empowered to work alongside their peers, become more independent and fully integrate into society.
- **The use of 14(c) certificates limits earnings.** 20% of individuals with developmental disabilities in Maryland work in facility-based settings where, for a 2-week period, the mean number of hours worked is 17 hours and the mean income is \$66.
- **The use of 14(c) certificates is an outdated model.** Federal policy is changing to support people with disabilities to have jobs, making real wages alongside people without disabilities.
- **Research supports the benefits of employment for people with even the most significant disabilities,** including improved health, fewer hospital stays, stronger connections to family and friends, and more confidence in daily activities and routines.¹
- **Support equal wages for people with disabilities.** HB420/SB417 will do that.

¹ Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities, *Interim Report to: The Honorable Thomas E. Perez United States Secretary of Labor*, September 15, 2015, p. 37.