



September 19, 2019

The Honorable Tim Kaine  
United States Senator  
1127 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott  
United States Representative  
1201 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear United States Senator Kaine and United States Representative Scott:

On behalf of the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), I am writing to thank you for introducing the Direct Creation, Advancement and Retention of Employment Act (CARE) Opportunity Act. We wish to express our support for this important piece of legislation, which recognizes the importance of the workforce supporting people with disabilities as they pursue full and independent lives.

ANCOR is a national, nonprofit trade association representing more than 1,600 private community providers of services to people with disabilities. Combined, we support over one million individuals with disabilities, and work to shape policy, share solutions and strengthen the community. The hardworking Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) employed by our members bring to life the promises of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) every day. They do so by helping individuals with disabilities find employment, learn skills associated with daily life, and live in the community with family and friends. DSPs are considered part of the direct care workforce.

The DSP occupation faces a 45 percent annual turnover rate. This affects the stability of supports for individuals with disabilities and exacerbates the burnout of those who wish to keep working as DSPs. Despite the high demand for this workforce and the critical role it plays, constraints within the Medicaid system which funds disability supports have kept wages too low to retain staff, given the responsibilities of the work. The Direct CARE Opportunity Act's grants for pipeline programs and investments in training are important first steps to addressing this crippling workforce crisis. We value your staff's thoughtfulness in encouraging local and regional innovation, which will help address geographic and cultural differences across supports in the United States.

Your legislation highlights this all too often invisible workforce - we appreciate the Direct CARE Opportunity Act's commitment to elevating this occupation and improving recruitment and retention in this field. The work performed is highly rewarding and with this legislative effort to address challenges in the work, we hope to see more people find a calling in this field.

We look forward to continuing to work with you, and thank you again for your consideration of this important issue. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or requests. I can be contacted by email at [smeek@ancor.org](mailto:smeek@ancor.org) or (703) 535 7850, extension 104.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Meek".

Sarah Meek  
Director of Legislative Affairs