



The National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC) applauds the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) for releasing the report, [Subminimum Wages: Impacts on the Civil Rights of People with Disabilities](#). This Report has determined that Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act - which permits employers to pay less than minimum wage to individuals with disabilities – is “inconsistent with the civil rights protections to which people with disabilities are entitled”. [Here](#) is a link to the press release and summary of key recommendations in the Report. The NDSC supports the findings in the Report, and we encourage Congress and the federal government to act to implement its recommendations.

The NDSC firmly believes that all individuals with Down syndrome should have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. Like so many other disability organizations, NDSC views Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act as outdated, discriminatory, and reinforcing a life of poverty, segregation, and dependency on public support for people with disabilities. We support phasing out 14(c) in a responsible way along with capacity-building for competitive integrated employment, and we are pleased that the USCCR has come to this same conclusion after careful consideration of this issue. We recognize that change isn’t easy, and that there are some in our community who are content with their current placements in sheltered workshops and are reluctant to make the transition. The USCCR also takes this into consideration and recommends key steps that Congress and the federal government can take to phase out Section 14(c) responsibly while reconceptualizing employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

The NDSC advocates for laws and policies that will build infrastructure and transition supports needed to phase out the issuance of subminimum wage certificates while increasing opportunities for competitive integrated employment and putting in place safeguards to protect the interests of any people affected by this shift. The Report’s recommendations align with this position. The NDSC’s full [position statement on employment](#) and NDSC Policy Director Heather Sachs’ [testimony](#) are available on NDSC’s website.

“NDSC has always fought for full inclusion of people with Down syndrome in the community, whether it’s in the classroom, on college campuses, in the workplace or beyond,” states NDSC Executive Director David Tolleson, “This recommendation by the Commission on Civil Rights reaffirms our belief that ‘full’ inclusion in employment means equal pay for equal work in an integrated setting. I’m proud of the role of NDSC’s Policy Team – and their partners across the disability rights community – in championing meaningful change for those we serve.” #RealWorkRealPay @usccrgov