



Make today a breakthrough.

January 10, 2023

The Honorable Bob Casey
United States Senate
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Casey,

Cure SMA, which represents individuals with a neuromuscular disease known as spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), **is pleased to support the Disability Employment Incentive Act aimed at promoting employment for individuals with SMA and other disabilities.** Your legislation would help to remove the employment barriers that exist for individuals with SMA and other jobseekers with disabilities.

SMA is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that robs individuals of physical strength, greatly impacting their ability to walk, eat independently, and perform other essential functions of everyday life. However, with access to treatments, mobility devices, and other essential supports, children and adults with SMA are excelling in school, contributing to their workplaces, and actively participating in their communities.

Employment was among the highest priorities identified by adults and young adults with SMA. Employment provides independence, financial security, and identity. Individuals with SMA are highly educated and qualified for employment, with about 64% of adults with SMA having obtained a bachelor's degree or higher, according to Cure SMA's [2022 State of SMA Report](#). While most adults with SMA are working full-time (47%) or part-time (22%), 8% are unemployed and actively seeking employment. *"I've filled out so many applications without hearing anything in return,"* said an unemployed college graduate with SMA. *"I'm not giving up!"* In addition, many adults with SMA experience underemployment where they work fewer hours or a job that does not meet their qualifications. The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) has quantified the employment challenges of people with disabilities through its [monthly reports](#) that show lower labor force participation and higher unemployment rates.

The Disability Employment Incentive Act (DEIA) would promote employment for people with SMA and other disabilities by expanding tax credits for employers who hire individuals with disabilities and for businesses who make their workplaces more accessible for their employees with disabilities. DEIA would increase the Work Opportunity Tax Credit to a maximum of \$5,000 (from \$2,400) for employers who hire an eligible person with a disability. In addition, DEIA would double the Disability Access Expenditures Tax Credit (from \$5,000 to \$10,000) for small businesses who incur an expense for making their workplaces accessible for employees with disabilities. Finally, DEIA would increase the Architectural and



Transportation Barrier Tax Credit to \$30,000 (from \$15,000) for expenses during a single year to remove a physical barrier such as a building entrance or transportation vehicle. Expansions of these tax credits will make workplaces more accessible for all workers and their customers and will further incentivize current and future hiring, retention, and promotion of people with disabilities, including individuals with SMA.

Thank you for helping to promote the employment and financial independence of individuals with SMA and other disabilities. Cure SMA strongly supports the Disability Employment Incentive Act, and we stand ready to assist you and your team in securing passage during the 118th Congress. For more information, your staff can contact Maynard Friesz, Vice President for Policy and Advocacy at Cure SMA, at maynard.friesz@curesma.org or 202-871-8004.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. A. Hobby".

Kenneth Hobby
President
Cure SMA

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maynard Friesz".

Maynard Friesz
Vice President of Policy & Advocacy
Cure SMA