

# Transition to Independence Act (Grassley-Wyden-Casey)

## Fact Sheet

### OVERVIEW

This bill seeks to establish the Transition to Independence Medicaid Buy-In Option demonstration program, which will give ten Medicaid Buy-In states an opportunity to receive bonus payments for meeting benchmarks tied to expanding individual integrated employment and reducing subminimum wage work, congregate setting work, or facility-based day habilitation placement for people with disabilities who receive Medicaid-funded home or community-based services (HCBS), and for taking other actions that help expand employment opportunities for people with disabilities within the state.

### PURPOSE

- Improve opportunities for people with disabilities to obtain integrated employment and reduce their relegation to subminimum wages and segregated environments;
- Modernize and coordinate systems to offer cost-effective supports and services to people with disabilities consistent with the rising expectations of and for people with disabilities; and
- Ensure that people with disabilities and their families regularly receive accurate information about and have access to services and supports that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion.

### BENCHMARK SUMMARY

#### *Mandatory benchmarks*

- Reduced participation in segregated programs; and
- Increased participation in individual integrated employment.

#### *Other benchmarks*

- Elimination of new placements of working-age individuals with disabilities receiving Medicaid-funded HCBS in subminimum wage work, congregate setting work, or facility-based day habilitation or day treatment;
- Demonstration of interagency collaboration;
- Ceasing to use vocational rehabilitation funding for subminimum wage work, congregate setting work, or facility-based day habilitation or day treatment;
- Increasing Medicaid payments for supported employment providers;
- Adoption of employment strategies to recruit, hire, and retain people with disabilities who are receiving Medicaid-funded HCBS as full-time employees of State government or government contractors;
- Development of a State equivalent of Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to recruit, hire, promote, and retain working-age individuals with disabilities who are receiving Medicaid-funded HCBS with a utilization goal of 7 percent of the State government workforce;
- Development of a special hiring authority mechanism akin to the Schedule A appointing authority of the Federal Government;
- Provision of State tax credits for employers that hire new working-age people with disabilities who receive Medicaid-funded HCBS

**Community Support for the Transition to Independence Act includes:**

- American Association of People with Disabilities
- American Association on Health and Disability
- American Network of Community Options and Resources
  - Christian Opportunity Center
  - Hope Haven
  - Opportunity Village
  - Hills & Dales
  - New Hope Village
  - Exceptional Persons Incorporated
- Autism Speaks
- Autistic Self Advocacy Network
- Muscular Dystrophy Association
- National Adult Day Services Association
- National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services
- National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities
- National Down Syndrome Congress

In their advisory role to Congress, National Council on Disability provided technical assistance.