

*voice/tdd*

401.737.1238

*fax*

401.737.3395

*mail*

400 Bald Hill Road, Suite 515

Warwick, RI 02886

*email*

[riddc@riddc.org](mailto:riddc@riddc.org)

[www.riddc.org](http://www.riddc.org)



RHODE ISLAND

Developmental Disabilities Council

*Charting a New Course*

March 1, 2021

## **Statement on Subminimum Wage H5851**

The Rhode Island Developmental Disabilities Council is fully in support of the proposal by Speaker Shekarchi to formally remove the language in Rhode Island statute allowing for subminimum wage based on disability.

The Council has worked for decades to remove subminimum wages (often referred to as 14c waivers) for people with disabilities. While the intent of the federal law in the 1930s was to allow returning military veterans to continue employment, it has been used to limit the integration and citizenship of many more people. No returning service member or any other Rhode Islander with PTSD or a traumatic brain injury should be paid less than minimum wage based on disability.

Soon after the Department of Justice sued the state of Rhode Island over its employment practices for people with developmental disabilities, all 14c waivers in Rhode Island were over. As a result, many more people with developmental disabilities are now flourishing in competitive employment, self-employment, and customized employment opportunities. This has allowed for greater integration and growth in and of our communities.

This is clear evidence that subminimum wage is inappropriate and harmful to our community and we support the removal of this statute from our state laws.