



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF DISABILITY DETERMINATION DIRECTORS

*President Erik Williamson
Ohio Disability Determination Services
400 E. Campus View Blvd.
Columbus, OH 43235*

*President Elect Sheri Seil
Secretary Liz McLaren
Treasurer Mary Gabriel
Past President Trudy Lyon-Hart*

April 30, 2015

The Honorable Sam Johnson
Chairman, Subcommittee on Social Security
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
2304 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Johnson,

On behalf of the National Council of Disability Determination Directors (NCDDD), I would like to thank you for your work to strengthen the Disability Program for the American people, and for your recent introduction of the Promoting Opportunity for Disability Benefit Applications Act. Your staff person, Amy Shuart, very kindly reviewed the bill with the NCDDD leadership.

We believe that providing individuals denied for SSA Disability benefits information regarding opportunities provided by public Vocational Rehabilitation programs and private employer networks is a practical and needed efficiency that will assist this vulnerable population in entering or returning to the workforce.

These referrals can help to reduce the number of applicants who file repeated appeals. Many denied applicants have impairments that impede their ability to return to work, but are not severe enough to meet Social Security's disability requirements. Referring these individuals to the vocational rehabilitation programs that can provide the necessary supports and training for them to return to work provides the opportunity for a more meaningful, independent life and reduces dependency on federal, state, and local support programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to communicate our support of this bill, and our thanks to you and your staff's efforts to improve the Disability Program for the public.

Sincerely,

Erik J. Williamson

Erik Williamson
President, NCDDD