

Submitter: Erika Bekermeier  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services  
Measure: SB576

Dear Chair Gelser-Blouin, Vice-Chair Art Robinson, and members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of Measure SB576. My appeal to each of you, as fellow human beings, is to consider the reality of the extra-ordinary effort it takes for disabled individuals to meet the requirements of preparing for life and work, every day of their lives, when even the most basic, automatic processes of biologic functions are impaired to various degrees. Let alone considering the stress and severe limitations of navigating an injured body in a wheelchair, or having other restrictions.

Current law does not allow them to participate in a workforce where they may grow into their full potential, to progress in their careers, nor to earn a decent salary to support their families, cover specialized medical expenses, and most of all the maintain their dignity. Yet, it is expected they maintain their will, their determination and grit to face life knowing that their current Medicare/Medicaid eligibility requirements will end their support programs. Period. Obviously, this adds a tremendous amount of additional mental and psychological stress to their already burdened lives.

As lawmakers, I appeal to you NOT to force the disabled person to choose between health and financial stability. As lawmakers you have the ripe opportunity to bring equality and equity in employment to the disabled person, as it is automatically given to every able-bodied individual.

It may be difficult to imagine, for those of us who are not disabled, what difficulties would accompany our daily lives; therefore, I invite you to envision yourselves in a wheelchair for just one day, robbed of your independence, your security in work and health, your opportunity to fully develop your career and enjoy a salary that would adequately provide for you, your family, your health, and general livelihood. Yet, you have a fully functioning mind wishing to contribute to the welfare of Self & family, to your work, and to your society!

Again, I appeal to you, please support this ripe opportunity, and vote yes on SB576.

Thank you for listening and acting,  
Erika Bekermeier