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August 17, 2010

The Honorable Edolphus Towns
Chair, Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC
Fax: 202-225-4784

The Honorable Brian P. Bilbray
U.S. House of Representatives
2348 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC
Fax: 202-225-2558

VIA FIRST CLASS MAIL AND FACSIMILE

Dear Chairman Towns and Congressman Bilbray:

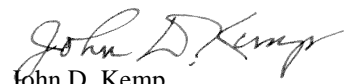
On behalf of ACCSES, I write to express enthusiastic support for HR 5983, the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act of 2010 (JWOD). Modernizing the JWOD Act will create job growth for people who are blind or have significant disabilities and streamline procurement processes with more focused oversight. It will also align the law and the AbilityOne Program with prevailing disability policy and the contemporary federal acquisition environment. We are particularly supportive of the provisions included in the proposed legislation that will:

- Increase the quality and diversity of employment opportunities available;
- Promote integration and upward mobility for people who are blind or have significant disabilities;
- Allow AbilityOne to be more responsive to federal customers;
- Create more focused oversight, while increasing efficiencies and reducing unnecessary paperwork;
- Reduce the chronically high 60 percent of working age Americans who are blind or have significant disabilities that do not have jobs;
- Expand AbilityOne business from its current level—less than 1% of federal contract dollars—and enable more sophisticated services and manufacturing jobs.

Increasing the number of AbilityOne jobs will save taxpayers millions of dollars. Through the AbilityOne Program, many individuals become taxpayers for the first time in their lives. Third party studies have shown that AbilityOne employees leave the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) cash assistance program at a much higher rate (25%) than other working SSI beneficiaries.

ACCSES anticipates working cooperatively with members of Congress to complete the modernization of the JWOD statute. We believe that the AbilityOne Program can and will play an important role in enhancing employment opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Sincerely,



John D. Kemp

ACCSES Chief Executive Officer

CC: Ms. Tina Ballard, Executive Director
Brenda Maxey, President, ACCSES Board of Directors
Steve Perdue, ACCSES Board of Directors
Mark Hall, co-chair ACCSES AbilityOne Division
Bobby Silverstein, Counsel, ACCSES AbilityOne Division