



**Marc Maurer, *President***

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www.nfb.org

June 13, 2012

Dear Goodwill Affiliate Director:

Over forty-five organizations of disabled Americans support H.R. 3086, the Fair Wages for Workers with Disabilities Act of 2011. This bill phases out Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act over a three-year period. The bill has bipartisan support and, as of today, has seventy-eight cosponsors. On behalf of disabled Americans, we urge your Goodwill affiliate to support this legislation.

Disabled Americans refuse to accept the low expectations, second-class citizenship, and outright exploitation inherent in the payment of subminimum wages. We refuse to accept that earning pennies per hour is a job and that it is the best we can do. We reject the erroneous and outdated belief that we cannot do productive work, and we will not let this falsehood destroy the hopes of yet another generation of disabled Americans. We can be productive, but we need you to be partners in our advancement.

According to a statement issued by the headquarters office of Goodwill Industries International, Inc., "64 Goodwill organizations report employing people with significant disabilities under the Special Minimum Wage Certificate. These 64 Goodwills employ approximately 7,300 employees with significant disabilities under the Special Minimum Wage Certificate..."

Freedom of Information Act requests filed by the National Federation of the Blind indicate that some Goodwill affiliates are paying employees pennies per hour; the lowest wage we can currently identify is \$0.22 an hour, paid to an employee of the Lancaster Workshop in Pennsylvania. The fact that any employee is receiving \$0.22 an hour ought to be a source of shame for anyone affiliated with this organization. Furthermore, only Goodwill's workers with disabilities are subject to this unfair, discriminatory, and immoral practice; other individuals seeking employment or placement services through Goodwill are not.

On the other hand, over half of the Goodwill affiliates are paying all of their employees, including the most severely disabled employees, at least the minimum wage. We commend these Goodwill affiliates and urge them to further demonstrate their moral leadership by (1) adopting and publicizing policies against the payment of subminimum wages, and (2) endorsing H.R. 3086.

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For more information on this critical issue, please visit [www.nfb.org/fairwages](http://www.nfb.org/fairwages).  
To notify us of your support, please e-mail us at [fairwages@nfb.org](mailto:fairwages@nfb.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marc Maurer".

Marc Maurer, President  
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND