

Dole Institute of Politics Archives and Special Collections

TALKING POINTS

INTRODUCTION OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY WORK INCENTIVES ACT

THE PURPOSE OF THIS LEGISLATION IS TO PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR CERTAIN BENEFICIARIES OF SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY INSURANCE (SSDI) WHO WOULD LIKE TO WORK DESPITE THEIR IMPAIRMENTS. RIGHT NOW THE FEAR OF LOSING CASH BENEFITS AND ACCESS TO MEDICARE KEEPS THEM FROM TAKING JOBS.

INCREASING JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IS IMPORTANT TO THE 101ST CONGRESS. A RECENT HARRIS POLL TELLS US THAT TWO-THIRDS OF ALL DISABLED PERSONS IN THIS COUNTRY BETWEEN THE AGES OF 16 AND 64 ARE NOT WORKING -- DESPITE THE FACT THEY WANT TO WORK.

CONGRESS SHOULD LOOK AT CREATING INCENTIVES FOR EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE -- ELIMINATING THE DISINCENTIVES THAT CURRENTLY EXIST.

THE LEGISLATION I AM INTRODUCING TODAY WITH SENATOR RIEGLE WILL ALLOW CERTAIN DISABLED INDIVIDUALS -- CLASSIFIED AS DISABLED ADULT CHILDREN (DAC'S) -- TO RETAIN THEIR CASH BENEFITS AND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE WHEN A CHANGE IN FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES CAUSES THEM TO MOVE FROM THE SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME PROGRAM (SSI) TO THE SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY INCOME PROGRAM (SSDI).

ANOTHER KEY PROVISION WOULD ALLOW ACCESS TO MEDICARE FOR ALL RECIPIENTS OF SSDI...BY ALLOWING THEM TO BUY INTO THE PROGRAM AS A HEALTH INSURER OF LAST RESORT. CURRENTLY THEY CAN ONLY GET MEDICARE FOR 48 MONTHS. AFTER THAT THEIR WAGE EARNING POWER IS CUT BY HAVING TO BUY PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE -- THUS LOSING THEIR INCENTIVE TO KEEP WORKING.

THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE SAYS THIS BILL WILL COST \$120 MILLION OVER FIVE YEARS.

ALLOWING SSDI RECIPIENTS TO WORK MAKES FINANCIAL SENSE. THE REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION TOLD CONGRESS IN 1984 THAT FOR EVERY \$1 SPENT TO RETURN A DISABLED PERSON TO WORK, 18 WERE RETURNED TO THE TAX BASE UPON THEIR PLACEMENT. THIS INCLUDES THE TAXES PAID BY THE PERSON AND MONEY SAVED THROUGH LOWER PUBLIC SPENDING.

THERE IS GROWING RECOGNITION THAT THESE PROVISIONS CAN SAVE MONEY. MORE IMPORTANT -- THE HUMAN DIGNITY DERIVED BY BEING A CONTRIBUTING MEMBER OF SOCIETY.