



DATE: January 14, 2022 **COMMITTEE:** Budget and Taxation
BILL NO: Senate Bill 93
BILL TITLE: Tax Credits - Employment of Individuals With Disabilities
POSITION: Support

Kennedy Krieger Institute supports Senate Bill 93 – Tax Credits- Employment of Individuals with Disabilities

Bill Summary:

SB93 increases the amount of credit a business may take against their State taxes for certain wages and certain childcare or transportation expenses, incurred in respect to qualified employees with disabilities.

Background:

Kennedy Krieger's Neurodiversity at Work program takes a multi-faceted approach to hiring and retaining individuals of all abilities as part of the workforce. Neurodiversity at Work is a collective impact initiative designed to create and support gainful employment for individuals with disabilities, providing economic benefit for businesses and the larger community. The Neurodiversity at Work program fosters integrated workplace settings where all individuals can experience success and independence. Currently the program includes several specialty initiatives Project SEARCH, CORE Foundations a Developmental Disabilities Administration Licensed Agency, HR pathways hiring program, training and education services, legislative efforts, research, transition consultation services, and planning for a national conference and on-going events.

Education and Training: Kennedy Krieger provides workforce training and development through customized, in-person Workforce Awareness and Inclusion training for Institute employees and local businesses. We provide to support to each individual and business for successful, sustainable, and integrated employment for all abilities.

Rationale:

People with disabilities want the opportunity to join the workforce, receive benefits and earn money. As a provider of employment services, we support the Tax Credits - Employment of Individuals with Disabilities legislation financial incentive for employers.

Statewide, employers continue to move forward to a more inclusive hiring practices. This Tax Credit legislation would give businesses the incentive and opportunity to hire applicants with disabilities who are willing and motivated to work. Given that 80% of individuals with disabilities are not part of the workforce, businesses need more support to make their recruitment and retention strategies more inclusive of all abilities. Employers should be looking to hire talent of diverse abilities and lived experiences to drive innovation and productivity in their organizations. Employers benefit from not only hiring individuals with disabilities, which makes good business sense, but also from accessing tax credits.

Kennedy Krieger Institute is an inclusive employer that believes that individuals with disabilities have the skills, talents, and drive to contribute significantly to the workforce and to the broader community. A neurodiverse workforce benefits all.

Kennedy Krieger Institute requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 93