



Breaking Down Barriers for People with Disabilities in Agriculture

Background

Created in 1991, the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) AgrAbility program provides funding for assistive technology and support services for farmers, their families, and other employees with disabilities in the agriculture industry. AgrAbility's funding and support is designed to be flexible and applicable for a wide range of uses, including modifications to equipment and facilities to make them accessible and counseling to ensure farmers have the resources they need to succeed.

AgrAbility's authorized funding levels have remained the same since 1999, and increases are needed to account for inflation and rising costs. Another issue the agriculture industry faces is the aging demographics of the employed population, as younger individuals interested in agricultural employment do not have the resources they need to navigate and succeed in the agriculture industry. People with disabilities who work in agriculture, or who wish to gain employment in this field, are facing limited resources and support they need to succeed in their careers.

Changes are Needed to Expand Accessibility and Support and to Incentivize Newcomers

Rep. Molinaro and Rep. Caraveo have introduced a bipartisan bill to break down the barriers farmers and young adults with disabilities face in the agricultural sector. The Think DIFFERENTLY Agriculture Accessibility Act (H.R. 4586) will increase authorized funding for the AgrAbility program by \$3 million. The legislation will also open the door and allow funding to be used for support and education for youth and young adults with disabilities interested in agriculture related careers.

SourceAmerica supports the legislation. Richard Belden, the CEO of SourceAmerica said, "On behalf of thousands of people with disabilities employed by hundreds of affiliated nonprofits across the U.S., SourceAmerica endorses Representatives Molinaro and Caraveo's Think DIFFERENTLY Agriculture Accessibility Act. This legislation will continue to ensure people with disabilities working in the agriculture industry have access to the accommodations and support they need to succeed over the next decade, while also expanding opportunities for young adults with disabilities preparing for agricultural employment."

Ask

We urge members of Congress to support and pass H.R. 4586 Think DIFFERENTLY Agriculture Accessibility Act.