Dear Congressman Tiberi,

My name is Beth Debus, President of the Columbus Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio. As one of your constituents, I urge you to sign on to important legislation to increase business opportunities for disabled Americans by enacting the Americans with Disabilities Business Opportunity Act, which our representatives discussed with your staff early this month. We expect to find a lead sponsor soon to introduce this legislation, and we very much hope that you will agree to cosponsor it.

The purpose of this legislation is to unleash the entrepreneurial capacity of Americans with disabilities in order to reduce their staggering unemployment rate and welcome them into the mainstream of American business.

This legislation should:

* Authorize tax credits to for-profit businesses that purchase goods or services from businesses owned by individuals with disabilities (including from businesses operated under the federal Randolph-Sheppard program),
* Amend Section 8(a) of the Small Business Act to include people with disabilities as presumptively socially disadvantaged,
* Change federal procurement law to provide that businesses owned by individuals with disabilities (including businesses operated under the federal Randolph-Sheppard program) are included on the list of preferred small businesses to which subcontracts must be awarded, and
* Create training and technical assistance programs to prepare individuals with disabilities to operate businesses capable of securing federal and private contracts.

Thank you for considering this piece of legislation. Blind Americans need your help to achieve our goals of economic security, increased opportunity, and full integration into American society on a basis of equality. Enactment of our legislative proposals will represent important steps toward reaching these goals. We need the help and support of each member of Congress. Our success benefits not only us, but the whole of America as well. In this time of national economic insecurity, these measures will contribute to increasing the tax base and encouraging the purchase of consumer goods.

Thank you,

Beth Debus, President

NFB-O Capital Chapter