



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4317

December 15, 2025

Chairman Jason Smith
House Ways & Means Committee
1011 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Smith,

I write to you today urging the Ways & Means committee to consider bringing **H.R. 1175, the Blind Americans Return to Work Act** to the committee for markup. This bill empowers blind Americans to contribute to the workforce and amends the outdated Social Security Disability Insurance earnings cliff.

Currently, the SSDI program's "earnings cliff" penalizes blind beneficiaries by terminating their benefits if they exceed the 2025 monthly earnings limit of \$2,700, even by a single dollar, as this qualifies as substantial gainful activity. This policy discourages blind individuals from working or accepting raises. **A 2018 National Industries for the Blind survey found that 21% of respondents declined promotions and 37% reduced work hours to preserve their average monthly SSDI payment of \$1,537 (approximately \$18,444 annually).**

The bill encourages work, supports a gradual transition off SSDI, and boosts contributions to the Social Security Trust Fund. The program simplifies the SSDI system and creates more consistent framework to support blind Americans in returning to work.

On December 2, 2025, I met with Social Security Commissioner Frank Bisignano and his legislative affairs team. The Commissioner gave his full support for the legislation and affirmed that Social Security Administration would have no issue with its passage.

I urge you to consider this crucial legislation for markup and look forward to working with you throughout the process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pete Sessions", written over a circular stamp.

Pete Sessions
Member of Congress