



Didlake, Inc.

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January 26, 2023

Virginia House of Delegates
Commerce and Energy Committee
1000 Bank Street
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Committee Members,

Didlake Inc. is a nonprofit rehabilitative services organization headquartered in Manassas, Virginia. We join several local disability advocacy organizations supporting H.B. 1924 to eliminate 14(c) subminimum wages for people with disabilities in Virginia. Under Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act enacted in 1938, employers are legally permitted to pay employees impacted by a physical, developmental, cognitive, mental, or age-related disability lower than the federal minimum wage. Fast forward 85 years, there are more employment opportunities, job training models, assistive technologies, and funding to assist individuals with significant disabilities in working meaningful jobs at or above minimum wage.

Didlake fully supports passing this bill so we can join 10 other states in passing legislation to eliminate the payment of subminimum wages. H.B. 1924 will eliminate this outdated federal program that remains in Virginia Code and transform how we support individuals with disabilities. Phasing out the subminimum wage for individuals with disabilities will create a path for people to rely less on benefits and entitlement programs, and more on their own earned income.

With the Virginia Department for Aging & Rehabilitation Services (DARS) receiving the Disability Innovation Fund grant for nearly \$14 million from the U.S. Department of Education to phase out subminimum wage, now is the opportune time for Virginia to start the process of phasing out 14(c) over the next three years, as proposed in H.B. 1924. The phase-out period in the bill corresponds with the period of the grant.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and support of Virginians with disabilities.

Sincerely,
Rachel Payne, PhD