

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 17

**Introduced by Assembly Member Aroner
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Havice, Kuehl, Longville,
Migden, Shelley, and Washington)
(Coauthor: Senator Solis)**

May 3, 1999

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 17—Relative to persons with disabilities.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 17, as introduced, Aroner. Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999.

This measure would urge the United States Congress to pass the Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 in order to meet the urgent demands of people with disabilities who work or want to work across the nation.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, In California and elsewhere, throughout a
2 prolonged period of economic well-being and record low
3 unemployment rates, recent national and California
4 studies both have unacceptable findings that only
5 one-third of adults with disabilities nationally and in
6 California hold part-time or full-time jobs; and
7 WHEREAS, In these same studies, 75 percent of those
8 not working stated they want to work; and
9 WHEREAS, The lack of access to private health
10 insurance or the lack of continuing access to Medi-Cal or

1 Medicare is the main obstacle individuals with significant
2 disabilities face when working or returning to work; and

3 WHEREAS, The Social Security Disability Insurance
4 (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) work
5 incentive rules have the potential to be effective but are
6 underutilized, overly complex, and inconsistently
7 administered. Social Security work incentives are used by
8 only a small fraction of those eligible and often result in
9 benefit overpayments that must be repaid by the payee;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, People with disabilities who are SSDI
12 beneficiaries and SSI recipients have limited choice in
13 employment services; and

14 WHEREAS, On January 28, 1999, Senator James M.
15 Jeffords, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Senator William
16 V. Roth, Jr., and Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan,
17 introduced Senate Bill 331, cited as the “Work Incentives
18 Improvement Act of 1999,” to expand the availability of
19 health care coverage for working individuals with
20 disabilities, establish a Ticket to Work and
21 Self-Sufficiency Program in the Social Security
22 Administration to provide these individuals with
23 meaningful opportunities to work, and for other
24 purposes; and

25 WHEREAS, On March 18, 1999, Representative Rick A.
26 Lazio, Representative Michael Bilirakis, Representative
27 Nancy L. Johnson, Representative Henry A. Waxman,
28 Representative Tom Bliley, Jr., Representative Bob
29 Matsui, Representative Fortney (Pete) Stark,
30 Representative Brian Bilbray, Representative Steve
31 Horn, of California and other states, introduced House
32 Resolution 1180, cited as the “Work Incentives
33 Improvement Act of 1999,” a measure similar to that
34 introduced in the Senate; and

35 WHEREAS, The federal act, as introduced, would
36 provide states with the option and incentive grants to set
37 up programs to extend medicaid coverage to certain
38 classes of SSDI and SSI beneficiaries who work, extend
39 Medicare for SSDI beneficiaries who work, provide more
40 choice of employment services, and establish a \$2 for \$1



1 earned income offset demonstration project for SSDI
2 beneficiaries; and

3 WHEREAS, The federal act, as introduced, contains
4 strong work incentive and planning provisions for
5 individuals with disabilities who want to work or return
6 to work, community work incentive planners to help
7 individuals understand and use the work incentive
8 program, Social Security specialists in work incentives at
9 field offices to disseminate accurate information
10 protection and advocacy assistance when an individual's
11 situation is negatively impacted as a result of work, and
12 a consumer controlled advisory panel to counsel the
13 Commissioner of Social Security and other federal
14 agencies on employment and work incentive programs;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, The interconnected provisions of the
17 federal act work in concert to remove work barriers for
18 people with disabilities; and

19 WHEREAS, Californians with disabilities want to live
20 and work side by side with others in their communities
21 and this goal can begin to happen with passage of this
22 historic national legislation; and

23 WHEREAS, It is the California Legislature's strongest
24 belief that people have the responsibility and right to
25 meaningful employment opportunities; now, therefore,
26 be it

27 *Resolved by the Assembly and Senate of the State of*
28 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature affirms its
29 endorsement of the federal "Work Incentives
30 Improvement Act of 1999," and urges the United States
31 Congress to pass this act at once in order to meet the
32 urgent demands of people with disabilities who work or
33 want to work across the nation; and be it further

34 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly
35 transmit copies of this resolution to the President and
36 Vice President of the United States, the Senate Majority
37 Leader, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the
38 Chairpersons of the Senate Committees on
39 Appropriations, Budget, and Finance, and to the
40 Chairpersons of the House Committees on



1 Appropriations, Budget, Commerce, and Ways and
2 Means, and to each Senator and Representative from
3 California in the Congress of the United States.

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