



April 4, 2008

TO: MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY PUBLIC EMPLOYEES & SOCIAL SECURITY COMMITTEE

CC: ASSEMBLYMEMBER JIM BEALL

FROM: Tamara Rasberry, Government Relations Advocate

RE: **AB 2635 (Beall)- State Employment Opportunities for People with Developmental Disabilities — SPONSOR**

**CALIFORNIA  
STATE COUNCIL**

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The Service Employees International Union is pleased to be a sponsor of AB 2635 (Beall) which would open opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to apply for and be hired into state employment.

People with severe developmental disabilities generally rely on the state's Supported Employment Program (SEP) to seek competitive employment in natural work environments and to hold those jobs. This program provides people with job developers to assess an individual's skills and interests and to locate and secure jobs that match. The program then provides job coaching that helps an individual to adjust to the demands of the job and the workplace, support which is available to a limited extent on an ongoing basis if needed. Both the job developer and job coaches also provide valuable supports to employers, which also helps make these placements successful and enduring.

Despite the widespread success of supported employment in the private sector, state employment is largely closed to people requiring these employment supports. State agencies and departments are generally not aware of the program, nor that people served in this program can help meet their workforce needs. And it is not widely understood how to navigate existing hiring options, such as the Limited Examination and Appointments Program (LEAP) in order to hire people with disabilities.

AB 2635 would create a program within the State Personnel Board, staffed by one FTE, that would work with state agencies and departments to set goals and timelines for the hiring of people served through supported employment, disseminate information on SEP, review data on hiring, and enforce implementation of the employment goals. State agencies and departments would be required to report employment data for people served by SEP; this would simply be added to the existing annual reporting on employment of people with disabilities. Hiring would take place almost exclusively through the existing LEAP program.

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This bill is a small but important step to correcting an historical inequity where people with significant developmental disabilities have not had the opportunity to participate in state employment. These people desire to be productive citizens and many would seek the opportunity to be valued public servants. And with the appropriate supports they have the skills to do so. This bill would provide state employers with the information and support to take advantage of this valuable workforce.

We respectfully request your support and "aye" vote of AB 2635.