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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 20, 2018
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Arizona Industries for the Blind Honors AZ Rep. David Schweikert as an AbilityOne Congressional Champion

Phoenix, Ariz.- Arizona Industries for the Blind (AIB) welcomed Rep. David Schweikert, R-Ariz., as the newest AbilityOne Congressional Champion to pledge support of the AbilityOne Program. The AbilityOne Program is a federal government program that is one of the nation's largest sources of employment for people who are blind or have significant disabilities.

Congressman Schweikert, who represents Arizona's 6th District, accepted the prestigious AbilityOne Champion award during a ceremony held Monday at AIB's Phoenix headquarters. Rep. Schweikert addressed the crowd that included AIB employees, and representatives from the AIB Board of Directors.

"These jobs provide so much more than just a paycheck and financial independence – they provide a sense of accomplishment and a sense of purpose," said Schweikert. "The AbilityOne Program enables individuals in our communities to be independent and achieve personal and professional goals. Thank you to all the hard-working men and women that make up this valuable program!"

"Congressman Schweikert is a friend and supporter of Arizona Industries for the Blind," said AIB CEO Richard Monaco. "He understands the powerful impact that the federal government can have through the AbilityOne Program in changing the lives of people who are blind -- one job at a time. We're grateful for his support of job creation for people with disabilities here at home and across the nation."

Under the AbilityOne Program, AIB employees work on federal contracts such as military supply chain management services for the U.S. Department of Defense and the operation of AbilityOne Base Supply Centers located at each of Arizona's three military bases.

AIB is one of more than one hundred nonprofit agencies associated with National Industries for the Blind (NIB), the nation's largest employment resource for people who are blind. NIB and its associated agencies employ nearly 6,000 people who are blind across the country, including veterans who are blind. "AIB is a leader in creating employment opportunities for people who are blind in the state of Arizona," said NIB President/CEO Kevin Lynch. "We're thankful for Rep. Schweikert's tireless support of our mission to enhance the independence of people who are blind through rewarding careers."

As an AbilityOne Champion, Schweikert joins the ranks of the 150 current congressional representatives who have publicly shared their support of the AbilityOne Program to help people who are blind or have significant disabilities find employment by working within a national network of over 600 nonprofit agencies that sell products and services to the federal government. More than 46,000 individuals are employed through the AbilityOne Program and its network of nonprofit agencies like AIB.

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About Arizona Industries for the Blind

[Arizona Industries for the Blind](#) (515 N. 51st Ave., Phoenix, AZ), an associated agency of [National Industries for the Blind](#), is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating employment opportunities for people who are blind. Its employees, more than half of whom are blind, deliver a variety of products and services, including a full-service Warehousing and Distribution Center, confidential Digital Data Scan (DDS) services for private businesses and government and the operation of Base Supply Centers located at each of Arizona's three military bases under the umbrella of the U.S. Department of Labor's AbilityOne program.