

FLORIDA'S PATH TO PORTABLE BENEFITS

› **Florida's independent workforce is massive:**

Nearly 890,000 documented independent contractors represent a vital and growing segment of Florida's labor force. Independent contractors make up a larger portion of Florida's workforce than in any other state, including California, Texas, and New York.

› **The Issue:** Current law creates a harmful paradox: offering benefits to contractors can trigger reclassification as employees, exposing businesses to severe penalties. This regulatory framework forces millions of independent workers to choose between the flexibility they value and critical protections like health insurance and retirement savings. By linking benefit access to employment status, our laws inadvertently penalize contractors seeking both autonomy and security in today's evolving workforce landscape.

› **The Portable Benefits Solution:** Independent contractors often work for multiple businesses simultaneously and frequently move between different projects or clients. This work pattern makes traditional employer-provided benefits impractical. Under a portable benefits system, contractors maintain access to benefits as they move between clients or platforms—benefits are

attached to the worker, not the job. To make this possible, legislation should explicitly state that providing these benefits cannot indicate an employment relationship under state law, which would remove the legal barrier preventing many willing businesses from offering benefits to their contractors.

BENEFITS OF THIS APPROACH

- 1. Preserves flexibility:** Contractors maintain their independence while gaining access to crucial benefits.
- 2. Market-driven:** Companies can develop benefit structures that best serve their contractors through market competition.
- 3. Worker-centered:** Benefits follow the worker across multiple platforms and clients, reflecting modern work patterns.

› **Proven Success** DoorDash's Pennsylvania pilot program showed overwhelming support, with 89% of participants finding it beneficial and 82% preferring to keep their flexibility with portable benefits rather than trading independence for traditional employment benefits.