

**NLWJC - Kagan**

**DPC - Box 013 - Folder 002**

**Disabilities - General**

Disabilities-general  
(and)  
Disabilities - executive order



Record Type: Record

To: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP  
cc: Laura Emmett/WHO/EOP  
Subject: Disability executive order

The executive order is now in clearance with the agencies, with the deadline for comments this Friday. I can send it to you if you like. There is \$2 million or a little more in the budget for DOL to do this. So it's all systems go, and we should think in terms of rollout. The appointees will want it in the state of the union, but I won't push that unless you want me to.

This will be the major good news in the budget for the disabled, with them being very disappointed in the flat funding level for special ed/IDEA, somewhat disappointed that we don't include any money for Medicaid home and community-based services or for new initiatives in getting people with disabilities to return to work (beyond the executive order itself). And I guess somewhat unhappy on child care as well.

Disabilities - general

13% DOJ ↑ disability  
15% EGOE ↑ overall  
Food stamps - disabled + elderly here when law signed.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

January 16, 1998

TO: MARIA ECHAVESTE  
ELENA KAGAN  
FROM: BILL WHITE  
DIANA FORTUNA  
SUBJECT: BACKGROUND ON DISABILITY APPOINTEE MEETING

DATE/TIME: Friday, January 16, 1998  
3:00 - 4:00 PM

LOCATION: OEOB - Room 211

PURPOSE: To follow-up on the issues raised at Erskine's meeting last year and to explore ways to better integrate disability into the President's initiatives. The appointees feel that many high-level officials at the White House do not view disability issues as a priority for the President, although they feel that he himself is very sensitive to disability issues. They want a disabled person working on policy at the White House.

BACKGROUND: The appointees would like to discuss the following issues:

Doc chair / Cecilia co-chair  
2m in budget  
(work on CAD)

Executive Order: Final draft is circulating with comments due by COB 2002 today. We should ask their input on roll-out. They will want a Presidential event and mention in the SOTU. *All about when to work - goal - complete as close as poss.*

SOTU: The world will end if the President fails to mention disability.

Budget-Medicare: They will ask why didn't we include all people with disabilities into our Medicare Buy-In announcement last week. They will say this is a missed opportunity in their efforts to get people with disabilities (PWD) off the rolls. Answer: PWD will greatly benefit, especially those with pre-existing conditions such as epilepsy, MS, diabetes, etc, who meet the criteria in the 55-64 age bracket. Our proposal is self-financing; including all PWD would have serious cost implications and driven the Medicare premium up from \$300 to \$500 per month. But we have work to do to eliminate work disincentives for PWD.

*(i.e. - have rolls -/on insurance / so don't return to work)*

EO! (All about this)

Medicaid buy-in  
for disabled  
(state opt-in)  
passed.

in FY99

Budget-Return to Work: The appointees will ask why we aren't doing more in our budget to encourage people with disabilities to leave the SSI/SSDI rolls and return to work, especially by providing them with health care. They may note we had two small health care initiatives in last year's President's budget, but do not have any in the new budget. Answer: This issue is the focus of the executive order. Also, one of our health initiatives last year actually passed Congress, and we are continuing to carry our "ticket" proposal in the budget. There is Congressional action on this issue (Bunning?). *2 pay private people who help people return to work - 50% of benefits*

Budget-IDEA: Serious concern about level funding for special ed. (I have yet to figure out a good rationale for our decision) and rehabilitative services. *(Part 2 of disability) any reallocate* *Can ed props generally not be*

Budget-Child Care: Why no reference to disability in child care initiative. What about funding targeted to training child care workers on meeting the needs of kids with disabilities. Answer: We need to say that we have not done a great job on outreach to the disability community on child care. We will be meeting on Tuesday at 3:00 with key advocates for children with disabilities. We believe there are several opportunities where kids with disabilities will/can benefit (training and early learning fund, research and evaluation fund, safety and health standards enforcement funds). There is \$5 million targeted to meeting the needs of kids with disabilities. This is the beginning of a process because we are proposing an initiative, not a specific piece of legislation.

Fans w/ Ch w/  
Disability support - ←

Budget-Personal Assistant Services: Why doesn't our budget seriously address the issue of long term care and PAS. Why haven't we engaged Gingrich on this subject. Answer: HHS has a working group on this issue that is working to develop a demo. We plan to work with Gingrich on this issue. This issue is difficult to address because of cost; ADAPT's bill (CASA) would cost about \$12 billion. *tried to get it for a second* *Chr to work w/ states*

NEXT STEPS: They probably will push to meet with Erskine.

PARTICIPANTS:

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Marca Bristo   | Chair, National Council on Disability              |
| Andy Imparato  | General Counsel, National Council on Disability    |
| Judy Heumann   | Education, A/S Special Education                   |
| John Lancaster | Pres Comte on Employment of People w/ Disabilities |
| Bob Williams   | HHS, DAS for Planning & Evaluation                 |
| Michael Winter | DOT, Associate Administrator                       |

Disabilities - generally

▶ Diana Fortuna  
07/07/97 07:01:32 PM  
.....

Record Type: Record

To: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP  
cc: Cynthia A. Rice/OPD/EOP, Christa Robinson/OPD/EOP  
Subject: DOJ request for President to do ADA PSA's

You asked what I thought of DOJ's idea of the President doing an ADA PSA with Bob Dole. It's a cute idea, and certainly bipartisan, so I kind of like it, although I don't know what sensitivities would be raised around here by something so unusual. Dole would have to agree, which he probably would, I suspect.

In terms of making sure we have something on the calendar for the ADA 7th, Public Liaison has put in a scheduling request for a conference on youth with disabilities and employment which is the officially sanctioned anniversary event of the disabled appointees, and would certainly fit with the announcements we are working on. So, I don't know if you'd want to do the DOJ idea in addition to the event. The PSA alone would not be sufficient in the eyes of the disability community.

Diana -

Only in addition - it definitely shouldn't be seen as sufficient. Why don't you send the script over to Ann Lewis, with a note saying that we kind of like it, but this seems like a communications call. Thanks.

Elena

cc: Bruce



DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

THE SECRETARY

APR 14 1997

Bruce Reed —

This is a good  
idea from Bob Williams.

He runs the  
office of Disability for  
Oliver. He is the  
lead DAS for Disability,  
long term care + Aging.  
in ASPE.

Don

Disability-general

EK/Diana -  
what do you  
think?  
BR

CONFIDENTIAL NOTE TO SECRETARY SHALALA FROM BOB WILLIAMS

I just read the transcript of President Clinton's response to a reporter's question regarding his recent surgery and the way his temporary disability is "profoundly impact(ing)" his view of people with disabilities and the challenges we face. I have always believed that the President has understood the enormous strength, reservoir of potential and dreams deferred Americans with disabilities represent. But, as he himself pointed out the other day, "feeling it and knowing it are two different things. "

To borrow Dorothy Day's phrase, I believe the President has undergone a revolution of the heart, which can have powerful transformational effects on both the man and the Nation he leads. I further believe that the best way to bring his recent experiences into sharper focus is to arrange for the President and Vice President Gore to meet in a relaxed atmosphere with key Cabinet officers (yourself, Secretary Riley, Attorney General Reno, the Secretary of Labor and the SSA Commissioner) as well as each's principal disability appointee. The group should likewise include Marca Bristol from the National Council on Disability, who we recently met with, and Tony Coehlo, the chair of the President's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities.

The size of the gathering should be kept small to foster ample give and take. Its purpose should be to discuss and identify with the President and the Vice President a series of incremental but vital next steps the Administration can take to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, including those on TANF (between twenty and fifty percent of those on AFDC have been estimated to have disabilities). As you know, the Administration has included several bold but viable proposals in its budget request aimed at strengthening the ability of disabled Americans to go to work and pay taxes.

*What happens?*

Disability appointees in the Administration believe there are a number of similar steps we could be taking in an unified manner in this same vain. The idea of pulling together such a session with the President is not new. Judy Heumann first suggested it at the time of the State of the Union. The President's recent experiences, however, presents us with an historic opportunity to both have that substantive discussion and move forward with a politically achievable agenda.

**My recommendation, therefore, is that you (acting alone or with Secretary Riley) explore whether the President would find such a dialogue to be a constructive use of his and Vice President Gore's time.** Should you decide to go forward with this, I would welcome the opportunity to be of any assistance I can. I will be on vacation from April 2-4 but will be back in the office Monday. I hope you find my comments and suggestions helpful. Thank you.

cc: Olivia Golden

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON  
MEMORANDUM

To: Jake Siewart

cc: Sylvia Mathews  
Kathy Wallman  
Diana Fortuna ✓  
Jim Kohlenberger

From: Tom Kalil TAK

Re: Approval of attached Presidential statement on Web accessibility initiative

Date: March 31, 1997

cc Elena Kagan  
Bill White  
We should tell  
Vicki Radd.  
- Diana

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**Summary:**

I have been encouraging industry to launch a project that would make the World Wide Web more accessible for people with disabilities. Currently, people who are blind struggle with the Web's graphical interface, and any Web content or application that can't be rendered using audio, braille, large text or synthetic voice. People who are deaf need captioning for audio on the Web. This will become a more important issue over time as the amount of information and services available over the Web expands.

On Monday, April 7th, the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) will announce an initiative to address some of these problems. I will be speaking at the launch in Santa Clara, California, and would like to have a statement from the President that we could release to the press (see attached). Ideally, this statement could be approved by Wednesday so that the organizers of the initiative could translate it into Braille.

**Initiative:**

The World Wide Web Consortium, which is the international organization responsible for developing technical standards for the Web, would initiate the following project:

- Develop standards that make the Web more accessible for people with disabilities;
- Develop "authoring tools" that make it easier to create accessible content;

- Develop “guidelines” for use by software companies and content creators;
- Educate content creators about the needs of people with disabilities;
- Conduct R&D in areas where more work is needed before standards can be set.

**Funding:**

The funding required for this project is \$1 million per year for at least three years. W3C is prepared to put \$250,000 of their member dues into this project per year. Over the next six months, they will work to find additional sources of funding from companies, foundations, and government agencies.

NSF and the Department of Education are both interested in funding a portion of this project. The Department of Education is willing to put \$300,000 in the project over the next three years, and the NSF is likely to fund an additional \$500,000 of the project. NSF, however, needs to go through a “peer review” process before making any final decisions.

NSF is also considering launching a larger R&D initiative in this area.

**Other endorsements**

Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien may endorse the initiative as well. I expect that a number of disabilities groups will issue statements of support.

Draft 3/30

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I am pleased by today's launch of the Web Accessibility Initiative -- an effort to ensure that people with disabilities have access the Internet's World Wide Web.

New information and communications technologies can improve the quality of life for people with disabilities, but only if they are designed from the beginning to be usable by everyone. We need "electronic curbcuts" on the information superhighway.

It is particularly important that the World Wide Web be accessible, given the explosive growth in the use of the Web for publishing, electronic commerce, life-long learning, and the delivery of government services. The Web Accessibility Initiative will develop the tools, technology and guidelines to make it possible to display information in ways that are accessible to everyone.

I want to commend the World Wide Web Consortium, industry sponsors, and the Yuri Rubinski Insight Foundation for launching this important project. I am pleased to announce that the Department of Education will provide funding for the Web Accessibility Initiative, and that the National Science Foundation is considering expanding its support for research and development in this area. My Administration is committed to working with these and other organizations to ensure that this project is a success.

March 6, 1997

Met w/ appointees w/ disabilities

Unemp - A-A 90%

Hisp 75%

Asian 60%

Disabil as integrated part of P's agenda

Schools w/ disabled kids are integrated  
when tech being used.  
HOPE schools? Disabil: who could  
benefit.

Spec Ed 7.2% ↑

when Repubs are pushing for lg ↑.

Transport - reqs not promulgated as they need to be.  
HUD -

Medicaid per capita cap -

Proposal not sensitive to varying rates of disabil cen.

Draft EO - not only vehicle // constructive needs to emphasize around  
proclaim commitment to empowering p. from even perspective.

Publication - office - need rep.

CAP program - DOD - Fin to take gov wide  
provide accn at every level ]

- Disabilities - general

~~get and talk of this~~

Table of Contents

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- Budget info
- Answer to criticisms
- Answer to executive order request
- Executive order request
- Demographics and groups of disabled
- Clinton Administration accomplishments on disabilities
- FDR memorial background
- FDR memorial talking points
- List of attendees

Bruce - This is  
- essentially the  
set of briefing  
materials given to  
Eveline re today's  
disabilities mtg  
Elena

Mar-04-97 04:27P Marie Strahan

301-855-4771

P.02

MEETING AGENDA  
WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS

I. Erskine opens

I. Introductions (3 min)

Tony Coelho

II. Background (5 min)

Achieving Independence Report  
Advancing the President's Agenda  
Widespread Support (Tony)

Marca Bristo

III. Concerns (5 min)

Integrating Disability Policy into Broader Agenda  
State of the Union Address  
Budget/Implementation Issues  
-Special Education  
-Welfare Reform and SSI  
-Children's SSI Benefits  
-Immigrant's SSI Benefits  
-Health Care - Medicaid and Medicare  
-Housing  
-Transportation

Judy Heumann

IV. Top Priorities

White House Policy Appointment  
Employment Initiatives/Executive Order  
Key Appointments in the Administration  
(SSA, ED, HHS, DOT, DOL, HUD, etc.)  
Follow-Up on Current Policy Concerns

Marca Bristo, John Lancaster, Tony Coelho

V. Discussion

VI Erskine closes

## DISABILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS TALKING POINTS

- o Welcome to the White House. Before we begin, I want to introduce two members of my staff who will play key roles on disability issues. The first is Maria Echaveste, the new Assistant to the President for Public Liaison, and Elana Kagan, the new Deputy Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy.
- o The Clinton Administration is very proud of our record of accomplishment on disability issues during the last four years, and we look forward to working with you to develop and implement an agenda during the next four years.
- o We have worked hard to vigorously enforce the Americans with Disabilities Act, and we are particularly pleased that our FY 98 budget requests a 5% increase in ADA enforcement at the Department of Justice. We have also worked successfully to protect the ADA from Congressional efforts to weaken the law.
- o One of the accomplishments that the President is most proud is his stand to protect Medicare and Medicaid last year, which is so important to people with disabilities.
- o The President's efforts to enact the Family and Medical Leave Act is making the workplace more accommodating to families with adults or children with disabilities.
- o The Kennedy-Kassebaum legislation that the President signed last year now prohibits insurance companies from denying coverage because of pre-existing conditions, which greatly benefits people with disabilities.
- o We are proud that President Clinton has appointed more people with disabilities than any President in history. And we are not just talking numbers, but high-level policy making positions in which all of you in this room serve.
- o But although we recognize our past accomplishments, we both know that much remains to be done. We look forward to working together as we develop and implement disability policy.

### **Information about the Appointees:**

As the Chief of Staff knows, the appointees with disabilities have a number of sensitivities about language and behavior pertaining to people with disabilities. They are leaders in the emerging civil rights movement for this community, and see this movement as being perhaps 20 years behind African Americans or women in terms of the degree of understanding and sensitivity of the non-disabled community. They believe that denigrating language and behavior is still widely tolerated in our society. In their view, disability is a natural part of life and people with disabilities should be viewed positively, rather than as victims, courageous, or pitied.

The term "people with disabilities" is preferred to "handicapped" or even "the disabled." They often say that, in the spirit of "putting people first," you should look first at the person rather than the disability. People "use" a wheelchair rather than "are in" a wheelchair -- or worse yet, "are confined to" a wheelchair. In general, you should not offer assistance with a basic task such as opening a door or getting seated unless the person appears unable to do so on his or her own.

The Administration's most prominent appointee with a disability is probably Judy Heumann, who is Assistant Secretary at Education in charge of special education and vocational rehabilitation. She played a major role in the development of the independent living movement, which champions people with disabilities living in the community and with their families, and has helped many people leave nursing homes. (The community is very much opposed to nursing homes, viewing them as rarely or never appropriate for people with disabilities.) She is a very constructive internal advocate.

Bob Williams, who is Commissioner of the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD), part of HHS, speaks with a voice machine. When he wishes to speak, he often makes a noise and begins punching into the machine. The etiquette is that other conversations should continue until the artificial voice begins to speak, and then wait until the thought is expressed. Bob is a very thoughtful individual who has also been a leader in the disability movement.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, which governs special education) are viewed as virtually sacred by the community. The Administration has been extremely strong in supporting these laws. In 1994, the community was very fearful that the Republican takeover of Congress would lead to attempts to weaken these laws. The threat never materialized into proposed legislation, but the community believes it must be ever-vigilant in defending these laws.

## REMOVING BARRIERS TO WORK FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The President's budget includes important steps to make it possible for more people with disabilities to work. A large and growing number of people with disabilities can work, and want to work. With the ADA, changes in societal attitudes, and advances in technology, it is clearer than ever that being disabled does not mean that you can't contribute to our nation's economy. However, people with disabilities face a variety of complex barriers to work.

Therefore, the President's budget addresses this critical problem with the following three initiatives designed to assist people with disabilities who are eligible for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI):

- **New State Option on Medicaid:** The budget proposes to help people with disabilities work without losing their health care coverage. Today, people on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) who go to work lose Medicaid if their earnings exceed caps that vary by state. Yet, it is often especially difficult for people with disabilities to get private insurance, especially coverage for any preexisting conditions. As a result, many people who are eligible for SSI "manage" their income to ensure that they keep Medicaid -- by stopping work when they hit the caps, or even turning down promotions. The President's proposal would create a new state option that would allow SSI beneficiaries with disabilities who earn more than these caps to keep Medicaid by contributing to the cost of their coverage as their income rises.
- **Medicare:** The President's budget authorizes a four-year demonstration to encourage Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries to return to work. Under the demonstration, certain SSDI beneficiaries who have exhausted their coverage would be eligible for up to four additional years of premium-free Part A coverage.
- **Pay for Results for Rehabilitation Services:** The Administration is proposing a new strategy to encourage more SSDI and SSI beneficiaries to return to work. Currently, the Social Security Administration refers some SSDI and SSI beneficiaries to state vocational rehabilitation agencies. Under this pilot proposal, SSDI and SSI beneficiaries could choose their own public or private rehabilitation providers. Providers who successfully assist beneficiaries in leaving the rolls and returning to work would be paid a percentage of the disability benefits saved. These payments would continue only as long as the person remained off the rolls, up to a maximum of five years. Because providers would be rewarded for results rather than for their costs, this should encourage more providers to have a continuing interest in their clients' long term success, which in turn may lead to more beneficiaries returning to work.

This plan creates new ways to help people find work and achieve their goals. The Administration looks forward to working with the Hill to enact these proposals. Since there are members of Congress from both sides of the aisle who are also working to solve this problem, we are hopeful that we will have a constructive dialogue that will lead to the enactment of legislation.

### Criticisms that Disability Appointees May Raise:

- Welfare Reform -- The group would have preferred that the President not sign the welfare bill. They are concerned that disabled recipients are not exempt from or given special assistance in meeting the work requirements. People with severe disabilities are not subject to welfare reform because they are eligible for SSI. Therefore, the group is more concerned about those with mild or moderate disabilities. Some estimate that a very high proportion of AFDC recipients have some form of disability. Also, the group is also concerned about parents of children with disabilities being forced to work even though they can't afford child care.

The Administration is working with states on these issues, and encouraging them to provide the more expensive child care disabled children often require. Also, the law prohibits states from cutting off assistance to parents of children under 6 who can't find appropriate child care.

- Children's SSI -- Because of tremendous growth in the children's SSI program and media reports that children were faking mental problems to get benefits, Congress proposed block granting and sweeping cuts to this program. The Administration successfully fought off these cuts, but eventually agreed to significant cuts. The Social Security Administration just issued regulations that will cut 135,000 children from the program. The appointees are disappointed in two things: that we did not fight these cuts harder, and that our regulations did not take a more liberal approach in issuing the regulations.

We can take credit for defeating Republican plans to block grant children's SSI. As to SSA's recent regulation, SSA did not believe that a more liberal interpretation was legally possible.

- Medicaid -- The appointees are concerned that our per capita cap proposal could disadvantage people with disabilities, especially people with severe developmental disabilities, because their costs are far higher than average. Our proposal does address this problem by including a separate cap for the disabled. However, it is possible that a per capita cap would lead states to be reluctant to add services for very expensive long term care needs.

In addition, the appointees are disappointed that we have not been able to move forward on a proposal for Medicaid "personal assistance" services. Many people with disabilities need assistance with activities of daily living, such as getting bathed and dressed, in order to work or live in the community, but health plans do not tend to pay for this service because it is not considered medical. (Many states have Medicaid "waiver" programs that provide these services, but the number of participants is capped.) The Administration's health care reform proposal (which was strongly supported by the disability community) would have partially addressed this issue by creating a new block grant. The appointees feel that it is time to move ahead on this issue again. However, OMB has major concerns about the cost implications. The President has made very sympathetic statements about

the need for this program in public forums.

A radical advocacy group called ADAPT is pushing this issue. The Administration has agreed to a meeting on this issue and others with the President and a range of external disability advocates, including ADAPT.

- Special Education/“Individuals with Disabilities Education Act” -- **Budget:** The appointees are disappointed that our FY1998 budget includes “only” a 4% increase for special education spending. However, IDEA funding increased by an astounding 25% in the FY1997 budget, so we felt that a 4% increase was appropriate for this year. (Members of Congress pushed through the 25% increase, not the Administration, but we can take credit for signing it.)

**Reauthorization:** IDEA is also up for reauthorization, and Senator Lott is leading an collaborative process that the Administration is participating in to come to an agreement on a bill. IDEA is extremely important to this community, especially to parents of children of disabilities. IDEA includes civil rights protections that ensure that children with disabilities have the right to attend school -- something they did not have before IDEA was passed 20 years ago. In fact, Judy Heumann, the Administration’s most prominent political appointee with a disability, was excluded from public schools for many years, prior to IDEA.

The Administration has been extremely supportive of the disability community’s position on IDEA. School boards and the unions view IDEA as an “unfunded mandate” that is a major drain on school budgets. They point out that federal funds support only 7-8% of the costs of special education, even though the original legislation foresaw federal payments covering 40% of costs. We have fought the “unfunded mandate” interpretation in a number of settings, instead stressing that IDEA is a civil rights law that shouldn’t be weakened or tampered with.

**Discipline:** The most contentious current IDEA issue is when and how schools can discipline students with disabilities. Critics charge that IDEA allows a double standard for students with disabilities by making it almost impossible for schools to remove them from the classroom or school, even if they are disruptive or violent. Parents respond that schools have long used the discipline issue as a smokescreen to try to remove these children just because they are different or harder to educate.

The Administration supports modest and sensible measures to ensure that schools can maintain order, but we have totally supported the disability community on this issue -- even to the point of allowing Secretary Riley to oppose a measure to expel disabled students who bring guns to school.

- Immigrants -- Disabled legal immigrants lose SSI benefits under welfare reform. We have proposed to ameliorate this, as part of our welfare “fix” package, by allowing legal

immigrants who become disabled after entering the country to continue to receive SSI. The appointees are concerned about whether we are committed to this proposal. They may also be concerned that we left out those who were disabled upon entry to the U.S.

Appointees may also be concerned about a regulation that the INS will issue shortly to waive the English and civics testing requirements of the naturalization process for legal immigrants with certain severe disabilities. They are concerned both that it has taken the INS over two years to issue these regulations, and that the final regs will not waive the oath of citizenship. An advocacy group is suing us over this regulation.

We can point out that our proposed welfare fix package would address much of this problem by exempting legal immigrants disabled after entering the U.S. from the SSI cuts. However, the INS says the law does not allow them to waive the oath of citizenship. (We have not commented on whether we would waive it if we could.)

- Employment -- Estimates are that half to two-thirds of people with disabilities are unemployed. The community argues that many unemployed people with disabilities want to work, but they face many barriers. The ADA is starting to improve this picture marginally, but there is a long way to go.

The appointees have two concerns. First, as reflected in their draft executive order, they believe this problem is not viewed as a national priority by the Administration. They point to the fact that the Bureau of Labor Statistics collects this unemployment statistic on a very occasional basis. Second, they believe that the current federal Social Security system often acts as a disincentive to work. People on SSI or SSDI benefits who want to work face the loss of Medicaid or Medicare, as well as cash benefits.

We should point to our new initiative in the President's 1998 budget that addresses the second issue (see attached description). We can also agree to consider the draft executive order. However, potential solutions to the "disincentives" of the current Social Security system could be very expensive. (Note this week's GAO report and House hearing alleging that the SSI program is out of control because, among other concerns, SSA fails to drop people from the program quickly enough when they go back to work.)

- Housing -- The appointees may be concerned that the Administration has not been more proactive in enforcing housing civil rights laws. Also, they oppose past HUD efforts to segregate people with disabilities or require them to accept services as a condition for housing assistance (i.e., residential programs for the mentally ill or drug addicted). An advocacy group is suing HUD on all these issues.

Secretary Cisneros reached out to groups very extensively on these issues and recently established an Office of Disability Policy in the Secretary's office that is staffed by a trusted appointee with a disability. He gets a lot of credit for this, but Secretary Cuomo is more of an unknown quantity to them.

- Transportation -- The concern here is probably that we should not weaken or delay the requirements of the ADA for accessible transit systems, and that we should make funds available to assist transit systems with compliance. We have been pretty strong on this issue. State and local governments tend to view these requirements as unfunded mandates, but we have argued that as a civil rights law the ADA can't be defined as an unfunded mandate. The appointees give us credit for eliminating problematic "unfunded mandate" language in a report by the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations last year.

## Comments on Draft Executive Order on Employment of People with Disabilities

- Would establish a goal of parity in the employment rate between people with and without people with disabilities by the year 2006, including an interim goal of “a 3 percent annual increase in the employment rate” of people with disabilities.

It is not clear whether parity is an achievable goal. And the annual improvement expected appears quite ambitious. We should discuss with the NEC.

- Calls on federal agencies to “eliminate employment barriers to persons with disabilities, such as discrimination and inadequate access to health care....”

It is not clear that federal agencies are in a position to accomplish this without vastly increased resources.

- Sets a target that 11% of the federal workforce shall be persons with disabilities.

This must be considered in light of existing policies on targets for federal hiring.

- Would extend the Department of Defense’s Computer/Electronics Accommodations Program (“CAP”) to the civilian agencies, with funding for the expansion to be “sought within” DOD budget.

CAP is an excellent program that provides Defense employees with disabilities with the latest in computer equipment to allow them to do their jobs. The program has a showroom for equipment and serves as a central purchasing point so that federal purchasing power is maximized. Since funding for the program is centralized, individual departments do not have to bear the costs of a very expensive piece of computer equipment for an employee. Last year, the DPC recommended to OMB that we expand CAP to all federal agencies, but the change was not funded in the budget.

- In an otherwise innocuous section on encouraging small business and micro-enterprise among people with disabilities, the draft refers to using “the full buying power of the Federal government” to put people to work.

We would have to consider this in the context of current policy on federal purchases.

- Gives a one-year deadline for Labor and Commerce to develop a monthly measurement of the unemployment rate of people with disabilities.

We would have to investigate how achievable this suggestion is, and budget implications.

**Suggested Talking Point:** Thank you for all the hard work you have put into this package. As you can imagine, the specific points in the draft raise a number of budget and economic issues that we will want to discuss with you. We assume we should work with the President’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities as we pursue these issues further.

DRAFT #6 -- 2/28/97

**Memorandum**

**To:** (List agency heads for the departments and agencies listed in Section 2 of the Order)

**From:** President Clinton

**Subject:** Executive Order Establishing a Goal for the Employment of People with Disabilities

**Date:** (mm/dd/97)

John,  
This is the  
latest draft  
Speed is the  
only other  
person who  
has a  
copy  
EL

The Order accompanying this Memorandum establishes a national goal for the employment of people with disabilities and directs the key executive branch agencies charged therein to set in place the requisite policies and actions to achieve this goal.

People with disabilities are at least twice as likely as people without disabilities to be unemployed. At the end of 1994, 19.5 percent of the population aged 18-64, or 30.7 million people, had a disability. Of these, 14.5 million had a severe limitation and were employed at the rate of only 24.7 percent. The artificially low employment rate of people with disabilities poses a cost to society in excess of \$200 billion annually. This unacceptably low employment rate has been a long standing problem throughout the history of this country, and was a motivating factor in the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990. Additionally, the cost of many government subsidies is growing dramatically with the recent rapid expansion in the disability rolls, such as the Social Security disability benefit programs and workers' compensation insurance programs. More importantly, many individuals trapped in these programs seek to survive on poverty level subsistence and have little opportunity to contribute to and participate in our economy. We must work to change Federal policies and programs.

The Social Security Administration now pays more than \$36 billion a year in disability insurance benefits to 4.5 million disabled workers, and pays \$25 billion a year in Supplemental Security Income (SSI) to more than 5 million low-income people with disabilities. These costs reflect only monetary benefits. When the Medicare and Medicaid costs associated with disability-based cash assistance are factored in, the Federal and State expenditures associated with our income support programs more than double. We know that less than 1 percent of the over 8 million SSI and Social Security Disability Insurance beneficiaries return to work to become income earning, tax paying citizens, and that an alarming percentage of children on disability benefits never transition off the rolls into work as they become adults. High percentages of individuals with disabilities, both on these and other income maintenance rolls as well as others without any supports, can and want to work. However, to enable them to work, it is essential that government and industry work together to remove the remaining significant barriers to employment for people with disabilities, including lack of appropriate health insurance, transportation, long-term services and

supports, and child care. Additionally, sufficient incentives and access to education, rehabilitation and job training services, job placement services, and fair and adequate wages must be available.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, along with other Federal, State and local civil rights laws which prohibit discrimination and mandate equal opportunity in the workforce, have set the framework for people with disabilities to compete effectively and fairly in our labor market. Recent statistics of the Census Bureau suggest a positive impact of the ADA on the employment rate of people with disabilities. Now we must eliminate the current policies and practices that do not encourage employment or actually deter employment and that conflict with the purposes of the ADA and other civil rights laws, and replace them with those which equip more of our people to work.

For example, innovative research and demonstration programs of the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services show that individuals with disabilities who were previously thought incapable of substantial, gainful employment, including individuals with mental retardation and other serious cognitive, sensory, psychiatric and physical disabilities, can in fact work full-time with the availability of natural supports, medical breakthroughs, school to work programs, better vocational rehabilitation and training, and technological innovations. The approach of the 21st century is ushering in powerful changes in technology and telecommunications systems, which are opening up more entrepreneurial and telecommuting opportunities for individuals with disabilities. These programs must be further explored and expanded. However, all of this will only work if the severe economic disincentives, health care barriers, and other barriers to work are replaced with real access to jobs and careers.

The budget recently submitted to Congress contains initiatives that would begin to reverse the trend of increasing dependence on government benefits by increasing the availability of health care insurance and rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities who want to leave the Social Security rolls to enter the workforce. This will be an important first step in the realigning of our Federal policies and programs to consistently support people with disabilities in working. Millions of unemployed and underemployed Americans with disabilities can become productive citizens if government programs and policies are designed to encourage their employment.

**Executive Order**  
[number]  
[month / day], 1997

**Goals 2006 for the Employment of People with Disabilities: A Renewed and Reinvigorated  
Executive Branch Commitment**

This Order establishes a National goal for the employment of people with disabilities and directs the key executive branch agencies charged herein to set in place the requisite policies and actions to achieve this goal.

By virtue of the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, and in order to address the enumerated facts in the accompanying Memorandum and to support the goals articulated in the findings and purpose section of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, it is ordered as follows:

**Section 1. Establishment of National Employment Goal for Individuals with Disabilities.**

There is hereby established as a national goal the reaching of parity in the employment rate for all adult individuals with disabilities as compared to the employment rate of the general adult population. Consistent with this goal, and in accordance with Section 3 of this Order, there is hereby established an interim goal of a 3 percent annual increase in the employment rate of people with disabilities ages 18 to 64, between the date of this Order and July 26, 2006, the 16th anniversary of the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act. As defined herein, a person with a disability is a person with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits at least one major life activity. This definition comes from, and is to be read consistent with, the first prong of the definition of "individual with a disability" that appears in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

**Section 2. Achievement of National Employment Goal.**

(a) The U.S. Department of Labor, Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, Social Security Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Commerce, Department of Treasury, Department of Justice, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Department of Transportation, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Defense, Federal Communications Commission, Office of Personnel Management, National Council on Disability, and President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities shall put policies and programs into place which achieve the national employment goal described in Section 1 of this Executive Order. Furthermore, under the direction of the Secretary of Labor, with the assistance of the Secretaries of Education and Health and Human Services and the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, the above named departments and agencies shall coordinate their efforts and resources to eliminate employment barriers for persons with disabilities, such as discrimination and inadequate access to health care, transportation,

housing, education, vocational rehabilitation and training services. The above named departments and agencies shall also analyze all of their existing programs and policies to determine if changes, modifications and innovations of said programs and policies would encourage and provide incentives for the employment of people with disabilities.

(b) In achieving this National employment goal, the federal government shall become a model employer of people with disabilities. By July 26, 2006, 11 percent of the civilian workforce of each federal agency shall be people with disabilities as defined in this Order. The Office of Personnel Management and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission shall review all federal government personnel laws, regulations and policies and, as appropriate, shall recommend or implement changes necessary to achieve this federal government goal. This review shall include personnel practices and actions including: hiring, promotion, benefits, retirement, workers' compensation, retention, and layoffs and reductions in force. Additionally, the Department of Defense's Computer/Electronics Accommodations Program is expanded to serve all government agencies, and appropriations shall be sought within the Department of Defense's budget to adequately fund the program.

(c) The Social Security Administration and the Department of Treasury, in cooperation with the National Council on Disability and the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, shall design and implement innovative programs that provide economic and other incentives to both employers and individuals with disabilities to encourage persons with disabilities to leave the Social Security and other income maintenance rolls or to avoid enrollment in those rolls altogether.

(d) The Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services, as well as the Small Business Administration, shall develop and carry out strategies for assisting low income individuals, including people with disabilities, to create small businesses and micro enterprises to provide consumer driven personal assistance and other work related supports. This effort shall use the full buying power of the Federal Government to achieve the twin vital aims of putting people on welfare and individuals with disabilities to work.

(e) The Department of Commerce and Small Business Administration shall develop and implement small business and entrepreneurial opportunities for individuals with disabilities that have a significant effect on the ability of such individuals to develop and sustain successful small business and entrepreneurial activities.

(f) All efforts taken by federal departments and agencies under this Section 2 of this Executive Order shall further partnerships and cooperation with public and private sector employers, disability advocacy groups, organized labor, veteran service organizations, and state and local governments whenever such partnerships and cooperation are possible and would promote the employment and gainful economic activities of individuals with disabilities. These efforts should also concentrate on the full array of employment opportunities; including benefits, types of jobs, job promotion, part-time and episodic work, and education and re-training programs.

**Section 3. Measurement of Results.**

(a) No more than one year after the effective date of this Executive Order, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor and the Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce, in cooperation with the Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, National Council on Disability, and the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, shall design and implement a statistically reliable and accurate method to measure the employment rate of working age individuals with disabilities on a monthly basis.

(b) By January 1 of each year this Executive Order is in effect, the Secretary of Labor shall report to the President the steps taken by each department and agency listed in Section 2 to achieve this national goal on a biannual basis. The first report shall be due on July 26, 1998, and it shall articulate the government-wide plan to achieve the goal and the statistical data necessary to measure progress towards the goal. Subsequent biannual reports shall detail progress towards the goal and indicate any adjustments that may be necessary in the overall plan and strategy to achieve the goal by July 26, 2006.

## THE DISABILITY CONSTITUENCY

### DESCRIPTION

The 1994 Census estimates that there are 49 million Americans with disabilities. The community is even larger when including families, friends, and providers that are affected by disability policies. According to Lou Harris polls, during the last two Presidential elections, the disability vote was as follows:

1996 Clinton - 69%, Dole - 23%, Perot - 8%  
1992 Clinton - 50%, Bush - 26%, Perot - 18%.

### KEY GROUPS

Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities  
Justice For All  
The Arc (Mental Retardation)  
National Council on Independent Living  
United Cerebral Palsy  
National Easter Seals Society  
Disability Rights Education Defense Fund  
Family Voices (Parents of children with disabilities)  
National Federation of the Blind  
National Association of the Deaf  
National Mental Health Association  
Bazelon Center (Mental Health)

### MAJOR ISSUES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the landmark civil rights law for people with disabilities, is the 3rd rail of disability politics; and is as central to the disability community as Social Security is to seniors. The other key issues for the community include: Medicare, Medicaid, Special Education (IDEA), home and community based services; and employment, housing, and transportation issues for people with disabilities.

## AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

*"Opportunity is critical to what we have to do as a nation to meet the great challenges we face and to move forward into the next century... We will not allow Americans with disabilities to be kept from realizing their dreams by closed doors or narrow minds."*

President Bill Clinton  
July 26, 1995

President Clinton came to Washington with a plan to put people first by making the government more accountable and accessible to all Americans, including those with disabilities. From the White House to every federal agency, this Administration has demonstrated an unprecedented commitment to address the concerns of Americans with disabilities. The President is committed to supporting the 49 million Americans with disabilities in their efforts to exercise their full rights and responsibilities, to live as independently as possible and to be productive throughout their lives.

### A RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- **Fighting Discrimination:** Under President Clinton, federal agencies have vigorously enforced the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and other critical civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities in schools, workplaces and public areas across the nation. President Clinton strongly opposes attempts to weaken these laws.
- **Protecting Health Care:** The Clinton Administration refuses to go backwards on health care coverage for Americans with disabilities and has rejected proposals to end the Medicaid guarantee to meaningful health benefits for people with disabilities. President Clinton has preserved Medicaid coverage for 6 million persons with disabilities, including 1 million children. Without Medicaid, many families would have to impoverish themselves to pay for a child's medical care, give up their jobs to stay home to care for a child or seek placement in an institution. Medicaid is often the only form of health care available to people with disabilities and allows many children and adults to receive services at home rather than in institutions.

The President also pushed for and signed the Kennedy-Kassebaum legislation, to prohibit insurance companies from denying coverage because of pre-existing conditions, as well as legislation giving parity to mental health services.

- **Improving Education for Children with Disabilities:** President Clinton opposes weakening the guarantee of a right to education for children with disabilities. The Administration is increasing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act's focus on educational results for children and cutting unnecessary paperwork so that more time can be spent on teaching and learning. The President signed legislation increasing funding for IDEA by 25% in the FY1997 budget.

- **Employment of People with Disabilities:** The President's 1998 budget proposes to remove barriers to employment for people with disabilities by making it possible for people to retain health care coverage when they go to work, and creating incentives for rehabilitation services.
- **Increasing Home and Community-Based Programs:** The Clinton Administration's flexibility in granting state waivers has spurred an increase in home and community-based services. As a result, the number of people with developmental or cognitive disabilities served in home and community waiver programs more than doubled to 149,000 in 1995.
- **Support for Families:** President Clinton fought for and enacted the Family and Medical Leave Act making workplaces more accommodating for many families that include a child or adult with a disability.
- **Increasing Access:** By enacting the National Voter Registration Act and the Telecommunications Reform Act, President Clinton has made voting easier and communications technology more accessible for Americans with disabilities.
- **Transportation and Housing:** The Clinton Administration is helping to connect people with disabilities to employment, educational opportunities and a full range of public activities by implementing requirements for accessible bus and rail transit systems, paratransit services and housing.
- **Appointees with Disabilities:** The President has appointed an impressive group of people with disabilities to high-level policy-making positions, including many people prominent in the disability community. Many of these appointments are to key positions that are not directly related to disability issues.

#### **THE CHALLENGES AHEAD:**

- Under President Clinton, federal agencies will continue to vigorously enforce the Americans with Disabilities Act with a balanced approach that emphasizes voluntary compliance wherever possible.
- The President has proposed a balanced budget that maintains meaningful health benefits for people with disabilities.
- President Clinton is committed to expanding employment options for people with disabilities and challenging all Americans to understand that people with disabilities can contribute to this country when given access to the workplace, health care, community services and technology.
- The Clinton Administration will work to maintain a strong Individuals with Disabilities Education Act for children with disabilities and to improve educational results for students with disabilities.

## THE FDR MEMORIAL CONTROVERSY BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A decision memo is pending on whether the President should speak out on the FDR Memorial controversy and recommend to the FDR Commission that another statute be commissioned depicting FDR in his wheelchair.

The President serves as Honorary Chair of the FDR Memorial Commission, which was authorized by Congress in 1955 to oversee the design of the FDR Memorial. During the past two years, the Commission has been criticized because the design does not depict FDR as a man with a disability.

The Commission, chaired by Sen. Inouye (D-HI), has invited the President to speak at the FDR Memorial dedication on May 2, 1997. The disability community, which is dismayed that the statutes at the Memorial fail to depict FDR in his wheelchair, is planning a protest at the ceremony.

The Roosevelt grandchildren are split on the subject. Curtis Roosevelt, in a letter to the Commission said, "Let me say quite emphatically that FDR would have been very disturbed. He was a very private person..." But Anne Roosevelt, on behalf of herself and seven other grandchildren wrote, "Were he alive today we are convinced that he would wish to have the people of this country and the world understand his disability. He would be comfortable, possibly eager, in light of current increased understanding of disability issues, to share awareness ...While we wish no delay in the construction of the proposed memorial we urge adequate inclusion of all facets of the man as he was, not as some think he ought to have been."

Senator Inouye, a disabled veteran from WWII, member of the Commission for the past 25 years, and current Chair of the Commission, has strongly opposed including a sculpture of FDR in a wheelchair. He stated, "I for one would not want to redo history. FDR was Commander-in-Chief of the greatest fighting force in the world and he wanted to be viewed as a strong leader. I would hate to see the man exploited after he was dead." But national opinion leaders, including President Bush, President Ford, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Hugh Sidey, George Will, and Maureen Dowd have voiced strong support for including FDR's disability in the Memorial. A Harris poll indicates that 73% of Americans said the Memorial should include "visible recognition of FDR's disability."

In response to a weekly report from Interior on February 21 alerting him to the controversy, the President wrote, "They should have one in a wheelchair. Should I speak out on it." During the spring of 1996, in response to a memo from Carol Rasco on the subject, the President stated, "I agree...FDR was for continuous forward movement. In today's world, I think he would insist on being shown in his wheelchair." In May 1996, the President spoke out publicly on this issue in a

speech to the President's Committee on Employment For People With Disabilities by stating, "I hope with Christopher Reeve, that as the Roosevelt Memorial becomes a reality, with your efforts to remove the stigma of disability, they'll find a way to make sure that the American people know that this great, great President was great with his disability."

The draft decision memo recommends that the President participates in the Memorial Dedication Ceremony on May 2, but calls upon the FDR Commission to design and incorporate into the Memorial a fourth statute of FDR in his wheelchair by a specific date.

### FDR TALKING POINTS

- o Last May, in a speech to the President's Committee on Employment for People with Disabilities (I know many of you were in attendance), the President spoke out on this subject, saying that he hoped the Memorial would show the American people, "that this great, great President was great with his disability."
- o The FDR Memorial Commission has taken some steps to highlight FDR's disability in the Memorial including; displaying a replica of FDR's wheelchair, displaying two photographs of FDR in his wheelchair in the entry building, and including discussion of FDR's disability in the National Park Service handout literature.
- o But the President is aware of the continued concern both within the disability community and beyond that the Memorial fails to depict FDR in his wheelchair. We look forward to working with you to find a solution to this issue.



PRESIDENT'S  
COMMITTEE  
ON EMPLOYMENT  
OF PEOPLE  
WITH DISABILITIES

To: Vicki Radd  
From: Tony Coelho, Chairman, PCEPD *Schedule: Ben - 434-1050*  
Subject: Meeting with Erskine Bowles  
Date: February 25, 1997

Pursuant to our earlier conversation, this memorandum contains a list of individuals who Marca Bristo and I would like included in the meeting you are helping to organize with the Chief of Staff. Marca Bristo, and the other key appointees with disabilities who have been meeting on disability issues, feel very strongly that all of the individuals on the list should be invited to the meeting with the Chief of Staff. The individuals on this list would greatly contribute to the success and productivity of the meeting though, of course, not everyone needs to speak at the meeting and not everyone will be available to attend because of scheduling conflicts. Obviously, it is particularly important that Marca Bristo, Susan Daniels, Judy Heumann, Paul Steven Miller, Bob Williams and I are in attendance.

I have consulted with Marca, and we are both available to meet with you and the Chief of Staff on Thursday, March 6, 1997. We would like the meeting to begin at 4:00 p.m. but are available at 3:00 p.m. if that would be more convenient for you. Please let me know if either of those times are possible, or if we need to select alternative dates and times.

Thank you for all of your assistance in this matter. I look forward to our meeting.

List of Suggested Meeting Participants

- Marca Bristo, Chair, National Council on Disability
- Speed Davis, Special Assistant to the Chairperson, National Council on Disability
- Tony Coelho, Chairman, President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
- John Lancaster, Executive Director, President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
- Susan Daniels, Associate Commissioner, Office of Disability, Social Security Administration

*Dir. Joe Davis  
Dep. Asst. Sec. of State  
6-EEC-1011*

1331 F Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20004-1107

202-376-6200 (Voice)  
202-376-6219 (FAX)  
202-376-6205 (TDD)

Marie Strahan, Office of Disability, Social Security Administration

Judith Heumann, Assistant Secretary, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services,  
U.S. Department of Education

Howard Moses, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative  
Services, U.S. Department of Education

Thomas Hehir, Director, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education

Fred Schroeder, Commissioner, Rehabilitation Services Administration, U.S. Department of  
Education

Kate Seelman, Director, National Institute on Disability & Rehabilitation Research,  
U.S. Department of Education

Paul Steven Miller, Commissioner, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Andy Imparato, Special Assistant to Commissioner Paul Steven Miller, U.S. Equal Employment  
Opportunity Commission

Bob Williams, Commissioner, Administration on Developmental Disabilities

Liz Savage, Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of  
Justice

Thea Spires, Office of Disability Policy, Office of the Secretary, Department of Housing and  
Urban Development

Michael Winter, Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Transportation, U.S. Department of  
Transportation

Jack Catlin, Access Board



PRESIDENT'S  
COMMITTEE  
ON EMPLOYMENT  
OF PEOPLE  
WITH DISABILITIES

*F.U. -  
Disabilities -  
General*

To: Vicki Radd  
From: Tony Coelho, Chairman, PCEPD  
Subject: Meeting with Erskine Bowles  
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Marca Bristo, Chair, National Council on Disability

Speed Davis, Special Assistant to the Chairperson, National Council on Disability 272-2004

Tony Coelho, Chairman, President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities

John Lancaster, Executive Director, President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities

Susan Daniels, Associate Commissioner, Office of Disability, Social Security Administration

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## COMMUNICATING WITH AND ABOUT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), other legislation, and the efforts of many disability organizations have begun to improve accessibility in buildings, increase access to education, open employment opportunities, and develop realistic portrayals of persons with disabilities in television programming and motion pictures. However, more progress needs to be made. Many people still view persons with disabilities as individuals to be pitied, feared, or ignored. These attitudes may arise from discomfort with individuals who are perceived to be different or simply from a lack of information. Listed below are some suggestions on how to relate and communicate with and about people with disabilities. We must look beyond the disability and look at the individual's ability and capability—the things that make each of us unique and worthwhile.

### WORDS

Positive language empowers. When writing or speaking about people with disabilities, it is important to put the person first. Group designations such as "the blind," "the deaf" or "the disabled" are inappropriate because they do not reflect the individuality, equality, or dignity of people with disabilities. Following are examples of positive and negative phrases. Note that the positive phrases put the person first.

#### AFFIRMATIVE PHRASES

person with mental retardation  
 person who is blind, person who is visually impaired  
 person with a disability  
 person who is deaf, person who is hard of hearing  
 person who has multiple sclerosis  
 person with cerebral palsy  
 person with epilepsy, person with seizure disorder  
 person who uses a wheelchair  
 person who has muscular dystrophy  
 physically disabled  
 person without a disability  
 unable to speak, uses synthetic speech  
 seizure

#### NEGATIVE PHRASES

retarded, mentally defective  
 the blind  
 the disabled, handicapped  
 suffers a hearing loss, the deaf  
 afflicted by MS  
 CP victim  
 epileptic  
 confined or restricted to a wheelchair  
 stricken by MD  
 crippled, lame, deformed  
 normal person (implies that the person with a disability isn't normal)  
 dumb, mute  
 fit

*File -  
disability -  
general*



successful, productive

has overcome his/her disability; courageous (when it implies the person has courage because of having a disability)

person with psychiatric disability

crazy, nuts

person who no longer lives in an institution

the deinstitutionalized

says she/he has a disability

admits she has a disability

### ACTIONS

Outlined below are the "Ten Commandments of Etiquette for Communicating with People with Disabilities" to help you in communicating with persons with disabilities.

1. When talking with a person with a disability, speak directly to that person rather than through a companion or sign language interpreter.
2. When introduced to a person with a disability, it is appropriate to offer to shake hands. People with limited hand use or who wear an artificial limb can usually shake hands. (Shaking hands with the left hand is an acceptable greeting.)
3. When meeting a person who is visually impaired, always identify yourself and others who may be with you. When conversing in a group, remember to identify the person to whom you are speaking.
4. If you offer assistance, wait until the offer is accepted. Then listen to or ask for instructions.
5. Treat adults as adults. Address people who have disabilities by their first names only when extending the same familiarity to all others. (Never patronize people who use wheelchairs by patting them on the head or shoulder.)
6. Leaning on or hanging on to a person's wheelchair is similar to leaning or hanging on to a person and is generally considered annoying. The chair is part of the personal body space of the person who uses it.
7. Listen attentively when you're talking with a person who has difficulty speaking. Be patient and wait for the person to finish, rather than correcting or speaking for the person. If necessary, ask short questions that require short answers, a nod or shake of the head. Never pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so. Instead, repeat what you have understood and allow the person to respond. The response will clue you in and guide your understanding.
8. When speaking with a person who uses a wheelchair or a person who uses crutches, place yourself at eye level in front of the person to facilitate the conversation.
9. To get the attention of a person who is deaf, tap the person on the shoulder or wave your hand. Look directly at the person and speak clearly, slowly, and expressively to determine if the person can read your lips. Not all people who are deaf can read lips. For those who do lip read, be sensitive to their needs by placing yourself so that you face the light source and keep hands, cigarettes and food away from your mouth when speaking.
10. Relax. Don't be embarrassed if you happen to use accepted, common expressions such as "See you later," or "Did you hear about that?" that seem to relate to a person's disability. Don't be afraid to ask questions when you're unsure of what to do.

The information for this fact sheet came from three sources: The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities; *Guidelines to Reporting and Writing About People with Disabilities*, produced by the Media Project, Research and Training Center on Independent Living, 4089 Dole, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045; and *Ten Commandments of Etiquette for Communicating with People with Disabilities*, National Center for Access Unlimited, 155 North Wacker Drive, Suite 315, Chicago, IL 60606



3/4 Disability Phone Call

MB + TC - met w/ VR

Report - last July - "Achieving Independence"

How List to move forward on these items

Bring more p. into Admin.

Emp w/ econ emp w/ VR

Didn't get long in SOTU!



interagency  
may w/ - EO - to

set goals / benchmarks

Appointments -

Admin  
w/ A

- health care item  
(Diana)

- other issues -

understanding -  
how deeply con-  
cerned.

- welfare reform
- children's tft
- medical /  
medicaid
- transportation

Diana Fortuna 03/14/97 05:11:30 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP  
cc:  
Subject: From Vicki Radd

I will have to find a copy of the package to confirm my suspicion that there is nothing in it about disability. Let me know if you want to respond to this instead of me.

----- Forwarded by Diana Fortuna/OPD/EOP on 03/14/97 05:09 PM -----

 Victoria Radd  
03/14/97 04:36:09 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Angus S. King/WHO/EOP, Diana Fortuna/OPD/EOP  
cc:  
Subject: Re: NEXTEA 

Diana & Angus --

Can you let me know about whether there is anything in this package regarding people with disabilities??

Thanks,  
V.

*File  
Disabilities generally*

Disabilities - generally

Diana Fortuna 03/16/97 02:02:39 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Victoria Radd/WHO/EOP  
cc: Angus S. King/WHO/EOP, Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP  
bcc:  
Subject: Re: NEXTEA 

No, there is nothing in the NEXTEA document about people with disabilities. (The appointees we met with would say that this is a good example of what they were complaining about.)

Victoria Radd

 Victoria Radd  
03/14/97 04:36:09 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Angus S. King/WHO/EOP, Diana Fortuna/OPD/EOP  
cc:  
Subject: Re: NEXTEA 

Diana & Angus --

Can you let me know about whether there is anything in this package regarding people with disabilities??

Thanks,  
V.



## NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY

*An independent federal agency working with the President and the Congress to increase the inclusion, independence, and empowerment of all Americans with disabilities.*

January 31, 1997

Vicki Radd  
Chief of Staff-Chief of Staff  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Vicki:

It was a pleasure meeting with you last Tuesday to discuss the further involvement of persons with disabilities in the President's agenda. We would like to recapitulate some of the important points of that meeting.

As we explained, we wanted to meet with you as part of the follow-up to work being done under the leadership of the National Council on Disability (NCD). In July of 1996, the NCD published a report, Achieving Independence: The Challenge for the 21st Century, containing over 120 recommendations for improving the lives of persons with disabilities. The recommendations were generated by over 300 grassroots persons with disabilities gathered in Dallas, Texas, in April, 1996. The report was presented to President Clinton in the Oval Office on the Sixth Anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act on July 25, 1996. Upon receipt of the report, the President reiterated his commitment to furthering the goals of independence, inclusion and empowerment for persons with disabilities.

Following the publication of Achieving Independence, NCD has been facilitating a series of meetings of administration appointees with disabilities to review those recommendations, and to prioritize them into a few key action agendas that will further the President's goals. Further, these meetings have focused on the appointment of persons with disabilities to key positions within the administration to facilitate the achievement of those goals.

As a group, the appointees have given the highest priority to the issue of employment and economic empowerment for persons with disabilities. The appointees feel strongly that a Presidential directive calling for the establishment of a national employment goal for persons with disabilities and related initiatives are imperative to meet the President's stated goals for persons with disabilities: The unemployment statistics for persons with disabilities show that we, as a society, have a long way to go toward enabling access for them to the world of work. The government sends confusing messages to persons with disabilities about work by sponsoring programs intended to promote work, while at the same time, setting up both legal and practical barriers which impede efforts to return to work.

To achieve the President's goals, it is critical that a person with a disability be placed in a key policy position within the White House. Even though the President has appointed many persons

with disabilities to high level positions in the various departments, many key decisions are made at the highest levels within the White House where there is currently no person with a disability who is knowledgeable about issues of the disability community. As a result, the interests of persons with disabilities are either missing in the policy discussions or are inserted almost as an afterthought--sometimes too late to be effective. The President thereby misses valuable opportunities to incorporate into his programs the goals he has established for persons with disabilities.

It is also essential to the achievement of these goals for a commitment to be made by the President and the Cabinet that all agencies look like America including the appointment to high level policy and management positions of persons who understand disability issues. Your help in securing this commitment will be appreciated. The Administration should be a model employer in its outreach and recruitment practices for all minorities, including persons with disabilities.

We are prepared to work cooperatively with you to accomplish these three tasks. There are several steps that can be taken to move us toward our goals.

We believe that meetings between the appointees with disabilities and Erskine Bowles and Bruce Reed are critical to our success. Any help you can give to facilitate those meetings will be appreciated.

We want to work with you on language for the State of the Union speech demonstrating the President's commitment to identifying initiatives supportive of increased employment opportunities and economic empowerment for persons with disabilities. We understand that Judy Heumann, an Assistant Secretary in the Department of Education, has been working with Secretary Riley's office on this. You will find attached the language they are proposing.

We stand ready to work with you to identify one or more initiatives supporting employment and economic empowerment for persons with disabilities that could be part of an Executive Order issued as a follow up to the speech.

Marca is making Speed Davis, a member of the NCD staff, available to work with the Presidential Personnel Office to coordinate the recruitment of persons with disabilities. Although he is not yet physically over there, he has already begun collecting resumes and identifying open positions.

Finally, we would like to pursue your suggestion about meeting with Elaine Kamarck in Vice-President Gore's office.

It is vital that the above items be addressed quickly. Important policy and personnel decisions are being made every day and the sooner we are able to ensure the voice of persons with disabilities in those discussions, the more likely we are to be able to effectively integrate them into the President's agenda.

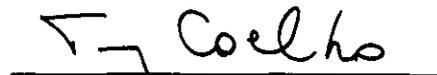
We are committed to working with you and other members of the President's staff in the spirit of support and collaboration. We feel that the disability community is ready for constructive change through the Reinventing Government initiative or other mechanisms. We offer our assistance to ensure that decisions are made with information and insight.

Thank you for meeting with us. We look forward to working with you in the second Clinton administration.

Sincerely,



Marca Bristo  
Chairperson  
National Council on Disability



Tony Coelho  
Chairman  
President's Committee on Employment of  
People with Disabilities

**Suggestion for State of the Union Address:**

We know that most disabled Americans can work and want to work. They would be proud to contribute their fair share of taxes.

Let's increase the number of disabled people in our workforce -- it's vital to the health and well being of our nation's economy.

We can work together to take three steps:

**One:** Let's give states the option of extending Medicaid to disabled workers who need it to pay for personal assistance and other supports that are necessary for them to find and keep meaningful jobs.

**Two:** Let's set a national ten year goal for employment of people with disabilities and then let's develop strategies to achieve them.

**And Three:** Let's track the job prospects for disabled people each month through the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Disabilities

- 1. Pat Sitzer 301 - Leadership conf.
- 2. Coelho / Brito

for cut sit → M4 w/ ETS  
 look to some of these concerns → Deny of support as PT pers  
 -

- Bill White - SPL
- Diana Ferreira -

Vicki  
 ESTERNE

Amico/ME  
 MARIA  
 ? - KAMARCK-FED EMP.  
 NASH

MARCA -

/ SPEED

TONY COELHO -

2) THEIR MTG -

[CONFIRM TONY IS COMING.]

PRE-MEET w/ SPEED TO GET SENSE OF ISSUES -  
 WILL DO TALKING POINTS

DO WE HAVE SOME INITIATIVES  
 WE CAN TALK ABOUT?

- ANSWER AT MTG.

→ Letter outlining some of issues -

- Report of SP of appointees - after removal-related.

Anniv of ADA??

v. Radd - Disabilities community

} Big patron in CRasco.

They don't have place to play in - T new.

Coelho - (close to AB) - Pres. Chronon  
Pines comm

Marca Bristo - Chronon National Council of Disabilities.

In particular - employment issue

(shunted over to POL - but  
going on there).

Kamarch -

emp ideas in last part.

New step - BOR, EKamarch, VR, EK.

mtg.

Diana

ADA component -

"Perfect for me."

Chuck Ruff ??

They also have Clinton appointee's center  
interested in quantifying.

CALL MATTHEW BRISTO

Excuse  
do  
drop-by

cond.  
w/

Taser  
Gold



## NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY

*An independent federal agency working with the President and the Congress to increase the inclusion, independence, and empowerment of all Americans with disabilities.*

January 31, 1997

Vicki Radd  
Chief of Staff-Chief of Staff  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

cc Elena  
- Diana

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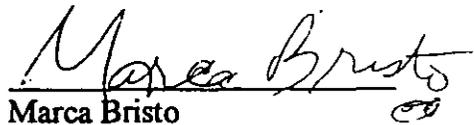
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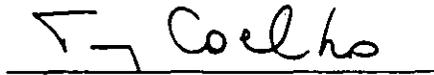
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