

During their 1992 campaign, Bill Clinton and Al Gore identified independence, empowerment, and inclusion as the themes that would guide their disability policy. In the past six years the Clinton/Gore Administration has made great strides in meeting these policy goals. They have set the tone for national policy by including many people with disabilities in high-ranking positions in the Administration. The Clinton/Gore Administration also acknowledged the contributions of one of America's greatest citizens with disabilities, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, by supporting an addition to the FDR Memorial that will portray President Roosevelt in his wheelchair.

When members of Congress attempted to weaken the civil rights laws that protect Americans with disabilities, President Clinton and Vice President Gore articulated their steadfast opposition to weakening amendments and worked to increase funding levels for enforcement. Most recently, President Clinton and Vice President Gore successfully fought back destructive amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which members of Congress tried to attach to this year's appropriations bills. President Clinton and Vice President Gore have also fought hard to protect Medicare and Medicaid and to sustain Social Security benefits for people with disabilities. They have helped to address the needs of families with disabled children or adults by supporting the Family and Medical Leave Act. In September, the Clinton/Gore Administration proudly announced new regulations that will make over-the-road buses accessible in the 21st century.

Although Congress resisted the President's attempt to ensure that every American has access to quality health care, including provisions for personal attendant services, this year the President worked with the Health Care Financing Administration to urge State Medicaid Directors to provide long term services and supports in the most integrated setting and support community-based alternatives to institutions. The President also instructed his Administration to work with Senators Jeffords and Kennedy to develop a workable Work Incentives Improvement Act, which would give people with disabilities the option to seek employment and retain access to quality health insurance coverage. The President included this policy in his short-list of priorities for the Omnibus budget agreement, only to have it rejected by Congress, and will continue to seek its passage next year. Although the President and Vice President look forward to continued work on behalf of people with disabilities, they have laid a powerful foundation with their past and current achievements.