

**STATEMENT ON FINAL PASSAGE  
OF THE  
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

**SENATOR BOB DOLE**

**JULY 12, 1990**

MR. PRESIDENT, I RISE  
TODAY IN SUPPORT OF FINAL  
PASSAGE OF THE CONFERENCE  
REPORT ON THE AMERICANS  
WITH DISABILITIES ACT.

I HAVE SUPPORTED THE  
ADA BECAUSE I BELIEVE IT IS A  
JUST AND FAIR BILL WHICH WILL  
BRING EQUALITY TO THE LIVES



OF ALL AMERICANS WITH  
DISABILITIES. OUR MESSAGE TO  
AMERICA TODAY IS THAT  
INEQUALITY AND PREDJUDICE  
WILL NO LONGER BE TOLERATED.  
OUR MESSAGE TO PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES IS THAT 'YOUR TIME  
HAS COME.'

THE AMERICANS WITH  
DISABILITIES ACT WILL EMPOWER  
43 MILLION AMERICANS WITH

DISABILITIES TO EXERCISE THEIR  
RIGHTS AND PARTICIPATE IN THE  
MAINSTREAM OF AMERICAN LIFE.  
THE AMERICANS WITH  
DISABILITIES ACT WILL ENRICH  
OUR NATION BY SUPPORTING  
THE TALENTS, SKILLS AND  
ABILITIES OF A MINORITY GROUP  
WHICH HAS UP UNTIL NOW BEEN  
ON THE SIDELINES. UNDER THE  
ADA, WE ARE ALL WINNERS.



I AM OPTIMISTIC THAT THIS  
LEGISLATION WILL SET AN  
IMPORTANT TONE AS WE ENTER  
A NEW DECADE. JUST AS WE  
HAVE SEEN THE WALLS GO  
DOWN IN EASTERN EUROPE, WE  
ARE NOW WITNESSING SOME OF  
OUR OWN WALLS CRUMBLING—  
—THE WALLS OF PREJUDICE,  
ISOLATION, DISCRIMINATION  
AND SEGREGATION. WE HAVE

**PAID DEARLY FOR OUR POLICIES  
OF THE PAST —**

**DISCRIMINATION COSTS BOTH IN  
HUMAN TERMS AND FINANCIAL  
TERMS. KEEPING PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES OUT OF THE  
WORKFORCE AND DEPENDENT  
ON GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES IS  
A POLICY OF THE PAST.**

**LET'S CONSIDER WHAT THIS  
LEGISLATION WILL YIELD IN**



**TERMS OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. IN  
TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT — IT  
WILL OFFER ACCESSIBLE  
ENVIRONMENTS AND  
REASONABLE ACCOMODATIONS  
TO EMPOWER PERSONS WITH  
DISABILITIES TO UTILIZE THEIR  
FULL POTENTIAL IN  
STRENGTHENING THE  
WORKFORCE.**

TRANSPORTATION IS THE  
CRITICAL LINK TO EMPLOYMENT.  
THIS BILL WILL RESULT IN  
ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC  
TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM  
THE WORK SITE.

LIVING INDEPENDENTLY AND  
WITH DIGNITY MEANS  
OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE  
FULLY IN EVERY ACTIVITY OF  
DAILY LIFE, BE IT GOING TO



THE MOVIES, DINING IN A  
RESTAURANT, CHEERING AT A  
BASEBALL GAME,  
COMMUNICATING BY PHONE OR  
GOING TO THE DOCTOR. THE  
ADA OFFERS SUCH OPPORTUNITY  
TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

THE TOUGH BUT FAIR  
ENFORCEMENT REMEDIES OF  
ADA, WHICH PARALLEL THE CIVIL  
RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, ARE

TIME—TESTED INCENTIVES FOR  
COMPLIANCE AND  
DISINCENTIVES FOR  
DISCRIMINATION. THE  
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EFFORTS  
MANDATED IN ADA WILL  
SUPPORT TWO EFFORTS CRITICAL  
TO THE MISSION OF ADA: 1)  
THEY WILL INFORM PERSONS  
WITH DISABILITIES ABOUT THEIR  
RIGHTS UNDER THE LAW AND 2)



**PROVIDE THE NECESSARY  
SUPPORT TO BUSINESS AND  
INDUSTRY AS THEY UNDERTAKE  
THE IMPORTANT JOB OF  
IMPLEMENTING THE LAW.**

**WE HAVE INCLUDED IN  
THIS LEGISLATION ALL PEOPLE  
WITH ALL DISABILITIES, NO  
MATTER HOW MISUNDERSTOOD  
BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT THIS BILL  
IS ABOUT —— REPLACING**

MISUNDERSTANDING WITH  
UNDERSTANDING. WE HAVE NOT  
SAID THAT YOU HAVE TO  
EMPLOY A PERSON IN A JOB  
THEY REALLY CANNOT DO, OR  
IN A SETTING WHERE THEY WILL  
POSE A DANGER TO THE HEALTH  
OR SAFETY OF OTHER PEOPLE.  
WHAT WE HAVE SAID IS THAT  
THESE DECISIONS MUST BE MADE  
ABOUT INDIVIDUALS, NOT



**GROUPS AND MUST BE BASED  
ON FACTS, NOT FEARS.**

**WE HAVE HAD A PATCH  
WORK QUILT UP UNTIL NOW —  
— AN INCONSISTENT AND  
PIECEMEAL APPROACH TO  
DISABILITY POLICY. TODAY WE  
MOVE TO EMBRACE THE MOST  
COMPREHENSIVE CIVIL RIGHTS  
LEGISLATION OUR NATION HAS  
EVER SEEN. TODAY WE MOVE**

TO PUT OLD STEREOTYPES AND  
ATTITUDES BEHIND US —— WHERE  
THEY BELONG.

NO INDIVIDUAL IN AMERICA  
IS MORE COMMITTED TO EQUAL  
OPPORTUNITY THAN PRESIDENT  
BUSH. HIS UNFLAGGING  
SUPPORT OF THE ADA AND HIS  
CONTINUED EAGERNESS TO SIGN  
THIS LEGISLATION INTO LAW  
ARE EVIDENCE OF UNPARALLELED



**LEADERSHIP IN THE WHITE HOUSE  
ON BEHALF OF PERSONS WITH  
DISABILITIES. WE ARE PROUD  
THAT WE HAVE REACHED THIS  
JUNCTURE, AND CONFIDENTLY  
SEND THIS LEGISLATION TO THE  
PRESIDENT'S DESK.**

**IN 1964 THIS BODY  
DECLARED DISCRIMINATION  
ILLEGAL AND LAID A SOLID  
CIVIL RIGHTS FOUNDATION FOR**

OUR NATION. TODAY WE BUILD  
UPON THAT FOUNDATION WITH  
THIS LANDMARK LEGISLATION  
PROVIDING CIVIL RIGHTS  
PROTECTIONS FOR THE 43  
MILLION AMERICANS WITH  
DISABILITIES. I AM PROUD OF  
THIS BILL, AND I LOOK  
FORWARD TO IT BECOMING THE  
LAW OF THE LAND.



**done on this bill.**