

May 25, 1989

TO: Senator Dole
FROM: Mo West
SUBJECT: ADA Update

Introduction: The ADA was introduced in the Senate (S.933) and the House (H.R. 2273) on May 9, 1989. The Senate sponsor is Senator Harkin with 36 cosponsors. The House sponsor is Rep. Coehlo with 106 cosponsors.

History: In April, 1988, the ADA was originally introduced. It was developed by the National Council on Disability, an independent agency with 15 members appointed by President Reagan. The legislation had many cosponsors (including you). A hearing was held in September, 1988, but no action was taken in the 100th Congress.

Justin Dart, with the endorsement of Chairman Major Owens of the Subcommittee on Select Education, created the Task Force on the Rights and Empowerment of Individuals with Disabilities in May, 1988. Throughout the remaining months of 1988, he conducted forums in every State, some territories, and Puerto Rico, to collect testimony with examples of how individuals with disabilities have been discriminated against in the areas covered by the legislation. Testimony was received from 9,000 individuals and grassroots support for the legislation was mobilized.

1988 Republican Platform -- This platform contains language that reflects and endorses the intent of the ADA.

President Bush: President Bush endorsed the concept of the ADA during the fall campaign. Currently, Executive Branch agencies are now analyzing the bill. The White House anticipates a final position by September, 1988.

The Senate: Senator Harkin anticipates speedy passage. Three hearings were held this month. Senator Hatch urged that the White House be given until June 19, 1989, to react to the ADA. If it does not, he indicated that the Committee on Labor and Human Resources would go forward without its formal input. Senators Harkin and Kennedy agreed to Senator Hatch's suggestion.

The House: The ADA has been referred to four Committees -- Education and Labor, Energy and Commerce, Judiciary and Transportation and Public Works. Mr. Michel asked Mr. Coehlo to work with him to develop a bipartisan bill. Mr. Coehlo has agreed. The first meeting between Republicans and Democrats is scheduled for May 31, 1989. Mr. Michel plans to meet with representatives of the disability community and to arrange meetings with the business community.

The Business Community: The Chamber of Commerce sponsored a briefing for business organizations on May 5, 1989. It is anticipated that small working groups on different issues will be established to work with Congressional staff. The Chamber and various other business groups are meeting with me today to discuss specific concerns with the ADA -- I will relay the concerns after our meeting.

The Disability Community: This community has become very organized since the Justin Dart forums. It is aggressively seeking rapid passage of the bill. It appears, however, that there is need for greater understanding, among the members of the groups both inside and outside of Washington, D.C. as to the specific provisions in the ADA and their implications for the private sector.



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