



COALITION OF TEXANS WITH DISABILITIES

FAIR HOUSING ACT BANS DISCRIMINATION

The Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 (HR 1158), prohibiting housing discrimination against people with physical and mental disabilities, has passed and been signed into law. The 1968 Fair Housing Act barred housing discrimination on the basis of race, color, or religion, and was amended in 1974 to prohibit discrimination based on sex.

For the first time, the new legislation makes it illegal to deny housing to people with physical and mental disabilities. According to the Act, tenants must be allowed to make reasonable modifications to the premises, and existing building rules must be modified within reason so that disabled individuals can enjoy the premises. While the Act does allow tenants to make access changes, these must be undertaken at the tenant's own expense, and an amendment requires tenants to return a dwelling to its original, inaccessible condition when they leave if they have made access modifications.

Effective two and a half years after enactment, the bill requires that certain new multifamily construction meet minimal standards to allow access and use by people with disabilities. The requirements cover only multifamily housing with four or more units and only ground-level units in complexes that do not have elevators. These new standards

require that the public use portions of the building be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. The doors must be wide enough to allow passage into and within the premises by persons in wheelchairs. All premises should contain an accessible route into and through the building. The light switches, electrical outlets and other environmental controls are to be in accessible locations. Reinforcements must be built into bathroom walls to allow later installation of grab bars. Kitchens and bathroom should be usable by individuals in wheelchairs.

The bill specifies that compliance with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard for accessible buildings "suffices to satisfy" the requirements described above. It also states that the Act does not pre-empt state legislation with stricter requirements than provided in the Federal legislation. HR 1158 would authorize the Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) to enforce the Federal fair housing law.

The state of Texas is considering legislation regarding the availability and development of public housing. The need for affordable housing which is accessible to persons with disabilities will need to be addressed by the Task Force on Affordable Housing, co-chaired by Senator Parmer and Representative Hinajosa.

WE THE PEOPLE...ADVOCATES UNITE!

CTD 11TH ANNUAL CONVENTION, OCTOBER 21-23

CALL FOR DIRECT ACTION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FRANK LOZANO

CTD membership involvement at our convention establishes direct steps toward changes in policy and practice. Only when we change our self-image and our image in society can we gain the respect necessary to enlighten public opinion and to reverse public policy. All of us benefit directly from the experience of direct action to advance our civil rights. Compared to other minority groups, we are at the absolute beginning of our civil rights struggle, living in a world where our brothers and sisters with disabilities are closed off from developing cultural pride based on our abilities.

We are faced with life and death issues which we must learn to address effectively. Government cutbacks in social services impact us dramatically and many of us must choose between buying food and necessary health care. When certain politicians and bureaucrats say that they would accommodate our needs if they could afford it, they fail to calculate the real cost in dollars and human loss of keeping us on welfare or locking us in institutions. In this way our lives are devalued rather than being empowered toward achieving self-determination in a world which simply and reasonably accommodates our physical differences.

We the people, advocates united for direct action, we must share our dignities and strengths in order to build our civil rights movement. By organizing locally and joining wider-

based efforts, we grow in collective power and knowledge of ways to achieve social change.

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER

21-22nd. **ARC Legislative Forum, Austin.** Contact: Beth Rezwini at 800/252-9729.

21-23rd. **CTD Annual Convention, "We the People... Advocates Unite!" El Paso.** Contact: Carole Patterson at 512/451-2807.

25-28th. **Adult Protective Services Conference, "Policy, Theory, Practice," San Antonio.** Contact: Sharon Pinkston at 512/337-3309.

26th. **San Antonio Candidates Forum, 5:30-8 pm, Rubles Center.** Contact: SAILS at 512/734-9931 (V/TTY).

27th. **ViaTrans Forum, Rubles Center, San Antonio.** Contact: SAILS at 512/734-9931 (V/TTY).

28th. **Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons Employment Awards Conference, Austin.** Contact: Cindy Counts at 512/445-8741.

28th. **Health and Human Services Issues for 1989, "Reducing Infant Mortality in Texas," Austin.** Contact: March of Dimes, Maria Kahn at 214/869-0595.

NOVEMBER

10-12th. **Texas Association of Adults and Children with Learning Disabilities 24th Annual Conference, El Paso.** Contact: TAACLD-El Paso at 915/591-8080.

11-13th. **Texas Alliance for Human Needs, "Human Needs for Today and Tomorrow," Austin.** Contact: TAHN at 512/474-5019.

NATIONAL ADVOCATES ADDRESS CONVENTION

DAVID CAPOZZI is the National Advocacy Director of the Paralyzed Veterans Association (PVA), which promotes and protects the legal rights of persons with disabilities. Prior to assuming the duties of Advocacy Director, Capozzi served for 2 years as an Associate in the Advocacy program where he was responsible for independent living, social security, and transportation issues. Capozzi was PVA's lead negotiator on a Federal advisory committee whose task was to negotiate regulations to implement the Air Carrier Access Act of 1986. Capozzi will address Federal legislation at CTD's annual convention.

JIM DIXON is Associate Director of Project Vote, a Washington DC based, nonprofit voter registration and education organization. Dixon has set up and supervised voter registration drives in a dozen states. These efforts have resulted in the registration of more than 150,000 disabled and non-disabled citizens. Dixon, who is legally blind, is also well-known for his attempt to sail alone across the Atlantic in the summer of 1987. At the convention, Dixon will give the keynote address and conduct a workshop on getting disabled persons to exercise their vote.

EDITOR'S NOTES

- As you may have noticed, we have changed the format of the newsletters to better accommodate our visually impaired readers.
- We seek submissions from our readers regarding issues and events around the state. What are your Mayor's Committees doing? What are your independent living centers doing? Send us articles and photos.

MARY JANE OWEN will close our convention as the challenge speaker. Owen, Director of Disability Focus, Inc. and former staff person for the President's Committee on Employment of Persons with Disabilities, writes and lectures extensively on creative policy options, attitudes and programs which can help America's 36 million disabled citizens realize their potential. Owen has been honored as a scholar by the National Rehabilitation Association and as an outstanding writer by the National Association of Government Communicators.

OTHER ACTIVITIES...

- A pre-conference workshop on Technology Access and Awareness will be offered on Friday from 1:30-4:30 pm at the Westin Paso del Norte in El Paso. This free workshop will instruct professionals and consumers in integrating technology into service delivery and will include limited hands-on computer work. Registration for the pre-conference workshop will be limited to 60 participants on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Saturday evening there will be an optional excursion to the Juarez dog races. The cost of the trip will be \$7, which will cover the cost of transportation, seating in the Jockey Club and one margarita. Dinner is not included but can be found for approximately \$3 to \$6. The racetrack is accessible to wheelchair-users. While the chartered bus is not accessible, private accessible transportation will be arranged for those requesting it.

NATIONAL BRIEFS

TECHNOLOGY ACCESS

Congress approved a bill authorizing grants to states for technology-related assistance for people with disabilities. The Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act, S. 2561, will facilitate greater use of assistive devices by providing access to equipment, disseminating information, and training disabled persons to use available technology. The bill would authorize \$9 million in fiscal year 1989 to assist states in their efforts to develop and implement consumer responsive statewide technology programs. Grants will be distributed to states by the US Department of Education to promote coordination and cooperation among existing Federal and state programs. Ten grants of \$500,000-\$1 million will be awarded in the first year, twenty the second year, and the remaining states will enter in the third year. Texas' Governor Clements has not yet designated a state agency to pursue the Federal grant.

INSTITUTE ON DEAFNESS

Both the House and the Senate have passed legislation calling for the creation of a National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders within the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The House version of the legislation requires the new institute to establish a data system to collect and analyze information on hearing and communicative disorders and to establish an information clearinghouse. The House and Senate versions of the bill are similar; their differences will be reconciled in a conference committee.

NEW RSA HEAD RESIGNS

Sue Suter has resigned as Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). Suter, who assumed the position in April after the forced resignation of Justin Dart, leaves the post to serve as director of Illinois' Department of Public Aid. No word yet on who will replace her.

TRANSIT STUDY FUNDED

The National Easter Seal Society has received \$1 million of a proposed \$3 million from Congress for a 30 month study of public transit for disabled people. This award follows the release of a study by the American Public Transit Association (APTA) which states that the increasing number of elderly and disabled persons will place a strain on mass transit in the future. Officials from Easter Seals contend that the project they will conduct with the grant money is necessary to identify the transportation needs of persons with disabilities, develop training for transit workers and disabled transit users, and to improve access for people with disabilities. ADAPT (American Disabled for Accessible Public Transit) advocates for 100% wheelchair accessible mainline transit; its members dispute the need for another study, calling it a subterfuge and a delay tactic. APTA, which favors allowing local transit authorities to decide how best to address the needs of disabled riders, supports the study.

VA GETS CABINET STATUS

Legislation designating the Veterans Administration (VA) as an Executive Department with full cabinet status has been passed by both branches of Congress.

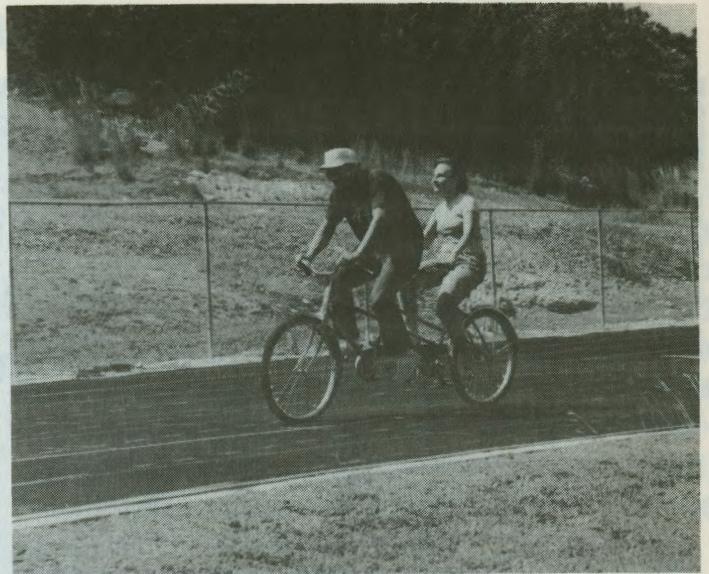
MASSACHUSETTS GUARANTEES COVERAGE

An innovative law will guarantee health insurance coverage for all Massachusetts' residents by 1992. Overseen by the newly created Department of Medical Services, the program relies on incentives for businesses to insure their employees. The program is only weeks old, yet nearly 5000 low income and disabled people are already receiving benefits from Commonwealth. An estimated 2.5 million Texas residents are without any form of health care insurance.

AIR CARRIER ACCESS

The Air Carrier Access Act of 1986 is intended to prohibit airline discrimination against travelers with disabilities. During a six month period in 1987, a negotiating team composed of disability organizations including CIL (National Council on Independent Living) and PVA (Paralyzed Veterans Association), negotiated with the Department of Transportation (DOT) about the content of regulations formulated to implement the new law. The negotiations broke down due to substantial disagreements on the part of DOT, and the negotiating team never approved the proposed regulations which were published for comment.

The proposed air carrier access rules have met criticism from the disabled community. These regulations do not adequately address the issue of seating in rows with emergency exits, nor do they make wheelchairs and medical equipment priority baggage. During the comment period which expired September 20th, the rules were not made available in braille. Word has that the comment period will be extended into December, and that the proposed regulations will be made accessible to blind persons.



BOARD MEMBER BETTY HUFFMAN TRIES THE TWO PERSON APPROACH TO FUNDRAISING.

MAINE WINS PCA LAW

Working cooperatively, the Maine Association of Handicapped Persons (MHAP), Alpha One and the Maine Commission of Independent Living saw successful passage of a new Personal Care Assistance Bill. The new bill, effective in August, raises the daytime rate of personal care assistants (PCA's) from \$5 per hour to \$7 and the nighttime rate from \$8 to \$12. The law also includes funds for vacation, sick and holiday pay, as well as health insurance benefits for PCA's. The new bill addresses the health needs of disabled persons by allowing severely disabled persons gaining full-time employment the opportunity to purchase Medicaid through a sliding fee scale based on their income.

BENNETT STEPS DOWN

Education Secretary William Bennett, well known for pushing a rigorous academic agenda for the nation's schools, has resigned. His replacement is former president of Texas Tech University, Lauro Cavazos. The Senate unanimously confirmed Cavazos, the first Hispanic to ever serve as a cabinet member.



VOLUNTEERS RON LUCEY AND RON CRANSTON ACT LIKE THEY'RE WORKING HARD.

AUSTIN FUN RUN HELD

On Austin's first truly autumn-like morning about fifty people gathered to walk, roll, jog, and bike in CTD's annual Fun Run. A chilly wind blew, keeping the participants from overheating in the sunshine. Donations of bagels from Humble Bagel and soft drinks from Coca-Cola of Austin were appreciated by all who attended. Many thanks to St. Stephen's track and the many volunteers who helped make the day a success.

CENTRAL OFFICE MOVES

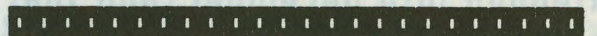
CTD's office has moved "uptown" to 7700 Chevy Chase, Suite 330, (78752). Our new telephone number is 512/451-2807. Conveniently, the new office is just west of IH 35 at 183. Everyone is invited to our office-warming/holiday party in December. Please note that CTD's mailing address is still P.O. Box 4709, Austin, Texas 78765.

ADA HEARING HELD

The House and Senate held a joint hearing on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1988 in late September. C-SPAN televised the hearings nationally and local C-SPAN affiliates have been rebroadcasting them on viewers' request. The tone of the hearing was positive, with Senator Kennedy stating that getting the legislation out of his committee and passed by Congress will be one of his top priorities when Congress convenes in 1989.

New Jersey advocates arranged for consumer representation at the hearing. Three Amtrack cars of individuals appeared during the meeting and made quite an impression on the legislators and the media present. Senator Weicker commented on the vital need for the media to see disabled persons representing themselves in favor of ADA.

Hearings will be held around the country regarding the bill. Congressman Owens of the Task Force on the Rights and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities will hold a public forum on October 24th in Boston. Congressman Jeffers' public forum in Vermont will be October 26th. Perhaps Congressmen Frost and Leland of Texas, who were both present at the joint ADA hearing, can be persuaded to coordinate an ADA hearing in Texas. The bill has been assigned to 7 subcommittees; when reintroduced in January, a major push will be necessary to boost it on to the floor early in the session.



NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

ARCIL RECEIVES GRANT

The Austin Resource Center for Independent Living (ARCIL) and the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) have landed a three-year grant. The \$675,000 grant, awarded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), will go toward the design and operation of the nation's first model program for supported employment and independent living for people with physical and mental disabilities.

The project will combine both the concepts of supported employment and independent living. Supported employment offers employment opportunities in integrated settings and ongoing training, supervision and other support services to severely disabled persons. Usually, those employed in supported employment program do not qualify for traditional vocational rehabilitation services. The independent living philosophy asserts that control over one's own life is essential and that personal independence increases with participation in community life. Under consideration now is a supported jobs approach for people with severe mental retardation and/or visual impairments, and separate design for people with chronic mental illness.

CTD WISH LIST

CTD needs the following items to better serve our membership:

- an IBM compatible computer
- a conference table and chairs
- MacIntosh upgrade for desktop
- a multi-line telephone system
- cash donations.

All donations are tax deductible.

METROLIFT RIDES AGAIN

Two Metrolift vans caught fire in late August, prompting Houston's Metropolitan Transit Authority to briefly suspend operation of its 86 Metrolift vans. Fortunately, no one was injured in either incident. The vans involved are believed to have a fuel-system defect and are being examined; the rest of the fleet has resumed service.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE MEETS WITH SUCCESS

The National Conference on Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons met in El Paso to address issues of concern for the next decade. Participants from across the nation discussed telecommunications access, technology, AIDS, education and rehabilitation. After the conference a brainstorming group strategized about some of the key topics brought up at the conference. The meeting was quite a success, bringing hearing impaired individuals with differing hearing losses together to focus on topics of common concern.



JOYCE DAWIDCZYK TEARS UP THE TRACK FOR ADAPT.

JOIN CTD—The Coalition of Texans with Disabilities

The Coalition of Texans with Disabilities is a coalition of organizations and individuals committed to cross disability communication, cooperation and coordination. The Coalition promotes social, educational, physical, and mental well-being of disabled Texans. The Coalition of Texans with Disabilities brings

together people and organizations with similar goals in a united effort to represent all disabled Texans to government, the private sector, and general public. Membership in the Coalition enables organizations and individuals to enhance their effectiveness in improving the quality of life for Texans with disabilities.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Individual Member

- Yearly \$12.00
 Life Member \$100.00

- Please send me _____ organizational memberships forms
 Please send me the CTD's newsletters on cassette tape.

Name _____

Address _____

Please make checks payable to:

CTD
P.O. Box 4709
Austin, Texas 78765

Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD) Board

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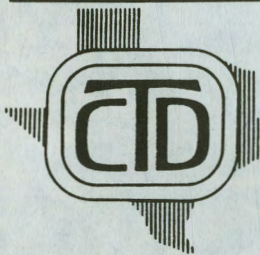
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Coalition of Texans with Disabilities

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