

The Disabilities Treaty: Opening the World to Americans with Disabilities



In four simple words, the treaty says to other countries that don't respect the rights of disabled people: **Be more like us.**

- Secretary of State John Kerry, USA Today, July 22, 2013

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (“Disabilities Treaty”) is an international agreement that will help protect the rights of Americans with disabilities when they leave our shores. Too many countries have not done what the United States did 23 years ago when we passed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We need to change that -- and we can. But it requires American leadership so that the more than 50 million Americans living with a disability can serve, study, work, and travel anywhere in the world with the same dignity and respect they enjoy here at home.

Ratification is the single most important step the United States can take to promote our accessibility standards internationally. Here's how:

Providing Opportunities for Americans Wanting To Serve, Study, Work, and Travel Abroad

- Ratification will help lift other countries to our gold standard for disability rights, and it will help provide the same protections globally that the ADA does here at home.
- Ratification will mean greater access and opportunity for Americans with disabilities to participate fully in the global economy.

Promoting American Businesses

- Ratification will create new markets for U.S. businesses as other countries raise their standards and need our accessible products, technologies and expertise to meet their goals.
- Ratification will help level the playing field for U.S. companies locked in competition with foreign counterparts that are often not required to meet strong accessibility standards.

Reinforcing America's Global Leadership

- Ratification will reinforce America's global leadership, putting us in the strongest position to advance disability rights worldwide.
- Ratification is not about changing America. It's about getting the rest of the world to raise their accessibility standards to our level. It's that simple.

Protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, ANY persons, is not a political issue. It is a human issue, regardless of where in the world a disabled person strives to live a normal, independent life where basic rights and accessibilities are available. Disability rights and protections have always been a bipartisan issue and ratifying this treaty should be no different.

- Prepared statement of Senator John McCain before SFRC, July 12, 2012

Now is the time to reaffirm the common goals of equality, access, and inclusion for Americans with disabilities - both when those affected are in the United States and outside of our country's borders. I urge you to support U.S. ratification of this important treaty.

- Letter from Senator Bob Dole to the SFRC, July 12, 2012