



DISABILITY RIGHTS ARE CIVIL RIGHTS

Speaker Nancy Pelosi  
1236 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

July 26, 2019

Re: National Sign-on Letter in support the Disability Integration Act of 2019 (H.R. 555) urging that the bill be moved forward to a full House floor for a vote before the end of the first session of the 116th Congress – **581** Sign Ons

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

The **581 undersigned** people with disabilities, their family, friends and allies are writing this letter in support of the Disability Integration Act of 2019 (DIA) H.R. 555, and we urge you to move this legislation forward to a full House floor vote before the end of the first session of the 116th Congress.

On the 90th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther King Jr., the Disability Integration Act (H.R. 555/ S. 117) was introduced by Representative Jim Sensenbrenner in the House with 40 original cosponsors and Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) with Senator Cory Gardner (R-CO) and 22 other original

cosponsors in the Senate. In a statement for the DIA introduction ceremony Rep. Sensenbrenner said, "I am proud to re-introduce this bill, because all Americans should share in the American Dream, and that begins in the community in someone's own home."

Since its introduction, ADAPT and NCIL members worked long and hard to secure **236 bipartisan cosponsors** on H.R. 555 (218 Democrats and 16 Republicans). Today, a majority of the House of Representatives are cosponsoring this legislation as is a majority of every committee with jurisdiction over the bill.

DIA is supposed to move through the House Energy and Commerce Committee, but ADAPT, NCIL and others in the Disability Community have been told by Chairman Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ) that this bill will not be allowed to move forward. (See ADAPT press release June 19, 2019 – Pallone Obstructing DIA's Movement: <https://adapt.org/pallone-obstructing-dias-movement/> )

Last month, we celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the Supreme Court's Olmstead decision. This decision recognized the fundamental equality of those with disabilities and affirmed that people with disabilities have the right to live in the most integrated setting, rather than be forced into unwanted institutionalization. Unfortunately, the promise of Olmstead has not been fulfilled and countless elderly and Disabled Americans remain segregated in institutions. The continuing existence of unfair and unnecessary institutionalization denies individuals with disabilities the opportunity to live and participate on an equal basis in the community and costs the United States billions of dollars in unnecessary spending related to perpetuating dependency and unnecessary confinement. It is, therefore, necessary to recognize in statute a robust and fully articulated right to community living.

Discussing the importance of the Disability Integration Act, Disability Rights attorney Steve Gold has said:

*This important civil rights bill picks up where Olmstead left off. It enshrines in Federal statute the right to live in the community, which Olmstead recognized. It gives people with disabilities and seniors the right to demand that states and insurers remove the obstacles, which stand in the way of their integration. It takes what disability advocates have learned in working for integration in the past eighteen years and gives disability advocates another and a more powerful tool to effect that integration. (2017)*

This legislation was written with purposeful Intersectionality, the critical race theory that encompasses the fact that people with disabilities are represented in all parts of life. Many people with disabilities are multi-marginalized because they are of all races and religions. They may be non-religious, LGBTQ+, incarcerated or formerly incarcerated, immigrants and refugees. It is in this solidarity that 581 people with disabilities, their family, friends and allies express our

support the Disability Integration Act of 2019 (H.R. 555) and call on the House of Representatives to pass this imperative civil rights legislation today!

FREE OUR PEOPLE!

To find out more on the bill go to: <http://www.disabilityintegrationact.org/>

To see the full list of organizations supporting DIA go

to: <http://www.disabilityintegrationact.org/dia-supporter-list/>

Sincerely, (581 people)

- Aaron Baier
- Abubakar Usman
- Adam Prizio
- Alan Holdsworth
- Alana R Theriault
- Alex Ghenis
- Alexa Mavroidis
- Alexandra Hwee
- Alexis Brown
- Alfred C. Desmarais
- Alisa Grishman
- Allisa Fernandez
- Alyssa e Snyder
- Amanda Kay Willard
- Amanda Therrien
- Ami Weidler-Hyten
- Amilia M Gonzalez
- Amina Donna Kruck
- Amy Jo DeKoeyer
- Amy Viklund
- Ana Avendano
- Anais Keenon
- Anastasia Douglas
- Anastasia M Lawhead
- Andrea Abel
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- Andrea James
- Andrea Kindseth
- Andrea Smith
- Andrew Kurzweil
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- Angela Nevin

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- Annette Otero
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- Anthony Frischenmeyer
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cc: Rep. Kevin McCarthy, Minority Leader  
Rep. Steny Hoyer, Majority Leader  
Rep. James Clyburn, Majority Whip  
Rep. Steve Scalise, Minority Whip  
Rep. James Sensenbrenner, Sponsor of DIA (H.R. 555)

Rep. James Langevin, Dem Co-chair of Disability Caucus  
Rep. Don Young, Rep. Co-Chair of Disability Caucus