



STATE OF DELAWARE
STATE COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
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The Honorable John Carney
Governor

John McNeal
SCPD Director

September 29, 2019

The Honorable Christopher A. Coons
United States Senate
127A Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: H.R. 3373 (Office of International Disability Rights Act)

Dear Sen. Coons:

We at the Delaware State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) respectfully urge you to support H.R. 3373, the Office of International Disability Rights Act. This much-needed legislation is a bi-partisan bill proposed by Representatives Dina Titus (D) from Nevada and Don Young (R) from Alaska.

The legislation is clear and direct. It formally creates an office that will advise on international disability rights in the State Department and for the U.S. government. It will ensure that any policies developed and adopted by the Department will reflect the commitment to integration and inclusion of people with disabilities in the full scope of Department activities. The bill also requires training for State Department personnel on disability rights, inclusion, and how to integrate both into programming, budgeting, and hiring. It represents the next step that we can take to ensure that the lofty goals of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other precedent-setting U.S. disability rights laws, are fully understood and implemented.

Put simply, the new office will ensure that when the United States builds a building abroad, it will be accessible; that when the U.S. sponsors a program abroad it will be held in an accessible venue; that all U.S.-sponsored programs will address the interests and needs of persons with disabilities.

There are over one billion people with disabilities across the globe, many of whom are denied schooling, health care, housing, employment, freedom of movement, personal choices, and decision-making power because of their disabilities. Maintaining this marginalized status of persons with disabilities drains families, public resources, and economies. This legislation will allow the U.S., the champion of civil and disability rights, to provide leadership and assistance as countries

around the world take steps to implement the CRPD, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, a UN treaty now ratified by 174 countries.

We urge you to support this important bill, to become a co-sponsor, and to vote for its passage. The State Council for Persons with Disabilities stands ready to assist you and your staff as you consider this bipartisan legislation.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Todd Webb". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T" and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Todd Webb, Chairperson
State Council for Persons with Disabilities