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Texas Rehabilitation Commission-Board [1983-1984]

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LLOYD DOGGETT
STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 14
P. O. Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711
512/475-3731

*The Senate of
The State of Texas
Austin 18711*

Committees:
JURISPRUDENCE
HUMAN RESOURCES
STATE AFFAIRS

Chairman:
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
CONSUMER AFFAIRS

May 4, 1984

Mr. Lex Frieden
Independent Living Research Utilization
P. O. Box 20095
Houston, Texas 77225

Dear Mr. Frieden:

Since you were highly recommended to me by people whose judgment I value, your name was among those I submitted to Governor Mark White for consideration for appointment to the Texas Rehabilitation Commission Board. I now want to let you know that Governor White has announced the appointment of Mr. Wendell Faulkner of Pecos, Texas to this position. A wheel chair bound victim of Multiple Sclerosis who serves on the MS Board, Mr. Faulkner should bring insights and perspectives to TRC which that Board has not had before.

I'm sure Mr. Faulkner will be glad to hear from you regarding TRC services and I look forward to hearing from you anytime my office may be of assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Lloyd Doggett".
Lloyd Doggett

TEXAS
CHAPTER



PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA
HOUSTON • Waco • North Texas • San Antonio



VAMC 128A, Rm. 101A • 2002 Holcombe Blvd. • Houston, Texas 77211 • 713-795-7556

June 9, 1983

RECEIVED JUN 13 1983

Lloyd Doggett
State Senator
District 14
P. O. Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Senator Doggett:

The Texas Paralyzed Veterans Association, an organization that represents spinal cord injured and diseased veterans throughout Texas, is supportive of the concept that qualified disabled consumers should be involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of programs that effect their lives.

The Texas Rehabilitation Commission is an agency that provides a varied range of services that assists the disabled person to become independent in their community.

TPVA would like to recommend that Lex Frieden be appointed to the Board of the Texas Rehabilitation Commission. Lex has distinguished himself both nationally and statewide as a leader in the disabled community and a planner of programs that have led to a more independent life for numerous disabled people. His involvement, energy and creativity have been recognized by the numerous programs he has developed and the awards he has received. He is currently the Executive Director of Independent Living Resource Utilization Program and chairs the TRC's Consumer Consultation Committee. His expertise is unquestionable and the ability to weigh the pros and cons of an issue is one of his major assets. Over the years Lex has assisted TPVA in many areas and has been available for consultation when necessary.



*a paraplegic
is an individual . . .*

THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA IS AN ORGANIZATION FORMED BY AND FOR THE MOST SERIOUSLY DISABLED IN THE WORLD. IT IS DEVOTING ITS LIFE AND EFFORT TO EVERY PROBLEM OF EACH PARAPLEGIC REGARDLESS OF RACE, CREED OR COLOR. THESE PROBLEMS ARE MANY, FOR A PARAPLEGIC HAS SUFFERED A SPINAL CORD INJURY RESULTING IN PARALYSIS; (1) INABILITY TO WALK; (2) LOSS OF CONTROL OVER INTERNAL FUNCTIONS; (3) LOSS OF SENSATION BELOW LEVEL OF INJURY; (4) PERMANENT CONFINEMENT TO A WHEELCHAIR.

RECEIVED JUN 13 1983

Lloyd Doggett
State Senator
June 9, 1983

Page 2

It is without reservation that we make this recommendation.
He would represent the needs of disabled Texans and the needs
of all Texans ably.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bob Kafka".

Bob Kafka
President

BK:fk

cc: Lex Frieden
Executive Director
Independent Living Resource Utilization
6910 Fannin, 2nd Floor
Houston, Texas 77030

Max Arrell
Commissioner
Texas Rehabilitation Commission
118 East Riverside Drive
Austin, Texas 78704



LLOYD DOGGETT
STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 14
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February 9, 1984

Mr. Lex Frieden, Director
Independent Living Research Utilization
P. O. Box 20095
Houston, Texas 77225

Dear Mr. Frieden:

Thank you for sharing with me a copy of your letter to Patricia Otis. I am glad to know of your interest in serving on the Council on Disabilities and will be interested in the response you receive.

As you probably know, I have requested that Governor White also appoint someone who knows disability first-hand to the Texas Rehabilitation Commission Board. Your name was suggested to me by Bob Kafka, president of Paralyzed Veterans of America, and I included you on the list of recommendations I sent to the governor's special assistant for appointments in August. No action has been taken on the TRC appointments as yet, I am told.

Your accomplishments are impressive and you obviously have a great deal of insight to contribute. Thank you for your willingness to serve the people of Texas.

I look forward to hearing from you any time my office can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lloyd Doggett", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lloyd Doggett

cc: Ms. Patricia Otis
Mr. Dwayne Holman

RECEIVED MAR 5 1984



MARK WHITE
GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE CAPITOL
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711

February 28, 1984

Lex Frieden, Director
Independent Living Research Utilization
P.O. Box 20095
Houston, Texas 77225

Dear Mr. Frieden:

Thank you for your letter expressing continuing interest in serving on the Council on Disabilities. After our conversation at the Long Term Care Coordinating Council for the Elderly, I submitted your name to our appointments office for consideration when the Council on Disabilities is formed. Senator Doggett also recommended your qualifications to us. Your knowledge of independent living programs can provide important insight in our work to improve services to disabled persons. I look forward to hearing from you on your ideas and recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia Stephens Otis".

Patricia Otis, Ph.D., Coordinator
Health and Human Services Section

PO:bp
cc: The Honorable Lloyd Doggett
Betty Button

EDITORIAL

Pejorative Terms and Attitudinal Barriers

In the past 20 years, most people have learned to stop using the common pejorative terms applied to blacks, Jews, women and other previously repressed groups. Despite the fact that disabled citizens have recently come to be recognized as a similarly repressed group, certain pejorative terms are still in popular use in the jargon of rehabilitation as well as in the general public and the media. How often have we heard a medical case presentation begin with language such as "This *unfortunate* woman has been an arthritis *sufferer* since 1950, and is *confined* to crutches"; or "This stroke *victim* is *afflicted* with left hemiplegia and is *restricted* to special equipment for feeding and personal hygiene". Patients are regularly described as being *confined* to crutches, or wheelchair *bound*.

Our language reflects our attitudes; these terms convey a negative empathy or patronizing pity which reflects the speakers' personal reactions to how they imagine they would feel under the same circumstances. Use of such negative language serves to perpetuate the attitudinal barriers faced by our handicapped patients as they try to re-enter the able-bodied world.

Rehabilitation professionals know that crutches do not confine, but free one from a chair or bed. The wheelchair does not bind, but liberates its user to go out into the world for work, play or travel. A wealth of other positive expressions are available to us. The patient is a person with arthritis, or a man who has recovered from stroke and is handicapped by hemiplegia. The mobility-impaired person is a crutch-user or a wheelchair-ambulator. The ADL-impaired person is one who uses adaptive eating and toileting devices for independent self-care.

Both *handicapped* and *disabled* are acceptable as adjectives; the former is more commonly used in the Midwest and the latter tends to be preferred on the East coast. On the contrary, their use as nouns in expressions such as *the disabled* or *the handicapped* is not acceptable because it conveys a separate and inferior status. *Handicapped individuals* or *persons with disabilities* are positive alternatives which convey a sense of respect and equality.

The use of the term *normal* to describe non-handicapped persons tends to demean disabled persons by suggesting that they are abnormal or subnormal. The preferred term to describe the general public is *able-bodied*.

We in the rehabilitation professions should not hesitate to correct anyone who uses pejorative expressions toward our disabled constituents. A friendly but firm explanation that these terms are undesirable will usually be accepted and appreciated. The goal should be an atmosphere where *sufferer*, *victim* and *afflicted* are just as unacceptable in civil conversations as *nigger*, *kyke*, or *broad*.

— Paul J. Corcoran, M.D.



Watch Your Language, Please!

JUNE ISAACSON KAILLES, MSW

NOTE: This article results from the author's frustration related to our sloppiness with the language we use when talking or writing about disability. Comments from readers are encouraged and welcomed!

Public attitudes about disability are much more disabling than the actual disability. Attitudinal barriers are probably the most difficult barriers to overcome. We must deal with the challenge of changing attitudes on many levels: education, integration, personal relationships and LANGUAGE.

We, the disabled community, strive for community accessibility and acceptance, yet we continue to use language which perpetuates very negative stereotypes of who we are. We must become aware of the power of language. Are you perpetuating negative attitudes and stereotypes by the language you use?

DISABILITY versus HANDICAPPED?

Which to use? This is a continuing controversy within the disabled community. The legal and political systems have favored and

institutionalized the word "handicapped."

I prefer the word disability. For me, handicap will always connote the miserable image of people standing on the corner with a "handy cap" in their hand, begging for money.

Granted the word "disability" is certainly not perfect either, as it still implies a negative: what a person can not do. It can, however, be somewhat improved with either the use of a hyphen "dis-ability," or with some strategically placed capital letters, "disABILITY."

I agree with Beatrice Weight, who in her classic book Physical Disability, A Psychological Approach (1960) differentiates the meaning of the two words. She explains that a disability is a medical condition, either emotional or physical. A handicap is a cumulative result of the obstacles which a disability interposes between an individual and her/his maximum functional level. Therefore not all disabilities are really handicaps. A person who uses a wheelchair is not handicapped in a job that does not require climbing stairs. A person who is blind is not handicapped in a job that does not require a visual orientation.

In other words, a disability does not always mean a handicap. People are not handicapped by their disability all the time. A disability can mean that a person may do something a little bit differently than a person who does not have a disability, but with equal participation and equal results.

DISABLED PEOPLE

People with disabilities are only handicapped or disabled some of the time. A woman who is disabled as a result of polio and uses a

wheelchair is also a mother, a wife, a student, a citizen, a board member, a gifted public speaker, etc. In our use of language, both written and verbal, we can choose to emphasize people's similarities or their differences. The term "a disabled person" is a sloppy short cut to the more involved, sometimes more awkward but psychologically sounder expression, "a person with a disability." The latter is by far preferred. It connotes that a person with a disability is first and foremost a person, with many unspecified characteristics in addition to their particular disability. "Disabled person" represents differentness and seperateness and reduces a person to their disability. This sloppy short cut disturbs and undermines who we are and how we want to be seen. Similarly, the use of "the disabled" or "the blind" denies any sense of individuality. A preferable term would be "the disabled community," or simply "people with disabilities, people who are blind."

CONFINED TO A WHEELCHAIR/WHEELCHAIR BOUND

People are not confined to wheelchairs. People use wheelchairs to increase their mobility, similar to the way people use cars. Many people who use wheelchairs do walk, but find wheelchair travel faster and easier. Often ability and speed of movement is increased by wheelchair use. For many, a wheelchair means mobility freedom! People who use wheelchairs can often transfer to cars and chairs. Thus, they are not confined!

PATIENT

"Patient" connotes a person sitting or lying passively and patiently waiting for something to be done to them or for them. People with

disabilities are not chronic patients. They are not sick!

CRIPPLED

Crippled is derived from the stem of the old English word "to creep," Certainly not a great image!

NORMAL PERSON

One could argue about the definition of the word "normal" indefinitely. "Normal Person," when used in contrast to "a person with a disability," implies that people with disabilities are not normal. If you are referring to a person who does not have an apparent disability, it is more accurate and much less stereotypical to refer to the person as "a person who is able-bodied" or "a person who is non-disabled."

SUMMARY

It will take time to change old language habits, but if we are all committed to increasing community awareness, acceptance and access, then we must take time to be vigilant about the language we use. Language does play an important role in shaping ideas.

Become consciously aware of images and attitudes you convey with words. We must discard negative labels and use accurate language. By doing so we will perpetuate the fact that people with disabilities are first and foremost people. Please help!

#

Westside Community for Independent Living
PREFERRED TERMINOLOGY

Unacceptable/Offensive

Acceptable

Disabled Person.....	A person with a physical disability
A blind person.....	A person who is blind
A deaf person.....	A person who is deaf
The disabled.....	People who are disabled or the disabled community
Joe is Arthritic.....	Joe has Arthritis
June is Cerebral Palsied.....	June has Cerebral Palsy
Dumb.....	A person who has a speech or hearing impairment
Cerebral palsied, palsied, spastic, retard, retardate.....	A person who is mentally retarded
Fit.....	Seizure
Patient/Sick.....	Only use when a person is in the hospital or at the <u>actual</u> time of being seen by a doctor or medical facility
"Normal person" as compared to a person with a disability....	A person who is non-disabled or able bodied as compared to a person with a disability
Confined to a wheelchair/ wheelchair bound.....	A person who uses a wheelchair

NOTE: The following words have negative connotations and tend to evoke pity:

Afflicted.....Burden.....Sufferer.....Victim.....Invalid

February 2, 1984

Patricia Otis
Office of the Governor
Texas State Capitol
Austin, Texas

Dear Ms. Otis,

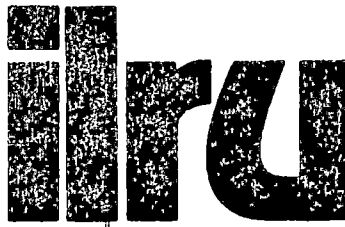
Following our meeting at the Governor's Long Range Planning Committee for Persons with Disabilities last summer, I wrote you on July 25, 1983. At that time, I sent you a resume and requested that I be considered as a candidate for appointment to the Council on Disabilities. Since I have heard nothing from you regarding my request, I assume that either it did not reach you, or that I was not qualified to be considered as a candidate for this appointment. Nevertheless, I continue to be interested in and committed to the efforts of the Council on Disabilities, and I would appreciate any information which you could send to me regarding the composition and accomplishments of this group. Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Lex Frieden
Director

LF:rms

cc: Senator Chet Brooks
Senator Lloyd Doggett
Justin Dart, Jr.
Bobby Simpson
Betty Button



independent living research utilization

July 25, 1983

Patricia Otis
Office of the Governor
Texas State Capital
Austin, Texas

Dear Ms. Otis,

It was a pleasure meeting you at the recent meeting of the Governor's long range planning committee on disability. As I mentioned at the meeting, there are several factors which I believe significantly influenced the success of this project which many of us have been involved in during the past year. First of all, our planning group included substantial involvement by people with disabilities, in addition to the active participation of program administrators, planners, legislators, and professional advocates. The group also benefited from the strong and capable leadership provided by our chairperson. Groups are seldom led by such unassuming, unbiased, and well organized people as Justin Dart, Jr. Finally, I believe the fact that our group was composed of people who essentially represented nonpartisan points of view greatly aided our ability to produce a useful product.

I have no doubt that your efforts to implement the legislation which resulted from our work will be well received by all of the former members of our committee. If I may be of assistance to you in your efforts, please do not hesitate to contact me. As you might imagine, I believe that the most important aspect of implementation relates to the selection of the people who will serve on the various councils. I believe these individuals should be selected with the same consideration and criteria which led to the composition of the planning group. In this regard, I would like to be considered as a candidate for appointment to the Human Services Council or the Council on Disabilities. I have enclosed my resume for your review. If I can provide you with further information, or if I can assist you in developing your implementation plan, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely yours

Lex Frieden
Director

Enc.

jean cole, lex Frieden--project directors laurel richards--training coordinator laurie gerken--asst. training coordinator
tirr (the institute for rehabilitation & research) 1333 moursund houston, texas 77030 (713) 797 1440