

FOIA MARKER

**This is not a textual record. This is used as an
administrative marker by the William J. Clinton
Presidential Library Staff.**

Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records

Subgroup/Office of Origin: Counsel Office

Series/Staff Member: Jonathan Young

Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 40194

FolderID:

Folder Title:

ADA [Americans with Disabilities Act] News Coverage

Stack:

S

Row:

112

Section:

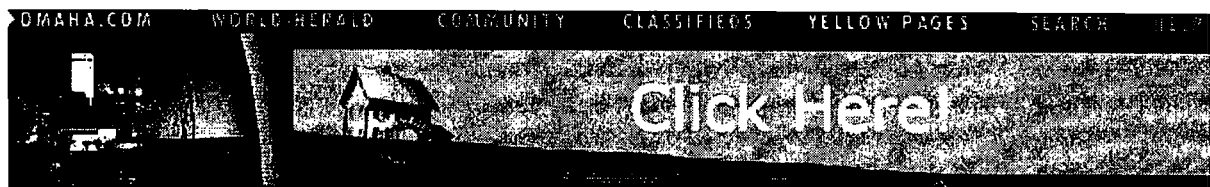
1

Shelf:

5

Position:

3



front page

midlands
sports
nation/world
business
opinion
living
weather
archive

Published Friday
July 07, 2000

@ mail this
to a friend

? share your
comments

ADA: A Decade of Access for the Disabled

BY ROBYNN TYSVER
WORLD-HERALD BUREAU

Lincoln - In wheelchairs and with walkers, they gathered Thursday on the steps of the State Capitol to pay homage to a landmark bill that mobilized the nation's disabled.

The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) will mark its 10th anniversary on July 26. The federal law is responsible for putting "handicapped accessible" into the nation's lexicon.

RELATED LINKS

- ▶ Americans With Disabilities Act
- ▶ Attorney General Don Stenberg

"Without the ADA, America often lived a lie when it came to claiming it was a country of opportunity for all," said Tim Kolb, a quadriplegic who has been at the forefront in the fight for the rights of the disabled in Nebraska. "With the ADA, we can all truthfully sing, 'My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty.'"

The ADA was responsible for countless curbs being cut, elevators installed and bathrooms modernized in an effort to accommodate the nation's disabled. The law also attempted to remove employment barriers for people with a disability who wanted to work and prohibited discrimination based on physical and mental disabilities.

"This was a landmark piece of legislation. It has had a profound effect on our society over the last decade," Gov. Mike Johanns told the crowd of about 60 people, which included Lincoln Mayor Don Wesely and Lt. Gov. Dave Mauststad.

"It has broken down walls and removed barriers," the governor said.

Kolb, who moves his wheelchair by blowing into a tube, agreed. He also said the law has changed how disabled people are viewed in society. And, he said, it was a smart thing to do for all people, with or without disabilities.

"Wise persons realized that it was not only wrong to discriminate against persons with disabilities, it was also illadvised. You see, if you intend to grow old ... you can be assured you will experience some kind of disabling condition," the Franklin, Neb., man said.

Kolb and several other disabled people in the audience said more needs to be done.

Cathy Carver, who is Ms. Wheelchair Nebraska 2000, said it was only a few years ago that she went to a movie theater on a first date only to find out it wasn't accessible.

"They wanted to carry me up the steps. For me, on the first date, I didn't want him to think I was that much of a problem," Carver said.

The problem, Carver and others said, is that there is no one agency that enforces the ADA. Disabled people are forced to go to court if they want action.

"There are still many pockets of resistance to making changes," Kolb said. "They need funding for enforcement at the federal level."

As if to underscore the fact that more needed to be done, about 10 disabled Nebraskans and their supporters marched to Attorney General Don Stenberg's office to protest his involvement in an ADA lawsuit.

The State of Nebraska has filed a friend-of-the-court brief in a case pending before the U.S. Supreme Court.

In the case, the University of Alabama questions the constitutionality of a segment of the ADA that allows the disabled to sue states. Alabama and Nebraska both say that provision unconstitutionally infringes on a state's sovereignty.

Kolb and others say the lawsuit puts the entire ADA at risk.

Stenberg disagreed.

In a letter sent later in the afternoon to Kolb, Stenberg said it was a question of constitutional law.

"Regardless of the outcome, disabled citizens will continue to have the ability to file lawsuits to ensure their rights," Stenberg wrote. "Even if the ADA is not able to be applied against the state government employers, the State of Nebraska is required to recognize the rights of the disabled."

[Back...](#)

WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID:
"Pay homage?" What a strange c... - Karl
Why is there lack of information on Deaf... - Steven
Breathing disabled were not mentioned. T... - Mark Welsch
I was one of the individuals' that visit... - Kathy Hoell
ADD YOUR COMMENT:

YOUR NAME:

COMMENTS:

© Copyright 2000 Omaha World-Herald Company. All rights reserved.
Omaha.com is designed and maintained by World Media Company.
[Copyright Information](#) - [Terms of Use](#) - [Privacy Policy](#)

Questions? Comments? E-mail webmaster@omaha.com