

GAMEPLAN FOR INTRODUCTION OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Goal: Introduction and enactment of the comprehensive equal opportunity law for Americans with disabilities as proposed by the Council in Toward Independence.

Reaffirmation: At its last quarterly meeting in May, 1987, the National Council on the Handicapped reaffirmed its commitment to the enactment of a comprehensive equal opportunity law as proposed in Toward Independence. The Council expressly rejected an alternative approach of trying to enact more narrow portions of the law in a piecemeal fashion. The Council also restated its desire to move forward with its comprehensive proposal during the current session of Congress.

PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION

Target Date for Enactment: During the 100th Congress which ends in October of 1988.

Target Date for Introduction of Bill: Near the end of the 1st session of this Congress in November of 1987.

Reasons for Timing of Introduction: The Congress and, in particular, the pertinent Committees and Subcommittees are currently dealing with important issues upon which the Council has been very involved -- the Civil Rights Restoration Act and the Fair Housing Act. By the end of the session in November, there is a good chance that Congressional action may have been taken on these matters; at the very least, they are likely to have passed out of the Committees. This would make it an appropriate time for the introduction of our proposal, without in any way detracting from the Council's efforts on behalf of the Restoration and Fair Housing Acts. Introduction before the end of the first session would also permit supporters of the measure to hold hearings during the recess period.

Steps before Introduction:

A. Continuing to line up support and develop coalition among disability community

- Council member meetings with organizations and individuals

- Council member phone calls and letters to appropriate organizations and individuals

- Meetings of NCH staff with organizations and individuals
- Presentations and explanations to describe the concept and generate support

B. Obtaining Congressional Support

1. Involvement of key supporters/sponsors/cosponsors, including such Senators as Weicker, Harkin, Kennedy, Dole, and Simon and Representatives such as Edwards, Schroeder, Coelho, Wright, Bartlett, Fish, Synar, Jeffords, Pepper, Owen, and Waxman

- Council member meetings at appropriate times with Congressional staff and/or members
- NCB staff meetings with Congressional staff members
- Generation of contacts and support in states of key congressional members

2. Contacts with other members of pertinent committees (Judiciary and others)

- Council member meetings at appropriate times with Congressional staff and/or members of Congressional committees
- NCH staff discussions with committee staff and staff of individual members of committees
- Generation of contacts and support in states of potential supporters

3. Contacts with special interest groups and lobbyists

- meetings and phone calls by Council members
- meetings and phone calls by NCH staff

C. Obtaining support of Important Nondisability Groups

1. Contacts and discussions with civil rights community

- a. Leadership Conference on Civil Rights
- b. others

2. Contacts and discussions with elderly community and leaders

3. Contacts and discussions with potential adversaries, including NAHB, APTA, insurance industry, hotel and motel organizations, NAM, Chamber of Commerce, etc.

4. The Reagan Administration -

- Department of Justice
- White House
- Others, including PCEH, PCMR, etc.

D. Drafting Bill

1. Circulate staff draft of bill to Council members for their informal review, comments, and suggestions

2. Incorporate Council suggestions and other conceptual comments previously received into revised draft of bill

3. Convene small conference of key disability litigators to react to and comment upon the draft bill

4. Revise the draft in reaction to the comments received at the litigators conference

5. Circulate the draft bill to small group of key experts for comments and suggestions

6. Revise the draft bill in response to the comments received

7. Present draft bill to staff of key Congressional supporters for their reaction (and presumably presentation to their legislative counsel)

8. Negotiate final draft of bill for introduction in Congress

E. Staff Preparation and Prerequisites

1. Compile data, studies, and anecdotes to support the need for the bill and to provide documentation for the concepts it contains

2. Develop Qs and As explaining proposals and providing responses to most likely question and objections

3. Develop a packet of information providing a brief explanation of the bill for dissemination to groups, individuals, and the media

4. Prepare an information dissemination plan for getting the word to the various disability information networks, the media, and grassroots consumers