

The Disability Inclusion Pledge

A simple pledge: Equality means nothing if millions of Americans are left behind. Disability must never be a barrier to learning, working, traveling, housing, or participating fully in civic life. Accessibility is not an afterthought — it is a fundamental right.

Why It Matters

- One in four Americans lives with a disability, yet barriers persist in schools, workplaces, housing, transportation, and technology.
- Disabled Americans face higher poverty, lower employment, and limited independence compared to nondisabled peers.
- Digital platforms, public infrastructure, and workplaces often ignore accessibility, excluding millions from opportunity.
- A democracy is only whole when all citizens can participate fully.

Our belief: Inclusion is not charity. It is justice. A just nation removes barriers so that every person can contribute, thrive, and belong.

What We're Saying

This is not a statement of sympathy. It is a pledge: that every system — education, work, housing, transit, and digital life — will be built with accessibility at the center.

What It Guarantees

- **Accessible Education:** Universal design for learning in every school and college.
- **Inclusive Workplaces:** Hiring pipelines, accommodations, and wage protections for disabled workers.
- **Accessible Housing:** Requirements for universal design in new housing, and retrofits for existing homes.
- **Barrier-Free Transit:** Nationwide standards for fully accessible buses, trains, stations, and ride services.

- **Digital Inclusion:** Every federal and public-facing website, platform, and service fully accessible online.

Programs You'll See

- **Universal Learning Grants:** Funding for schools to adopt accessible curricula, materials, and technology.
- **Disability Employment Accelerator:** Partnerships with employers to expand hiring and advancement, plus wage equity enforcement.
- **Accessible Housing Trust:** Grants and incentives for universally designed housing and retrofits.
- **Transit for All:** Federal-state partnerships to upgrade all transit systems to ADA+ standards, including rural areas.
- **Digital Access Mandate:** Enforcement of accessibility standards (WCAG) for all government and contracted platforms.
- **National Access Corps:** A service program training and deploying workers to retrofit buildings, assistive tech, and community spaces.

How We'll Make It Real

0–100 Days

- Establish the National Disability Inclusion Task Force with disabled leaders at the table.
- Begin a nationwide audit of accessibility in schools, workplaces, housing, transit, and digital platforms.

Year 1

- Launch Universal Learning Grants and Disability Employment Accelerator pilots.
- Begin funding first wave of accessible housing retrofits.

Years 2–3

- Expand Transit for All upgrades to every state.

- Require all federal digital services to meet accessibility standards.

Years 4–5

- Achieve nationwide accessibility benchmarks in education, housing, transit, and digital life.
- Embed disability inclusion in long-term infrastructure and workforce planning.

Accountability & Measures

- **Education:** % of schools meeting universal design standards.
- **Employment:** Disabled employment rate, wage gap reduction, advancement metrics.
- **Housing:** # of units built/retrofitted with universal design.
- **Transit:** % of systems meeting full accessibility benchmarks.
- **Digital Life:** Compliance rates with accessibility standards.

Guardrails & Values

- **Nothing About Us Without Us:** Disabled Americans lead the design and oversight of policies.
- **Equity First:** Prioritize low-income, rural, and underserved communities.
- **Universal Design:** Accessibility integrated from the start, not added later.
- **Transparency:** Public dashboards track progress across sectors.
- **Enforceability:** Real penalties for noncompliance in housing, transit, and digital accessibility.

Who This Helps (Snapshots)

- *Lena (10):* Uses accessible learning tech at school, keeping pace with classmates.
- *Jamal (27):* Secures a fair-paying job with accommodations through the Disability Employment Accelerator.

- *Maria (44)*: Moves into a universally designed home that allows her to live independently.
- *Greg (61)*: Travels freely on buses and trains with guaranteed accessibility in his rural county.
- *Sofia (75)*: Accesses telehealth and civic services online without digital barriers.

What Success Looks Like

In 24 Months

- First wave of schools, housing, and transit upgrades completed.
- Federal digital services fully accessible.

In 5 Years

- Nationwide accessibility benchmarks reached in education, work, housing, and transit.
- Disabled employment and independence rates rise measurably.

In 10 Years

- Full disability inclusion is a national standard: no American excluded from access, opportunity, or participation.

The Commitment

The Disability Inclusion Pledge is a national vow: that equality will be measured not by words but by access. Every barrier removed, every opportunity opened, every life included strengthens the republic. Accessibility is freedom — and it will be guaranteed.

Historical Reference & Value

The history of disability rights in America is a story of struggle and progress. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 first prohibited discrimination in federally funded programs, yet barriers persisted. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) was a landmark, outlawing discrimination in employment, housing, and public life, but enforcement has often lagged. The fight for accessibility in transportation,

digital platforms, and workplaces continues today. Court rulings and advocacy movements like the 1977 Section 504 Sit-In and the Capitol Crawl of 1990 proved that progress only comes when disabled Americans lead the way. The Disability Inclusion Pledge builds on these legacies, declaring accessibility not as accommodation but as the core measure of freedom and equality.

Referenced Acts & Initiatives (Guiding Frameworks)

- **Universal Learning Grants Act:** Funds schools to adopt universal design for learning, ensuring equitable access for students with disabilities.
- **Disability Employment Accelerator Act:** Expands hiring pipelines, enforces wage equity, and builds advancement opportunities for disabled workers.
- **Accessible Housing Trust Act:** Provides funding and incentives for universal design in new housing and retrofits of existing homes.
- **Transit for All Act:** Sets nationwide accessibility standards for all transit systems, including rural coverage.
- **Digital Access Mandate Act:** Requires all government and contracted digital services to comply with WCAG accessibility standards.
- **National Access Corps Program:** Trains and deploys workers to retrofit infrastructure, expand assistive technology, and ensure accessibility across communities.

Sealing Line

So it is pledged: that no American will be left behind — accessibility will be the measure of equality, and inclusion will be the standard by which freedom is secured.