

Memorandum

Date: July 23, 1993

To: Senator Dole

From: Alec Vachon *AV*

Re: Follow-up Comments to Meeting with Fritz Edmonds

Last Wednesday (7/14) we met with Fritz Edmonds, your appointee to the U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (called the "ACCESS Board") and the Kansas advisory committee to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. Although sincere and conscientious, Fritz sounded overwhelmed and uncertain about his responsibilities. Unfortunately, this seems a common predicament of "consumer representatives." On the one hand, they may bring personal experience and credibility to a panel; on the other, they often lack either the technical expertise or government agency experience that would allow them to meaningfully participate in substance or process.

I encouraged Fritz to call me if we could be helpful in any way or if he needed a sounding board. His term on the ACCESS Board runs through December 1994 (appointed September 1992). Also, given his interest in disability law and ADA, in addition to Jane Knight, I suggested he call Joan Strickler, who heads the federally funded protection and advocacy service in Manhattan that looks out for people with developmental disabilities.

Incidentally, in checking my files, I have spoken to one other Kansan about the ACCESS Board: Mitch Ricketts, ADA coordinator of the Southeast Kansas Service Center in Greenbush. Mitch works with about 50 school districts on ADA compliance. Mitch has found the ACCESS Board to be very helpful.

During the meeting you posed the question to me what was the greatest need regarding ADA. On reflection, that need is good information and advice -- i.e., technical assistance -- rather than money. Most people I have spoken with understand why ADA is important, but often are not sure how to proceed. At some point, I hope to examine how well the ADA Title V technical assistance provisions you initiated have fared.

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anytime  
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