

BOB DOLE
KANSAS

STANDING COMMITTEES:
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY
FINANCE
JUDICIARY

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

June 18, 1980

Dear Colleague:

In January of this year, I introduced Senate Concurrent Resolution 73 dealing with the United Nations proclamation declaring 1981 as the International Year for Disabled Persons. At this time I would invite your cosponsorship of this resolution.

In response to the U.N. proclamation, and with the support of several major national organizations, as well as President Carter's pledge of U.S. government support, the U.S. Council for the International Year of Disabled Persons was established in July of 1979. It has been my privilege to be asked to serve as a member of the Council's Honorary Committee. The council's goal is to improve the lives of this nation's 35 million physically and mentally disabled citizens.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 73 was drafted with the objective of adding impetus to our past initiatives to expand education and employment opportunities for our handicapped citizens. Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, great strides have been made in giving valuable assistance in the areas of employment and education to handicapped individuals. Attitudes towards the usefulness of disabled people in the employment area have come a long way towards overcoming lingering misconceptions. However, attitudinal barriers within our society still constitute a significant threat to the ready acceptance of handicapped individuals into the mainstream of our society.

It is my belief that Senate Concurrent Resolution 73 will serve as an instrument in expressing this nation's resolve to respect and promote the human rights of handicapped individuals that have unfortunately been denied for too long. Hopefully, by raising the awareness level of the public to the problems faced by handicapped individuals, we will begin to foster a true understanding of their potential contributions to our society. We will be that much closer to ridding ourselves of the misconceptions about the capabilities of the handicapped, and we can begin to focus our attention on the untapped resources these individuals possess for our nation.

I have enclosed a copy of S. CON. RES. 73 for your information and would welcome your support on this measure. If you would like to join me as a cosponsor, please contact Christina Bolton of my staff at 4-6521 or 4-8954.

Sincerely yours,



BOB DOLE

United States Senate

BD:cbm
Enclosure

riers that handicapped individuals must struggle against. Additionally, we should explore preventive measures wherever possible to help eliminate accidents and debilitating disease that can have such grave consequences.

PROGRESS IN REHABILITATION

Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1981, great strides have been made in giving legal justification and assistance to the cause and claims of handicapped persons, as they attempt to integrate themselves in the sphere of employment. Previously, they had no recourse in law to any of the unfair practices and prejudices which they encountered in their attempts to adapt to the context in which they live and try to work.

Although sections 503 and 504 especially have contributed much toward aiding handicapped individuals, there is still a lot of progress to be made in this area. Medical rehabilitation should continue to be followed up by educational and psychological rehabilitation, because these processes complement each other. Once these individuals are then physically and psychologically able to be reabsorbed into a more active role in their society, we should do everything possible to make it easier for them to cope and lead productive lives again. We, as legislators, should concentrate our efforts toward improving upon the steps we have already taken during the last decade.

ENLIGHTENMENT IN ATTITUDES

People and businesses alike are becoming more comfortable in their dealings with individuals who suffer from physical and mental disabilities. Their usefulness in the employment area has been recognized to a greater extent than in the past, and they have come a long way toward overcoming certain lingering misconceptions. However, we cannot drop the ball here, and must continue to focus on ways that we may be of further assistance in implementing the goals of the International Year of Disabled Persons.

RECOGNITION OF BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS

It is among the undisputable, inalienable rights of our Constitution that all citizens should be entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, but it happens all too frequently that certain individuals are prevented from achieving these possibilities because of superficial barriers.

In the case of disabled persons, attitudinal barriers within our society have all too often constituted the most difficult barrier to overcome. These people must constantly wage a battle for acceptance within our society. In this era of attention to human rights, we should recognize the right that disabled persons have to educational and employment opportunities without their having to contend with unfair practices and misconceptions.

CIVIL RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

Although it appears self-evident that handicapped persons should be entitled to the same rights as everybody else under our constitution, unfortunately their acceptance is not readily achieved and discriminatory practices continue to exist. While differences in race, creed, color, religion, and sex have been dealt with previously under the Civil Rights Act, there is currently an attempt to include the category of persons who are physically and mentally disabled under the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Further, it is unfortunate that the realities of our society should require such a step to be necessary. But, until recent years, handicapped persons had very limited protection under the law. Their efforts to lead productive lives to the extent that they are entitled to and able to do so, were constantly thwarted by unnecessary barriers.

AMENDMENT TO THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

As a cosponsor of S. 446, I urge my colleagues to take action which will facilitate implementation of the basic concepts laid out in this amendment to the Civil Rights Act, and, with a special year to look forward to in 1981, to initiate measures which will provide every available mode of assistance within our power to aid the disabled in their social integration. We must recognize the valuable contributions that our handicapped citizens can make to the work force, instead of all too often shoving this significant segment of our population aside, due to underlying misconceptions about their abilities. S. 446 is one way of paving the path for the year that will focus on this group of citizens internationally.

INTENT OF RESOLUTION

In looking forward to 1981, the United States can once again assume a leadership position by establishing innovative policies to assist the disabled within our society. Current legislation is a start, but we should continue to generate awareness and understanding of the problems of the handicapped, along with an active interest in solving these problems. We should be anticipating how best we can focus on and fulfill the special needs of our disabled citizens, even before the International Year of Disabled Persons actually takes place. It has been my experience that, unless the awareness level of the public is raised, merely to pass laws in favor of handicapped interests will not ultimately accomplish integrative goals. Doors will only open to disabled individuals when minds are opened to receive them with full acceptance and recognition of their capabilities as active, participating members of our society and

the work force. For this reason, I hereby submit this resolution to the Congress of the United States.●

**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
73—SUBMISSION OF A CONCUR-
SPECT RESOLUTION WITH RE-
SPECT RESOLUTION WITH RE-
OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERNA-
TIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED
PERSONS**

Mr. DOLE (for himself, Mr. STAFFORD, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. RANDOLPH, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mrs. KASSEBAUM) submitted the following concurrent resolution, which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 73

Whereas a new era in recognition of human rights and universal respect for these rights has begun;

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly has declared 1981 as the International Year for Disabled Persons;

Whereas the United States has made great strides during the last decade in improving the lives of 35 million American citizens with physical and mental disabilities;

Whereas there is still much to be done towards opening doors for disabled persons; and

Whereas the United States recognizes the need for further progress in strengthening public understanding and awareness of the needs and aspirations of disabled persons: Now, therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of the Congress that the President should take all steps within his authority to implement, within the United States, the objectives of the International Year of Disabled Persons (1981), as proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 31/123 of

SEC. 2. The Secretary of the Senate shall transmit a copy of this resolution to the President.

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PERSONS

● Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, in conjunction with last year's United Nations General Assembly Proclamation of 1981 as the "International Year of Disabled Persons," I would like to submit this concurrent resolution, expressing the sense of the Congress with respect to implementing the objectives outlined for the International Year of Disabled Persons. With an ever-increasing focus on human rights, it is my hope that this resolution will give added impetus to policy initiatives that will expand education and employment opportunities for our country's mentally and physically handicapped citizens.

U.S. COUNCIL FOR IYDP

In response to this United Nations proclamation, and with the support of several major national organizations, as well as the U.S. Government, the U.S. Council for the International Year of Disabled Persons was established last July. Mr. David T. Kearns, president of Xerox Corp., was named chairman of the Council, and Mr. Alan A. Reich, chairman of the People-to-People Committee for the Handicapped, serves as its president. The Senator from Kansas is privileged to have been asked to serve as a member of the Council's honorary committee.

PREPARATION FOR IYDP

The purpose of the U.S. Council is to improve the lives of America's physically and mentally disabled people, of which there are about 35 million, through an active public awareness campaign to strengthen understanding and support for the needs and aspirations of our Nation's handicapped citizens. The Congress of the United States should study potential actions which it can take in support of these same goals, and initiate legislative proposals which will enhance opportunities for this very significant segment of our population.

COMPLEXITIES IN ADAPTATION

In order to play a more active role in the world around them, certain adaptations have to be made by handicapped individuals and by those people who deal with them in the course of their activities. Additionally, their adjustment process becomes more complex, because certain environmental barriers must be overcome, and the degrees of reasonable accommodation necessary to accomplish this purpose are so diverse, depending upon the nature of the handicap in question.

ROLE OF CONGRESS

To this end, Members of the Congress of the United States have initiated legislative proposals that will assist disabled individuals in their struggle to cope with their environment and to communicate with, and contribute to, the society in which they live. In anticipation of this special year in 1981, I ask Congress to continue the work that it has begun in this area, and to consider how it might be helpful in further alleviating the additional and environmental bar-