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April 27, 2017

The Honorable Steve King
Chair, Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice
House Judiciary Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steve Cohen
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice
House Judiciary Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

OPPOSE THE "ADA EDUCATION AND REFORM ACT OF 2017" (H.R. 620)

Dear Chairman King and Ranking Member Cohen:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 200 organizations to promote and protect the rights of all persons in the United States, we write to express our strong opposition to the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Education and Reform Act of 2017 (H.R. 620).

The Leadership Conference believes in strong and vigorous enforcement of the ADA. Multiple bills have been introduced in Congress that seek to limit the power of the ADA and reduce compliance with the law. We oppose any such efforts, including H.R. 620, to limit the ability of people with disabilities to vindicate their rights in court.

H.R. 620 would impose a burdensome process before people with disabilities could file a civil action for an accessibility violation in a public accommodation case. Such restrictions on the ability of individuals to vindicate their rights do not exist for other protected classes who seek to access public accommodations. Moreover, these restrictions would undermine the compromise between the needs of business owners and people with disabilities that was crafted when the ADA was passed nearly three decades ago. H.R. 620 would upset this careful balance and dramatically shift the burden to access public accommodations from businesses to discrimination victims. The bill would remove incentives for businesses to comply with the law unless and until people with disabilities are denied access and submit the requisite notice. H.R. 620 would lead to the continued exclusion of people with disabilities from the mainstream of society and would turn back the clock on disability rights in America.

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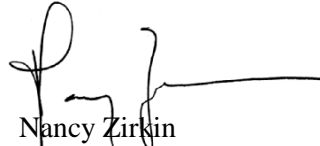


For these reasons, we urge you to oppose the ADA Education and Reform Act of 2017. If you have any questions, please contact Mike Zubrensky, Chief Counsel and Legal Director, at zubrensky@civilrights.org or (202) 869-0380.

Sincerely,



Wade Henderson
President & CEO



Nancy Zirkin
Executive Vice President