

OFFICES:
Gillette 307-682-6268
Cheyenne 307-772-2477
Casper 307-261-6572
Cody 307-527-9444
Jackson 307-739-9507
D.C. 202-224-3424
website enzi.senate.gov

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-5004

MICHAEL ENZI
WYOMING

COMMITTEES:

Health, Education,
Labor and Pensions
Ranking Member

Banking, Housing and
Urban Affairs

Small Business

Budget

January 22, 2008

A Guide to Assisting Office Personnel and Visitors with Accessibility Needs

Dear Colleague:

As the Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions I am pleased to provide you with a copy of a guide we have prepared to help in your efforts to address the needs of staff, constituents and visitors with disabilities. In an effort to start the new year off right, I hope that this guide, building on the work done by the Sergeant at Arms, will give you some ideas and suggestions that you and your office may find helpful for 2008 and on.

Living with a disability is a natural part of the human experience. Over 51 million Americans are currently living with one or more disabilities. As technology and medicine improve and the baby-boomers generation continues to age, the country will experience a rapid increase in the number of people living with disabilities. Furthermore, unlike ethnicity, gender, and other demographic or physical characteristics, disability is the only category that people can join at any time and most people will join as they age.

All of us encounter individuals with disabilities as we pursue the day to day activities of our lives. We may know someone with a disability, see someone in the local grocery store, or work with or meet with someone with a disability in our Congressional offices. Unfortunately, many of our constituents with disabilities have difficulties accessing their elected officials, attending hearings, and participating in other events here in Congress because of physical, attitudinal, and communication barriers that prohibit it or make it very difficult. No one should be precluded from participating in the legislative process because of these societal and institutional barriers.

Within the guide you will find procedures and options that will address the needs of those with a wide range of disabilities.

It contains materials dealing with basic rules of etiquette, emergency preparedness, and the importance of accessible room design. Feel free to use it as you continue to develop various policies and procedures for accommodating those with disabilities who work in or visit your office. If you have any questions regarding the guide, how to develop a similar handbook that is more specific to your needs, or if you need to obtain a version of the guide in a different format please contact Aaron Bishop or Kelly Hastings on my staff at 4-6770.

A special thank you must go to the following organizations that assisted with the development of this guide:

American Council of the Blind
Architect of the Capitol
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Brain Injury Association of America
Congressional Special Services
Easter Seals
Epilepsy Foundation
Gallaudet University
Goodwill Industries International
Institute for Educational Leadership
Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
National Federation of the Blind
Office of Compliance
Sergeant at Arms
Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc.
The Arc and United Cerebral Palsy Disability Policy
Collaboration
United Spinal Association
Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council

Sincerely,

Mike Enzi, U.S. Senator