

HOW WILL JOHN KERRY AND JOHN EDWARDS KEEP THEIR PROMISE TO AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES?

EMPOWER A COMMISSION TO ADOPT A COMMUNITY FIRST POLICY

There is an institutional bias that must be reversed to ensure that Americans with disabilities of every age have the services and supports to live in the community of their choice. To do this, John Kerry will appoint a national bipartisan Community First Commission made up of members of Congress, governors, distinguished older Americans, veterans, Americans with disabilities and other experts. The commission will identify short and long term policy reforms that will:

- Guarantee that all Americans with disabilities who can live in their community with affordable supports have equal opportunity to do so regardless of age, disability, state of residence, employment status or form of assistance required.
- Create a greater federal role in equitably financing and enhancing the quality and appropriateness of all long-term services.
- Eliminate institutional bias in Medicaid and Medicare that robs millions of Americans of their most basic freedoms, dignity and daily independence.

The commission will submit findings and recommendations to the Kerry administration and the leadership of both houses of Congress by July 26, 2005 – the 15th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

How can you help?

Join Americans with Disabilities for Kerry
www.johnkerry.com/signup/awd.php

See the Kerry-Edwards comprehensive agenda
for Americans with Disabilities at:
www.johnkerry.com

“We are bold, we are determined, and we will not take ‘No’ for an answer on this because failure is not an option. We must provide freedom, choices, and independence for all and I will not rest until we do.”

– John Kerry

Paid for by Kerry-Edwards 2004, Inc.

P.O. Box 34640
Washington, DC 20043

202-712-3000
202-712-3001 (fax)
202-336-6950 (TTY)
www.JohnKerry.com

Kerry Edwards



COMMUNITY FIRST



How Americans with
Disabilities
Will Prosper Through...

**Freedom, Independence,
& Choices**

COMMUNITY FIRST POLICY: HOW DOES IT WORK?

A Kerry-Edwards administration will ensure that Americans with disabilities prosper by making progress on key issues that promote freedom, independence and choices. Here are but a few examples of what a Kerry-Edwards administration will do for Americans with Disabilities when elected:

CIVIL RIGHTS

The Americans with Disabilities and Rehabilitation Act are the most important civil rights laws for persons with disabilities in our country's history. Kerry and Edwards believe it is vital that we enforce these laws and fight recent judicial and legislative actions that weaken these laws. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guarantees the right to live, go to school, work and play like every other American and they will fight for these freedoms guaranteed by the ADA. John Kerry and John Edwards strenuously oppose the Republican-proposed ADA Notification Act because it would aid those who seek to evade the ADA.

LONG-TERM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

Medicaid reforms such as MiCASSA and "Money Follows the Person" will ensure that no person is forced into a nursing home or institution. "The choice

to live, and become active members of our community is the birthright of every American." A Kerry-Edwards administration will prioritize the passage of these bills to increase the independence of Americans with disabilities and will appoint a national bipartisan commission to identify additional necessary reforms.

EDUCATION

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides a foundation for children with disabilities to obtain the education necessary to make a successful transition into adulthood. John Kerry and John Edwards believe if we, as a community, are to create opportunities for disabled Americans equal to those of their non-disabled peers, then education is the key that opens those doors and help ensure equality. A Kerry-Edwards administration will fully fund IDEA and seek stronger enforcement and compliance in order to make sure no children fall through the cracks.

HOUSING

John Kerry has said, "The Fair Housing Act and the U.S. Supreme Court Olmstead decision have set the precedent for a new dawn for Americans with disabilities." John Kerry and John Edwards will promote universal design, enforce public housing set asides, and increase HUD housing vouchers for people with disabilities. "We must embrace the challenges of implementing the Olmstead decision and begin the work of ensuring an adequate supply of accessible, affordable housing in the United States."

EMPLOYMENT

Employment provides Americans who have disabilities with the independence to live free in their communities as productive, tax-paying citizens who contribute to the local economy. A Kerry-Edwards administration will look like America, by guaranteeing that qualified individuals with disabilities play a pivotal role within and throughout their administration. Additionally, Kerry will reinstate the Executive Order issued by President Clinton to hire 100,000 qualified individuals with disabilities as federal employees.

HEALTH CARE

Americans with disabilities must have the freedom of choice to high quality, accessible and affordable health care. John Kerry will work hard to protect important programs like Medicaid; to fix those parts of Medicare that are broken; and to promote innovative solutions that will improve the overall health care system for Americans with disabilities.

TRANSPORTATION

Americans with disabilities need access to transportation to ensure they can travel throughout their communities. Doing so encompasses all aspects of freedom, independence, and choices. John Kerry will appoint an Attorney General who will enforce the ADA to ensure accessible transportation services for Americans with disabilities. And he will expand Project ACTION to increase communities' knowledge of best practices in providing accessible transportation.