

Beat: Politics

## JOHN KERRY CELEBRATES THE 25 ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT ADA

### DEPARTMENT OF STATE WILL HIRE MORE DISAB

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**USPA NEWS** - "I've traveled to a great number of countries as secretary of state, and I've seen firsthand that the protection of disability rights is not an abstract concept." Said Kerry US secretary with Special Advisor for International Disability Rights Judith Heumann celebrating the 25th Anniversary of ADA.

John Kerry US secretary with Special Advisor for International Disability Rights Judith Heumann speak on a panel celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the ADA at the Foreign Press Center today, July 27, 2015.

"Things you can see and touch make a measurable difference for people living with disabilities: things like sidewalks with curb cuts; public buildings with accessible bathrooms; restaurants, stores, hotels and universities with ramps and elevator access; buses with lifts; train platforms with tactile strips." Said John Kerry.

### THE WAY WE TREAT PEOPLE OF ALL BACKGROUNDS DEMONSTRATES OUR VALUES AND DEFINES WHO WE ARE-SAID JOHN KERRY-----

However t in too many countries, what we have done in the United States through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is far from reality. Children are left to die because of the stigma associated with disability. Adults who are blind or deaf are excluded from the labor market. Children with disabilities are turned away from schools. Roads and sidewalks are impassable for people using wheelchairs.

That disabled people in the United States have a different fate is due in no small part to the ADA, a piece of legislation won from a historic campaign waged by people with disabilities and their advocates. As a U.S. senator, I was proud to join that campaign and proud to be a co-sponsor.

For all of the impact of the ADA around the world, there is more progress to be made. As an international community, we must do everything in our power to pursue the policies of inclusivity so that we leave no one behind -- anywhere. - Secretary of State John Kerry.

### OBAMA AND KERRY WILL KEEP FIGHTING UNTIL ADA'S RATIFICATION IS ACHIEVED-----

"For all of the impact of the ADA around the world, there is more progress to be made. For one, the U.S. has yet to ratify the convention. President Obama and I will keep fighting until its ratification is achieved, because we need to help push open the door for other interested countries to benefit -- not just from our example, but from our guidance and expertise.

That's why the State Department is backing Mobility International USA's "RightsNow!" consortium, which is focused on enforcement and implementation of disability rights in Armenia, Kenya, Mexico, and Vietnam.

And it's why we're promoting a range of educational and cultural exchange programs focused on disability rights. For example, the alumni of our Mandela Washington Fellowship program are working on a project in Uganda to provide education, language therapy and rehabilitation for children with disabilities from poor families."

Source department of State

### JOHN KERRY EXPRESSED HIS PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT ABOUT THE ISSUE OF DISABILITY AND THE NEXT STEPS FOR MORE EQUALITY-----

"As Secretary of State, I am blessed to have a spectacular team working full time on this issue with me. Judy Heumann, one of America's leading activists on disability rights, serves as my special advisor for international disability rights and engages counterparts across the globe on disability rights issues. The Department also has promoted the hiring of individuals with disabilities and anticipates doubling our 2015 hires over those of 2014. And this year, American ambassadors at posts around the world acknowledged the ADA anniversary at their official July 4 Independence Day celebrations to signal our support for local disability rights advocates and our ongoing commitment to advancing disability rights worldwide.

These are just a few examples of how we are making our foreign policy work for people with disabilities around the

globe.-----The way we treat people of all backgrounds demonstrates our values and defines who we are-----

The principle is simple: though our circumstances might change, our rights must be respected and our opportunities must continue to improve. As an international community, we must do everything in our power to pursue the policies of inclusivity so that we leave no one behind -- anywhere. "¶ Said Secretary Kerry.

"Thanks to the ADA, the places that comprise our shared American life""schools, workplaces, movie theaters, courthouses, buses, baseball stadiums, national parks""they truly belong to everyone." ""President Obama on the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act-----

SOURCE: About the Author: John Kerry serves as the 68th U.S. Secretary of State. For more from the Secretary, follow @JohnKerry on Twitter and go to [www.state.gov/secretary](http://www.state.gov/secretary). Editor's Note: This entry originally appeared as an opinion piece in The Guardian. - See more at: <http://blogs.state.gov/stories/2015/07/22/americans-disabilities-act-turns-25-now-we-must-work-global-equality#sthash.tVS7snqJ.dpuf>, Read more on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): <http://go.usa.gov/37XvPi>»¿, : <http://go.wh.gov/ADA25>

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