



What is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities?

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is an international disability treaty that was inspired by U.S. leadership in recognizing the rights of people with disabilities. The CRPD is a vital framework for creating legislation and policies around the world that embrace the rights and dignity of all people with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was the model for the CRPD, which values of independence and respect and concept of reasonable accommodation are echoed throughout the treaty.

The United States signed the CRPD in 2009. On December 4, 2012 the United States Senate considered the ratification of the CRPD but fell 5 votes short of the super-majority vote required. The media coverage of the Senate's failure to ratify the disability treaty has been overwhelming and the CRPD's Senate leaders remain committed to bringing the treaty up in the 113th Congress.

Why should the U.S. ratify the CRPD when we have the ADA?



ADA leader Justin Dart's hat in his honor at CRPD Senate hearing

Ratification of the CRPD Exports U.S. Leadership

- Over **500** U.S. disability organizations support the U.S. ratification of the CRPD. **26** leading faith organizations also support U.S. ratification, holding that “American leadership in this arena is critical to the ultimate success of the treaty.”
- Ratification is critical to maintaining our leadership role and to eliminating disability discrimination throughout the world and gives the U.S. legitimacy to export the model of the ADA to other countries.
- Ratification provides the U.S. an opportunity to play an important and expansive role in the development of disability rights around the world without having to change any U.S. laws or add additional costs to its budget.

VSOs Strongly Support CRPD to Expand Opportunities for Veterans

• **22** veterans service organizations including Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, and Wounded Warrior Project support ratification of the CRPD. These groups recognize that our **5.5 million** American veterans with disabilities will have greater opportunities to work, study, and travel abroad as countries implement the CRPD with leadership from the U.S.



VSO Press Conference on CRPD

U.S. Business Supports Ratification of the CRPD to Benefit Business Interests

- The Chamber of Commerce, the U.S. Business Leadership Network, and the Information Technology Industry Council support U.S. ratification of the CRPD because it benefits American business interests abroad by giving the U.S. a role in holding other countries to the level of accessibility required in the U.S. by the ADA. This greatly expands the pool of available workers for positions in U.S. businesses abroad.
- Many accessible products are engineered, manufactured, or sold by U.S. corporations that can meet the new demands for the world's population of **1 billion** people with disabilities. An active role in CRPD implementation by the U.S. enhances U.S. businesses' ability reach these emerging new sources of revenue.

CRPD Ratification Improves Global Accessibility

- 4 out of 10 American travelers are estimated to be people with disabilities and their companions yet they still face constant barriers and discrimination abroad.
- Students with disabilities represent less than 4% of students that choose to travel abroad.
- By ratifying the CRPD, the U.S. will offer decades of honed technical expertise to reduce barriers globally and ensure that Americans who travel and study abroad have the same access they enjoy here.



Dar es Salaam Airport



Courtesy of Disability Rights International

CRPD Ratification Ensures Humane and Moral Treatment

- Without laws like the ADA abroad, millions of children and adults are housed in institutions without enrichment of a family life, community resources, or access to the most basic civil rights like a birth certificate or even a name. Until it ratifies the CRPD, the U.S. is a bystander on these critical matters.

U.S Ratification of the CRPD Has Strong Bipartisan Support

- Republican leaders of disability legislation support ratification of the CRPD including former President George H.W. Bush, former Senator Bob Dole, former Attorney General Dick Thornburgh and former White House Counsel C. Boyden Gray.
- Senators McCain (R-AZ) and Barrasso (R-WY) led the treaty ratification effort with Senators Kerry (D-IL), Durbin (D-IL), and Harkin (D-IA) in the 112th Congress under shared values of independence, respect, and dignity for all people with disabilities. This bipartisanship leadership for the CRPD continues in the 113th Congress, beginning in January 2013.

QUICK STATS ABOUT THE WORLD'S LARGEST MINORITY

- **57.8 million** Americans have one or more disabilities
- **5.5 million** American veterans are people with disabilities
- **1 billion** people with disabilities around the world
- **80%** of people with disabilities live in developing countries
- **1 in 4** of today's 20 year olds will be disabled before they retire
- **80%** of people with disabilities live in isolated rural areas

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