



ADAPT FREE OUR PEOPLE!



Over a quarter century after the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), it is appalling that Americans with disabilities who need long term services and supports continue to be forced into unwanted institutionalization where they are stripped of their personal liberties.

To address this injustice, ADAPT and others in the Disability Community crafted the Disability Integration Act (S.910/HR.2472). The bipartisan/bicameral legislation strengthens the ADA's integration mandate and ensures no Disabled American is denied their Constitutional right to Life and Liberty by requiring they be provided a community-based alternative to institutional placement that allows them to lead an independent life. The legislation – which has broad-based support within the Disability Community – was originally introduced at the end of 2015 in the Senate.

For over two years, ADAPT and others in the Disability Community have been trying to secure Senator Alexander's co-sponsorship of the bill. Tennessee ADAPTerS have repeatedly tried to meet with the Senator's staff and even personally delivered a scroll with the signatures of hundreds of his constituents urging the Senator to cosponsor DIA.

The legislation addresses a critical issue across the country, but there are particular concerns in Tennessee. In fact, because of barriers to accessing community-based services and supports, Disabled Tennesseans actually use a modern "underground railroad" and move to other parts of the country where they can live in the community instead of being forced into an institution.

ADAPT demands that HELP Committee Chairman, Senator Lamar Alexander:

- **Agree to co-sponsor the Disability Integration Act (S.910), bipartisan/bicameral legislation that strengthens the ADA's integration mandate and ensures no Disabled American is denied their Constitutional right to Life and Liberty by requiring they be provided a community-based alternative to institutional placement that allows them to lead an independent life; and**
- **Work with Ranking Member Murray, the HELP Committee staff, ADAPT, and the National Council on Independent Living to hold a committee hearing on the Disability Integration Act addressing the fact that Disabled Americans are being denied their Constitutional rights to life, liberty and due process when they are forced into nursing facilities and other institutions.**