

December 12, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama
President
The United States of America
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The Justice for All Action Network (JFAAN), a national coalition of organizations of, by, and with people with disabilities, applauds you and your Administration for declaring employment of people with disabilities as a top priority.

As follow-up to our June 29, 2009 letter outlining the JFAAN Employment Team Policy Recommendations as a roadmap out of poverty for millions of Americans with disabilities, we offer the attached draft Executive Order establishing a **Commission on People with Disabilities, Employment, Economic Empowerment and Social Security** as a blueprint to carry out your campaign assurances through concrete action.

As a measurable benchmark of your Administration's commitment to the employment and economic self-sufficiency of people with disabilities, we look forward to your announcing your Executive Order to establish such a Commission. We anticipate it will create a national dialogue on these important issues.

The 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) coming up on July 26, 2010, offers an ideal opportunity for milestones. If you are able to announce your Executive Order before the end of your first year as President in January 2010, it could enable the Commission to be appointed in time to hold its first meeting on or before the 20th anniversary of the ADA.

The attached draft Executive Order is endorsed by the signatories to this letter. It reflects due diligence, considerable thought and input from a broad perspective of stakeholders and subject matter experts, including employed subject matter experts with disabilities, who remain resources to your Administration in bringing the Commission to full fruition.

We are happy to work with Special Assistant for Disability Policy Kareem Dale and other Administration leaders to establish this historic Commission that will finally bring full access to the American dream for millions of men, women and children with disabilities for generations to come.

Signatories,

National Organizations:

ADAPT

American Association of People with Disabilities
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation
Coalition for Community Integration
Family Voices
Hearing Loss Association of America
Justice For All Action Network
Little People of America
National Association of the Deaf
National Association of Black Veterans
National Center for Environmental Health Strategies, Inc.
National Center on Self Determination
National Coalition of Consumer/Survivor Organizations
National Council on Independent Living
National Spinal Cord Injury Association
National Telecommuting Institute
National Youth Leadership Network
Not Dead Yet
Paralyzed Veterans of America
Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered
TASH
United Spinal Association
VetsFirst
Vietnam Veterans of America
Veterans of Modern Warfare
World Institute on Disability

Others:

Access Living, Illinois
ADAPT Nebraska
Elmer C. Bartels, former Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commissioner
Boston Center for Independent Living
California Foundation for Independent Living Centers
California Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
California Work Incentives
Center for Disability Rights, New York
Charles Carr, Commissioner, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
Concrete Change, Georgia
Cornucopia, Inc., Wisconsin
Craig Hospital, Colorado
Susan M Daniels, PhD, Washington DC
Disabled Action Committee, Virginia

Disabilityworks, Illinois
Disability Policy Consortium, Inc., Massachusetts
Disabilities Network of NYC
DK Advocates, Arizona
Stephen Gold, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Grassroots Empowerment Project, Wisconsin
Tari Hartman Squire, EIN SOF Communications, Inc., California
Ida Mae Campbell Wellness & Resource Center
Independence Empowerment Center, Virginia
Nebraska Statewide Independent Living Council
New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services
North Carolina Disability Action Network
Paraquad, Inc, Missouri
Shepherd Center, Atlanta, GA
Patricia McGill Smith, Nebraska
Starkloff Disability Institute
Statewide Independent Living Council of GA, Inc.
Stavros Center for Independent Living, Massachusetts
The Arc of Nebraska
The Community Access & Inclusion Project, Massachusetts
The Employment Now Coalition, Massachusetts
Cecil Walker, Kansas

cc: Kareem Dale, Associate Director and Special Assistant to the President for
Disability Policy