

The Disabilities Treaty: Opening the World to Americans with Disabilities

Benefits for U.S. Businesses

Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Disabilities Treaty) will help open new markets for American products, technologies and services.

American businesses are pioneers of innovation for people with disabilities. Take the consumer electronics industry – which includes assistive technologies in products such as computers, smart phones, and televisions. Last year alone, this industry contributed more than \$200 billion to the U.S. economy. Ratification of the Disabilities Treaty will help open new markets for U.S. businesses to export these products and services to people and businesses around the world seeking cutting-edge assistive technologies.

“To the extent we can make these technologies available on a worldwide basis, that’s a bigger market and more opportunity for companies to deliver their products into the world.”
– Brian Markwalter, Consumer Electronics Association

Ratification will help level the playing field for American businesses.

Unlike many of their foreign competitors, U.S. companies are required to meet robust accessibility standards. Ratification will help level the playing field for American companies as other countries rise to meet our standards.

“Ratification will help to level the playing field for U.S. businesses, which currently compete with foreign counterparts who do not have to adhere to our high standards when it comes to accommodation and accessibility for individuals with disabilities.”
– U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Ratification will help ensure that other countries model their accessibility standards on our own.

Since passage of the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, U.S. businesses have developed a wide range of products, technologies and services for people with disabilities. From televisions and smart phones to building construction and automobiles, the United States is a leader in developing and implementing accessibility standards. Ratifying the Disabilities Treaty will put the United States in the best position to export these standards to the rest of the world, ensuring that American businesses retain their competitive edge.

“This [treaty] really provides a blueprint to allow different technology companies to come together, working with different governments in setting harmonized standards for technology.”
– Frances West, IBM

“U.S. support for the [treaty] would strengthen the convention’s implementation globally because of the U.S.’s existing leadership role in accessibility. And U.S. ratification of the treaty will underscore the message that accessibility is a topic that we agree needs to be addressed in a globally and harmonized manner.”
– Andrew Kirkpatrick, Adobe Systems