

National Council on Disability

January 19, 2010
Letter of Transmittal
January 19, 2010

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the National Council on Disability (NCD), I am pleased to submit this report titled *The State of Housing in America in the 21st Century: A Disability Perspective*. This report looks at the state of housing for people with disabilities with the intent to provide recommendations that can improve housing opportunities. The research contained in this report provides a comprehensive overview of the state of housing in the 21st century and answers important questions about the current housing needs and options for people with disabilities living in the United States. The Council is deeply appreciative of your efforts on behalf of people with disabilities. We hope that the recommendations contained herein will aid the Administration in addressing the challenges facing people with disabilities in attaining affordable, accessible, and appropriate housing for people with disabilities.

NCD undertook this study with three objectives in mind: (1) to evaluate public laws, policies, and program initiatives affecting the housing opportunities available to Americans with disabilities and others who have accessible housing needs for whatever reason, whether due to aging or a temporary disability; (2) to analyze what housing, supports, and other benefits are available through the public, nonprofit, and/or private sectors; and (3) to provide recommendations that can improve housing opportunities for people with disabilities in the United States.

Affordable, accessible, and appropriate housing is critical and integral to making a community more livable for people with disabilities. In this report, NCD finds that there are unmet housing needs based solely on standard measures of housing affordability. This analysis also reveals a gap between current policy goals and outcomes—even with laws in place

requiring a portion of units to be accessible, some developers and property owners do not comply. Whether this noncompliance is due to ignorance or intent, the evidence suggests we have missed opportunities to increase the supply of accessible, affordable housing.

The findings and recommendations contained in this document are grounded in data and research gathered from federal agencies, either directly or via published reports, and from research completed by academics and disability advocates. This report also provides evidence of what can be effective in meeting the range of housing needs among a diverse group of consumers with disabilities. This includes best and promising practices drawn from real examples, and lessons learned from experts working on housing issues and policy. In reviewing best and promising practices, data were triangulated from different sources—interviews, published reports, and Internet research—to ensure a comprehensive assessment. To this end, the research has been reviewed and commented on by a diverse panel of experts and consumer groups that have all provided valuable insights and guidance.

NCD stands ready to work with you, members of your Administration, and the leadership in Congress as you work toward improving our nation's housing infrastructure.

Sincerely,

John R. Vaughn

Chairperson

(The same letter of transmittal was sent to the President Pro Tempore of the U.S. Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.)