

Disability Rights March and Rally marks 27th year of the Americans with Disabilities Act

Through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) the United States of America committed itself to eliminating discrimination against people with disabilities. In celebration of the act turning 27 and to reaffirm our commitment to inclusion and rights for all, the Minnesota Disability Rights March and Rally will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. Wednesday, July 26.

Orientation will begin at 1 p.m. at the Minnesota History Center, 345 Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul, in the Education wing. The March will begin at 1:30 p.m. to the Minnesota State Capitol. A Disability Rights Rally will be held from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. in the Capitol Rotunda.

The ADA celebration will include a variety of featured speakers and entertainment. Kristen Jorenby, Director of Accessibility Resources at Metropolitan State University, will act as the Master of Ceremonies. Entertainment will include performances by Young Ant, the first blind female rapper in the United States; and The Workin' Dogs, a group whose music promotes human dignity and equal civil rights for all. Speakers will include Senator Fong Hawj (67), Representative Frank Hornstein (61A), Minnesota Department of Human Rights Commissioner Kevin Lindsey, Access Press Editor Tim Benjamin, and others.

The Disability Rights March and Rally provides people with disabilities, their friends, family members and supporters, the opportunity to unite and reaffirm a commitment to full equality and inclusion for all. The march to the Capitol will demonstrate the ADA is still alive and that ongoing actions are necessary to promote continued change and to make sure the ADA is being fully implemented.

Passed in 1990, the ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life including employment, state and local government, transportation and all public places that are open to the general public. Additionally, the ADA aims to provide equality of opportunity, economic self-sufficiency, full participation, and independent living for people with disabilities.

As defined by the American with Disabilities Act, approximately 20 percent of the population has a disability. That number is expected to increase as the age of the American population increases.

While the ADA has paved the way toward progress, there is still a long way to go. Physical, communication, and social barriers still exist. Please join us July 26th to celebrate the successes of ADA and reaffirm our continued work toward opening gateways to full participation and opportunity for people with disabilities.

Accommodations for the orientation and rally include ASL interpreters, CART, and audio description.

For more information or to confirm audio description services or to request a reasonable accommodation not listed above, please contact Cindy at ADA Minnesota, 651-603-2015 or cindyt@mcil-mn.org by 7/7/17.