

Kentucky Primary Election, May 20, 2008
Relevant Information & Other Resource Materials
Prepared for the Kentucky Council on Developmental Disabilities



University of Kentucky

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document was prepared for the Kentucky Council on Developmental Disabilities (KCDD) and contains a variety of information related to the upcoming state primary election to be held on May 20, 2008. This report is intended to serve as a quick and simple interactive reference guide since most of the information was compiled from online sources; and as such, all the printed links (highlighted in blue) can be clicked on to automatically direct the reader to the website.

The first section provides general information on absentee ballots, which can only be obtained through the county clerk's office. Next, we report on where to get information on what the Kentucky State Board of Elections is doing to comply with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002. The state is supposed to ensure that all voting precincts and voting machines in all counties are HAVA compliant.

As part of this report, we contacted 96 out of the 124 counties in Kentucky to inquire about what specific resources and actions are being taken at the county level to assist voters with disabilities. Their compliance with HAVA requirements was highlighted. Contact information for all county clerks is listed in the appendix of this report. We also include a brief description of the voting machine that is intended to be accessible for voters with disabilities.

Lastly, campaign offices in Kentucky for two out of the three presidential candidates were contacted as well. One candidate has not yet established campaign offices in Kentucky. Information was requested on how voters with disabilities could avail of resources and information on the platform and positions taken by the candidates. This report includes a summary of the general platform and specific positions on disability policy for all three candidates.

INFORMATION ON ABSENTEE BALLOTS

This information is taken directly from: <http://elect.ky.gov/registrationinfo/absenteeballot.htm>

Absentee ballots can only be obtained through the county clerk's office. You may request an application for an absentee ballot through your county clerk's office in person, by phone, by mail or by fax. Also, the voter's spouse, parent or child can request an application for a mail-in absentee ballot.

Mail-in Absentee Ballots

In order to qualify for a mail-in absentee ballot, you must fulfill one of the below criteria:

- Advanced age, Disability, or Illness
- Military personnel, their Dependent, and Overseas Citizens
- Student who temporarily resides outside the county
- Other voter who temporarily resides outside of Kentucky, such as a vacationer
- Incarcerated but not yet convicted
- Your employment takes you out of the county all hours the polling place is open

The deadline for applying for a mail-in absentee ballot is 7 days before an election. **For the presidential primary election, that date is May 13.** The completed application must be received by the County Clerk by mail or in person by the 7 day deadline. The absentee ballot must be received in the county clerk's office by 6 PM local time on Election Day for the ballot to be counted.

Medical Emergency Paper Ballots

You can apply for a medical emergency absentee ballot if a medical emergency occurs within 14 days before an election. The spouse of the voter can also apply for a paper absentee ballot.

Voting Machine Absentee Ballots

A voting machine at the County Clerk's office is available 12 (or more) working days before the election for those voters who are qualified to vote by absentee ballot in the County Clerk's office. You must fulfill one of the below criteria in order to be eligible:

- You will be out of the county on election day
- Military personnel, their Dependents, and Overseas Citizens
- Military personnel confined to base who learn of it within seven days or less of an election
- Student or resident who temporarily reside outside of the county
- Voter who has surgery scheduled that will require hospitalization on Election Day, and the voter's spouse
- You are a pregnant woman in your third trimester
- Election Officials

President/Vice President Election

If you change your place of residence to a different state while the registration books are closed in the new state, you can apply for an mail-in absentee ballot or vote on the absentee voting machine only in President/Vice President election.

STATE LEVEL Information

State Contact Information

Kentucky State Board of Elections
Trey Grayson, Chairman
Tel # (502) 573-7100

Help American Vote Act (HAVA) Information & Implementation

Under provisions of the Help Americans Vote Act, the federal government makes funds available to states to insure accessible voting and requires that each voting location have at least one voting system accessible to individuals with disabilities. Kentucky's state plan for complying with HAVA is found at:

<http://www.sos.ky.gov/elections/hava/>

The 2003 State Plan was adopted on June 12, 2003, published in the federal register and effective after a 60 day state and federal public comment period. The 2006 State Plan was adopted on December 8, 2006, published in the federal register, and effective after a 60 day state and federal public comment period. To view either plan, please click on the respective links below:

LINK FOR: [2006 Amended HAVA State Plan in PDF Format](#)

LINK FOR: [2003 HAVA State Plan in PDF Format](#)

State Official in-Charge for HAVA implementation

Leslie A. Fugate
Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
Office of the Secretary of State
700 Capital Avenue, Suite 152
State Capitol
Frankfort, KY 40601
Tel No. (502) 564-3490
Fax: (502) 564-5687
Email: Les.Fugate@ky.gov.

Based on the page 6 of the 2006 Amended HAVA State Plan for Kentucky, more than \$16 million was spent to purchase, one per precinct, voting machines accessible for individuals with disabilities. Also from the same report, close to \$600,000 was spent to purchase, one per county, an absentee voting machine accessible to individuals with disabilities.

The State Board of Elections also purchased for each county, an optical scan ballot system for in-house and mail-in absentee voting. In addition, an election management tool was

developed which connects a statewide voter registration database to automate the absentee ballot application and post-election report process for all county clerks.

COUNTY LEVEL Information

For the upcoming Kentucky primary election on May 20, 2008, all counties in the states will have accessible (HAVA compliant) polling places and voting machines. Most precincts have been moved to schools which are ADA compliant to ensure access to all voters with any disability. As mandated by federal law, the electronic voting machine which will be in every precinct polling Braille identifiers on the controls and a headphone device that will read the ballot to the sight impaired. County officials indicated that election officers are trained to assist voters with disabilities if asked. In addition to Election Day activities, county officials interviewed emphasized that they are also promoting the use of absentee mail-in paper ballots for those who cannot go to the polls on Election Day because of age, disability, or illness.

County officials indicated that the Kentucky Disabilities Coalition has provided each precinct with multiple aids for the disabled voter. These include, brail instructions, line marker for signature, magnifying rulers etc. Some counties indicated that family and friends of most of the registered voters indicating a disability have signed a voter assistance form.

None of the county election officials or offices provides information on the platform and positions of the candidates. Election officers providing any information on the candidates will be charged with "electioneering" as per KRS 117.235.

Finally, almost every county representative that was contacted indicated some form of coordination with or assistance from the Kentucky Disabilities Coalition. Some mentioned preparing election posters designed to provide voting assistance information for voters with disabilities.

E-Slate Voting Machine

All counties will have an E-slate voting machine in each voting precinct. Voters with visual impairments, blindness, or literacy challenges may use the eSlate's integrated audio ballot reader to navigate through the ballot. The eSlate can also be used by voters with severe mobility impairments. With the eSlate, all voters can vote independently and privately. The eSlate's accessibility features have been judged superior in independent product reviews by a leading disability research organization.

An Adobe Flash based interactive demonstration is available at:
<http://www.hartintercivic.com/files/eSlate.swf>

Accessibility features of the voting machine is available at:
http://www.hartic.com/files/accessible_DLA_12_rev.pdf

County Contact Information

Please see Appendix 1 for the attached list of county clerks in Kentucky and their contact information (updated as of April 2008).

A list of county clerks in Kentucky is also available at:

<http://www.elect.ky.gov/countyclerks.htm>

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

Campaign offices in Kentucky for two of the three presidential candidates were contacted to request what resources and materials were available to inform and address any inquiry on candidate platform issues by voters with disabilities.

Campaign staff interviewed stressed that they make an effort to be as accommodating as possible to all inquiries and try especially to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. For example, since some of their volunteer staff members are physically handicapped, campaign offices are wheelchair accessible.

As for obtaining information on candidate's platform and campaign issues, the candidate's campaign website is the first option (considered as a possible first option for those who are deaf or hearing impaired). The second option is to call in to their offices (considered as a possible first option for those who are blind or visually impaired). The third option is if the campaign office is assessable, then a visit to the office where a volunteer may answer questions in person. Finally, they mention that in all campaign related events or rallies, they try to ensure that staff is on hand to communicate with individuals with disabilities. For example, they always have a person doing sign language during the campaign speeches.

We have compiled the following links on the presidential candidates regarding their general platform and when available, their specific position on disability policy.

Senator Hillary Clinton***Contact Information for Kentucky Campaign***

Main Website: <http://www.hillaryclinton.com/hq/Kentucky/>

Louisville Office

1357 Bardstown Road
Louisville, KY 40204
Phone: 502-454-4448

Pikeville

137 Division Street
Pikeville, KY 41501

Lexington

901 Richmond Road
Lexington, KY 40502

Covington

302 Court Street Ste 202
Covington, KY 41011

Frankfort

340-1 Democrat Drive
Frankfort, KY 40601

General Summary of Campaign Platform

Information taken from: <http://www.hillaryclinton.com/issues/>

[Strengthening the Middle Class](#)

America's middle class is under siege and ready for change. People are working harder and longer for less and less. For six long years, America's middle class and working families have been invisible to our president. When Hillary is in the White House, no American will be invisible to the president of the United States.

[Providing Affordable and Accessible Health Care](#)

Nearly 47 million Americans -- including 9 million children -- don't have health insurance. America is ready for universal health care. Hillary has the vision and the experience to make it a reality. This is a battle Hillary has fought before -- and she has the scars to prove it. She knows better than anyone how to fight and build the political support to get the job done.

[Ending the War in Iraq](#)

America is ready for a leader who will end the war in Iraq. Hillary's roadmap out of Iraq, the Iraq Troop Protection and Reduction Act of 2007, is a plan to end the war before the next president takes the oath of office. But if the Bush administration won't end the war, as president and commander in chief, Hillary will.

[Promoting Energy Independence and Fighting Global Warming](#)

The choices we make about energy touch nearly every aspect of our lives. Our economy, our national security, our health, and the future of our planet are all at stake as we make a choice between energy independence and dependence on foreign sources of oil. Hillary has proposed an Apollo Project-like program dedicated to achieving energy independence.

[Improving Our Schools](#)

Hillary has long been a passionate advocate for providing greater educational opportunities to all children. She knows that parents are our children's first teachers, and the early years have a

tremendous impact on their lives. She also knows that we have to improve our K-12 system in order to ensure that every child is prepared to compete, and has a plan to make college affordable for all.

[Fulfilling Our Promises to Veterans](#)

Hillary will ensure that all those who sacrifice on behalf of our country receive the help and care they need. They not only deserve our country's gratitude and support; they deserve the gold standard in health care and benefits when they return home. That is our most solemn obligation to those who have put their lives on the line for our country.

[Supporting Parents and Caring for Children](#)

America is ready for a president who fights for our children. From her first job out of law school at the Children's Defense Fund to her time as First Lady of Arkansas and of the United States to her service in the Senate, helping children has been at the center of Hillary's public life.

[Restoring America's Standing in the World](#)

The next president's most urgent task will be to restore America's standing in the world to promote our interests, ensure our security, and advance our values. America is stronger when we lead the world through alliances. As president, Hillary will lead by the words of the Declaration of Independence, which pledged "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind."

[A Champion for Women](#)

Hillary's historic statement in 1995 that "women's rights are human rights" still echoes worldwide. As a lawyer, advocate, First Lady, and senator, Hillary has fought for issues important to women here at home and around the world for decades. Hillary will continue her lifelong fight to ensure that all Americans are treated with respect and dignity.

[Comprehensive Government Reform](#)

Americans are ready for a government that puts competency ahead of cronyism. For the past six years, we've had an administration that has contempt for government. And because they view it with contempt, they treat it with contempt. We need a return to transparency and a system of checks and balances, and a 21st century government to meet our 21st century challenges.

[Strengthening Our Democracy](#)

Fair and honest elections are the bedrock of a successful democracy. Yet we have seen abuses in national elections since 2000 that have undermined our democracy and Americans' faith in our electoral system. Hillary is a leading champion of election reform. She has introduced the Count Every Vote Act to avoid repeating the problems of the past and ensure the integrity of our elections.

[Reforming Our Immigration System](#)

Our immigration system is in crisis. The laws we currently have on the books are inadequate and no longer serve our best interests. As a nation, we place a premium on compassion, respect, and policies that help families, but our immigration laws don't reflect that. Hillary has consistently called for comprehensive immigration reform that respects our immigrant heritage and honors the rule of law.

[An Innovation Agenda](#)

At a time when workers are anxious about the challenges of globalization and there is growing concern that America is losing its competitive edge, Hillary offered her views on how innovation can be the key for creating new jobs, stimulating economic growth, and ensuring American leadership of 21st century industries.

[Creating Opportunity for Rural America](#)

Hillary has a vision for rebuilding rural communities to ensure that opportunities are available and people can still achieve the American dream. At the core of Hillary's vision is her strong support for family farms. She believes that there are many opportunities to create good jobs and improve key services in rural areas.

[Specific Information on Disability Policy](#)

<http://www.hillaryclinton.com/issues/family/>

... Passing legislation to provide respite care for caregivers of elderly and disabled Americans.

<http://www.hillaryclinton.com/feature/ada/>

On the eve of the 17th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Hillary Clinton wanted to celebrate the significant progress that has been made since this landmark law was enacted. The nation has dramatically improved the accessibility of the built environment and the telecommunications infrastructure. But there is still have a long way to go. That is why today Hillary Clinton is unveiling a new set of proposals to empower people with disabilities for the jobs, work and careers they aspire to.

The United States will only reach its economic potential if it ensures that people with disabilities have the full opportunity to reach their potential. Americans with disabilities have half the employment rate and double the poverty rate of individuals who do not have disabilities. Even those people with disabilities who graduated college work at only two-thirds the rate of college graduates without disabilities. Hillary Clinton believes we must shift our orientation towards a new approach that helps those with disabilities thrive and reach their potential in the workplace, community and nation.

This agenda builds on Hillary Clinton's record on issues important to people with disabilities. From her support for programs that promote access to long-term support services to providing universal health care, Hillary Clinton has been a longtime champion of policies and programs that help people with disabilities live full and rewarding lives.

Hillary Clinton's work opportunity agenda for persons with disabilities is the start of an ongoing dialogue with the disability community. This dialogue will continue on campaign trail and when she's in the White House. She wants to reach a point so that on future anniversaries of the ADA instead of lamenting the lack of progress on employment and economic opportunity, we can celebrate together the vast strides we've made together. The ADA's promise of full and meaningful participation is not going to be realized as long as we have a bias towards institutionalizing people. That is why Hillary is a proud co-sponsor of the Community Choice Act and why today - in honor of the 17th anniversary of the ADA - she is proposing an economic opportunity agenda for all persons with disabilities. As President, Hillary Clinton will:

1. Promote innovative employment strategies for people with disabilities

Too many people with disabilities are being held back from obtaining good, high-paying jobs in our economy because employers are unwilling or unaccustomed to work with them. In addition, while states and cities throughout the United States have pioneered programs that help individuals with disabilities connect to high-paying jobs, these programs remain localized and poorly funded. As President, Hillary will help individuals acquire work-enabling technology and work with employers to ensure they recognize the economic potential of providing more accommodating work environments. She will dedicate \$100 million towards innovative initiatives that increase the proportion of people with disabilities in the workforce by:

Doubling Funding for Assistive Technology Loan Programs

Assistive technologies should be affordable to all people with disabilities who need them. Expensive loans that weigh down people already struggling are not the answer. Hillary will double loan programs that enable people to purchase assistive technologies and support state initiatives like the Virginia Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority, which has helped Virginians of all income levels (including SSI and SSDI recipients) to access low-interest loans to purchase equipment like wheelchairs, Braille equipment, hearing aids, low vision aids, and communication systems. To ensure that financing such technology is never an undue burden on the work aspirations of people with disabilities, Hillary Clinton will require an income-contingent option that never requires more than a modest percentage of one's income for repayment.

Providing More Technical Assistance for Employers

Many employers are hesitant to hire people with disabilities because they are unsure about the accommodations necessary to enable successful work. President Bush has not kept his promises to fund programs that remove employment barriers that keep people with disabilities from work. He has cut funding for the Office of Disability Employment Policy by 41%, and his current budget proposes to cut the Office by an additional 34%. As President, Hillary Clinton will restore funding to the Office of Disability Employment Policy, with an emphasis on giving employers the tools to effectively employ people with disabilities. She will establish a new technical assistance resource center to provide real-time support for employers and help them link with local resources to implement workplace accommodations.

Expanding Innovative State and Local Job Connection Strategies

Hillary Clinton will bolster employment for people with disabilities by providing federal challenge grants to expand and replicate innovative state and local strategies such as Maryland's Reach Independence Through Self-Employment (RISE) program that has trained over 1,000 people with disabilities on developing business plans and has supported the launch of over 30 businesses across the state of Maryland with loans of up to \$15,000.

2. Re-Establish the Clinton Administration Executive Order to Hire 100,000 Qualified Employees and make the federal government a model of accessibility

During the Bush administration, the federal government has failed to make jobs or information technologies fully accessible for people with disabilities. In her first month in office, Hillary Clinton will review all federal websites to ensure they are accessible. She will also re-establish Executive Order 13163 to hire 100,000 qualified employees with disabilities to federal employment over five years.

3. Enact a \$1,000 Refundable Worker With Disabilities Tax Credit

Workers with disabilities face extra costs for accessible technologies, transportation, and support service workers. These additional expenses amount to a regressive tax for workers with disabilities, so the federal government must work to offset these costs. Hillary Clinton proposes a \$1,000 refundable tax credit to help offset additional expenses for workers with serious disabilities and moderate incomes.

4. Reduce Disincentives to Work in Federal Benefits Programs

People with disabilities can lose their Social Security Disability Insurance, Supplemental Security Income, Medicare, and Medicaid benefits when they work for even a meager income. The Clinton administration took important steps to address this problem by enacting the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act. As a result, 31 states have enacted policies to reduce the disincentives to work. That represents significant progress, but state policies are still uneven. Some states place limits on unearned income with respect to enrollment. Others require persons with incomes above specified levels to pay premiums. And still others fail to provide enrollment protections for individuals who lose employment while participating in the Medicaid Buy-In program. In addition, when an individual who is covered by the buy-in moves to another state that has not taken up the buy-in option, they lose their coverage and incentive to stay employed. As President, Hillary will further break down the disincentives to work in our public programs by:

5. Equalizing Cost Sharing Treatment by Applying More Favorable SCHIP Cost Protections to Medicaid Buy In

States frequently charge burdensome premiums and co-pays for coverage under the Medicaid buy-in for working individuals with disabilities. The cost of that coverage can be unaffordable for working individuals with disabilities. To make health care more affordable for working parents of children, the federal government has limited the premium and cost-sharing amounts under the State Child Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) to 5 percent of family income. This proposal would limit premiums and cost-sharing for individuals buying into Medicaid to the same percentage of family income - creating parity between the two programs.³

Eliminating Medicare Eligibility Time Limit

An individual with disabilities who is eligible for Medicare can continue working and retain Medicare coverage for a time-limited 8½ years. Hillary would eliminate the time-limit, allowing individuals to continue to work as long as they are able, and still retain Medicare eligibility.

Conducting a National Review

Hillary will also ask top government officials to work with health, retirement and disability experts to review and make recommendations on how work disincentives can be eliminated from major federal programs such as SSDI, SSI, Medicare, and Medicaid eligibility. This review will develop recommendations to eliminate inconsistencies across states and will require HHS to release a best practice report that will make explicit recommendations to reduce disincentives to work.

Senator Barack Obama

Contact Information for Kentucky Campaign

Main Website: <http://my.barackobama.com/page/content/kyhome>

Lexington Office

125 East Reynolds road, Suite 115
Lexington, KY 40517
859-971-1271

[View the Map](#)

Bowling Green Office

814 State St.
Bowling Green, KY 42101
270-843-8444

[View the Map](#)

Louisville Office

900 E Market St
Louisville, KY 40206
502-561-8401

[View the Map](#)

Pikeville Office

224 Second St.
Pikeville, KY 41501
[View the Map](#)

Paducah Office

802 Jefferson St.
Paducah, KY 42001
270-217-7505

[View the Map](#) **Owensboro Office**

805 Frederica
Owensboro, KY 42301
270-683-8683

[View the Map](#) **Covington Office**

222 W. Pike St.
Covington, KY 41011
[View the Map](#)

Other Affiliated Largest Groups in Kentucky

[Kentuckians for Obama](#)

Georgetown

[Louisville for Obama](#)

Louisville

[Lexington for Obama](#)

Lexington

[NKY for Obama](#)

Fort Thomas

[Bluegrass for Obama](#)

Frankfort

General Summary of Campaign Platform

Main Material for Campaign Platform and Issues:

<http://www.barackobama.com/pdf/ObamaBlueprintForChange.pdf>

[Specific Information on Disability Policy](#)

<http://www.barackobama.com/pdf/DisabilityPlanFactSheet.pdf>

RACK OBAMA'S PLAN TO EMPOWER AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

Fifty-four million Americans – roughly 1 in 6 – personally experience some form of disability. And the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan continue to increase those numbers. Yet seventeen years after Congress enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Americans with disabilities still do not have an equal opportunity to fulfill the American Dream. In 2006, working-age Americans with disabilities were almost three times more likely to live below the

poverty line than those without disabilities. While the average annual household income of individuals in the United States without disabilities was \$65,400 in 2006, the average annual household income for people with disabilities was \$36,300. And the employment rate for persons with disabilities in 2006 was at least 40 points lower than the employment rate of working-age individuals without disabilities. These dismal statistics offer evidence of severe shortcomings in our country's efforts to break down the barriers that exclude people with disabilities and deprive them of true equality of opportunity and independence.

Barack Obama believes the United States should lead the world in empowering people with disabilities to take full advantage of their talents and become independent, integrated members of society. Dozens of countries have adopted laws modeled on the Americans with Disabilities Act, but America's leadership in the world has faded in recent years. As president, Barack Obama will renew America's leadership by making the United States a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – the first human rights treaty approved by the UN in the 21st century and a vital foundation for respecting the rights of people with disabilities worldwide. He will urge the U.S. Senate to ratify the Convention expeditiously.

Barack Obama has a four-part plan to provide Americans with disabilities with the greatest possible access to the same opportunities as those without disabilities: (1) providing Americans with disabilities the educational opportunities they need to succeed; (2) ending discrimination and promoting equal opportunity; and (3) increasing the employment rate of workers with disabilities; and (4) supporting independent, community-based living for Americans with disabilities. And Obama will work closely with individuals with disabilities and disability rights advocates to achieve this vision of a society where all can live with dignity and respect.

I. PROVIDING AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Fully Funding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Barack Obama has been a strong and consistent advocate for fully funding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Congress promised to shoulder 40 percent of each state's "excess cost" of educating children with disabilities, but it has never lived up to this obligation. Currently, the federal government provides less than half of the promised funding (17 percent). Children are being shortchanged, and their parents are forced to fight with cash-strapped school districts to get the free and appropriate education the IDEA promises their children. Fully funding IDEA will provide students with disabilities the public education they have a right to, and school districts will be able to provide services without cutting into their general education budgets. In addition to fully funding IDEA, Obama will ensure effective implementation and enforcement of the Act.

Early Intervention for Children with Disabilities

Children's ability to succeed in school relies on the foundation they build in their first three years. Pre-kindergarten for four-year-olds is important, but it is not enough to ensure children arrive at school ready to learn. This is particularly so for children with disabilities and/or special health care needs, who already face challenges in the early years that can set them behind their peers before they ever enter school. Barack Obama will invest \$10 billion per year in early intervention educational and developmental programs for children between zero and five. His

plan will help expand Early Head Start to serve more children with disabilities, and will spur states, through programs like Early Learning Challenge Grants, to expand programs for children with disabilities, such as IDEA Part C, and integrate these programs with other early childhood programs.

Support Universal Screening

Roughly 90 percent of infants in the United States are screened for various potentially disabling or life-threatening conditions, but fewer than half the states screen all infants for the American College of Medical Genetics' full recommended panel of 29 disorders. Many of these conditions, if caught early, can be treated before they result in permanent impairments or even death. And parents are often unaware that the tests are available. Barack Obama believes that we should ensure that all states have comprehensive newborn screening programs. In addition, Obama supports setting a national goal to provide rescreening for all two-year-olds – the age at which some conditions, including autism spectrum disorders, begin to appear. Part of Obama's early childhood intervention plan will be directed at coordinating fragmented community programs to help provide parents with information about screening for disabilities as infants and again as two-year olds. Achieving universal screening is essential so that disabilities can be identified early enough to help children and families get the special supports and resources they need.

Support Vocational Rehabilitation Programs

Students with disabilities who graduate from high school face unique challenges that often serve as barriers to college matriculation or entry into the workforce. Vocational rehabilitation programs currently exist in every state that have provided successful counseling to help high school students with disabilities and high school graduates with disabilities to develop the life skills necessary to move on to college and into independent lives. Obama supports vocational rehabilitation programs and will assure there is sufficient funding to empower Americans with disabilities to succeed in college and beyond.

Improving College Opportunities for High School Graduates with Disabilities

If they are to succeed to their fullest capabilities in the labor market, students with disabilities need more opportunities to obtain a college education. Today, however, students with disabilities are less likely to attend college than their peers and are less likely to complete a degree program when they do attend. When students with disabilities do graduate from college, the first year of their participation in the labor market is roughly equal to their classmates without disabilities. To improve college opportunities, Barack Obama will:

- **Make College More Affordable:** Obama will help make college more affordable and accessible by creating a new American Opportunity Tax Credit. This universal and fully refundable credit will ensure that the first \$4,000 of a college education is completely free for most Americans, and will cover two-thirds of the cost of tuition at the average public college or university.
- **Strengthen Community Colleges:** Almost half of all college students with disabilities attend public two-year institutions, particularly community colleges. Obama will create a Community College Partnership Program to strengthen community colleges by providing grants to (a) conduct more thorough analysis of the types of skills and technical education that are in high

demand from students and local industry; (b) implement new associate of arts degree programs that cater to emerging industry and technical career demands; and (c) reward those institutions that graduate more students and also increase their numbers of transfer students to four-year institutions. These efforts will ensure that community college students are able to directly use their skills in the workforce following graduation, and be prepared to continue their higher education. And the grants will support programs that facilitate transfers from two-year institutions to four-year institutions.

Authorize a Comprehensive Study of Students with Disabilities and Transition to Work and Higher Education

There has not been a comprehensive study of evaluating access to higher education or transition to the workforce by students with disabilities. As president, Barack Obama will initiate such a study and task his Secretary of Education with researching: the barriers that keep students with disabilities from seeking and completing higher education; the barriers that prevent students from making a direct transition to work; the extent to which students with disabilities are able to access loans and grants; reasons college students with disabilities drop out at a higher rate; and best practices from schools that have effectively recruited and graduated students with disabilities that can be implemented more widely.

II. ENDING DISCRIMINATION AND PROMOTING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Restoring the Americans with Disabilities Act

As a former civil rights lawyer and a strong advocate for workplace diversity, Barack Obama understands the critical importance of reducing workplace and labor market discrimination against people with disabilities, including by expanding employers' provision of workplace accommodations. The Supreme Court has severely restricted the application of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by narrowly defining what it means to have a "disability." As a result, lower courts have held that people with epilepsy, diabetes, heart disease and cancer can be fired from their jobs *because they have those conditions*. Obama strongly supports Senator Tom Harkin's (D-IA) ADA Restoration Act, which would overturn the Supreme Court decisions that limit the ADA's coverage and effectiveness and will sign it into law as president.

Appointing Judges and Justices Who Respect Laws Designed to Protect People with Disabilities

Barack Obama will appoint judges and justices who respect Congress' role as a co-equal, democratically elected branch of government and who exhibit empathy with what it means to be an American with a disability. The Supreme Court's interpretations of the ADA have shown disrespect for Congress' intent and frustrated the law's goals of fully integrating people with disabilities into society.

Increasing Funding for Enforcement

The Bush Administration has cut funding for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), the agencies tasked with enforcing anti-discrimination laws that protect

workers with disabilities. Staffing for these agencies has also been significantly reduced. As a result, while the number of complaints filed with those agencies has remained steady, the number of charges resolved by the EEOC has declined. More than 100,000 charges were resolved in FY 1997 and FY 1998, but in FY 2006, fewer than 75,000 were resolved. Barack Obama will fully fund and increase staffing for the EEOC and the OFCCP to reduce charge backlogs and to prosecute efforts to remedy systemic discrimination. To assure that the federal government holds itself to a high anti-discrimination standard, Obama will appoint a Chair of the EEOC and nominate commissioners who are committed to enforcing anti-discrimination laws.

Supporting the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act

With medical advances in the field of genetics, getting genetically tested can be of increasing usefulness in diagnosing and treating certain health conditions. In order to take advantage of those advances people need to be assured that their genetic code will not be used against them in a discriminatory way. Barack Obama is a cosponsor of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of genetic information by employers and health insurers. The Act also applies health information privacy regulations to the use and disclosure of genetic information.

Guaranteeing Health Care Coverage

Many people with disabilities do not seek work or leave the workforce because they need the guaranteed health insurance that the federal government's benefit programs provide. As a result, many stay on Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI), which include Medicare or Medicaid coverage, rather than take a job that might jeopardize their health care coverage. Barack Obama has pledged to sign universal health care legislation by the end of his first term in office that will assure that Americans with disabilities will have quality, affordable, portable coverage that will allow them to take a job without fear of losing coverage. People with disabilities who lose their Medicare or Medicaid eligibility by taking a job, but still cannot afford coverage, will be provided a subsidy in order to purchase coverage. Moreover, under Obama's plan, insurers will not be able to deny coverage on the basis of pre-existing conditions.

Improving Mental Health Care

Mental illness affects approximately one in five American families. Veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan are coming home with record levels of combat stress. The National Alliance on Mental Illness estimates that untreated mental illnesses cost the U.S. more than \$100 billion per year. Barack Obama is a supporter of the bipartisan Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007, and, as a state senator, Obama helped pass a mental health parity bill that requires coverage for serious mental illnesses to be provided on the same terms and conditions as are applicable to other illnesses and diseases. As president, Obama will support mental health parity so that coverage for serious mental illnesses is provided on the same terms and conditions as other illnesses and diseases. For veterans, Obama will improve mental health care at every stage of military service—recruitment, deployment, and reentry into civilian life.

III. INCREASING EMPLOYMENT RATE OF WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES

Increasing Executive Branch Hiring of Workers with Disabilities:

Barack Obama believes the federal government should serve as a model for other employers in hiring and accommodating employees with disabilities. The federal government is the United States' largest employer. Obama believes the federal government must recruit, hire, retain and advance workers with disabilities. To achieve this end, Obama will reinstate Executive Order No. 13173 which President Clinton issued just before he left office. Executive Order No. 13173 failed to achieve its mandate of hiring an additional 100,000 federal employees with disabilities within five years. Obama will issue this executive order early in his first term and designate a senior White House official to assure that all federal departments and agencies meet the mandate. That official will also be responsible for integrating disability policy into major presidential initiatives. Obama will also ensure that all electronic and information technologies employed by the federal government are fully accessible to federal employees and members of the general public with disabilities, as required by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. In that spirit, Obama has taken steps to make his campaign website consistent with Section 508 standards.

Effectively Implementing Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act

Barack Obama will direct all of his department and agency heads to bring their agencies into full compliance with all aspects of the Rehabilitation Act and adopt regulations which assure that result. Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act requires the federal government and employers who are federal contractors to "take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities." Yet, affirmative action in employment for adults with disabilities is not enforced with goals and timetables like the affirmative action requirements for people of color and women found in Executive Order No. 11246 and its progeny. As a result, affirmative action under the Rehabilitation Act is largely ineffective. Barack Obama will direct his Secretary of Labor to make changes to the regulations implementing Section 503 so that they more closely resemble those implementing Executive Order No. 11246.

Providing Private-Sector Employers with Resources to Accommodate Employees with Disabilities:

Several large employers, such as Walgreens, CVS, and Marriott, have led the way by establishing systems for recruiting, hiring, accommodating, retaining and promoting employees with disabilities. As president, Barack Obama will direct his Secretary of Labor, the Labor Department's Office of Disability Employment Policy, and its Job Accommodation Network to bring together employers, employer associations, human resources professionals, disability advocates, service providers, and the labor movement to identify, promote, and disseminate best practices in accommodating workers with disabilities.

Encouraging Private-Sector Employers to Use Existing Tax Benefits to Hire More Workers with Disabilities

The tax code already contains several provisions designed to encourage employers to hire employees with disabilities, including the Disabled Access Tax Credit, a Tax Deduction for Architectural and Transportation Barrier Removal, and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. Yet, very few employers actually take advantage of these credits. Barack Obama will launch an aggressive effort to educate employers about these tax benefits so that more employers use them to hire greater numbers of employees with disabilities.

Establishing a National Commission on People with Disabilities, Employment, and Social Security

As president, Barack Obama will announce the creation of a National Commission on People with Disabilities, Employment, and Social Security which will include presidential appointees, congressional appointees and the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration and the Secretaries of Labor and Health & Human Services as ex officio members. The President's charge to the commission will include:

- Examining and proposing solutions to work disincentives in the SSDI, SSI, Medicare, and Medicaid programs.
- Revisiting the Ticket to Work Act to assess how it can better provide SSDI and SSI beneficiaries with the supports they need to transition into work.
- Considering opportunities to improve the results produced through the relationships between the SSDI and SSI programs and the workforce investment and vocational rehabilitation systems.
- Examining the sufficiency of SSDI and SSI benefit levels in light of available work opportunities for working-age people with disabilities.
- Determining the sufficiency of the “substantial gainful activity” level in the SSDI program and whether it should be indexed to average hourly wages or some other measure.
- Studying programs that would help young people join the labor force rather than the SSI rolls.

Supporting Small Businesses Owned by People with Disabilities

Despite the challenges that individuals with disabilities face in starting their own businesses, they are not currently considered “disadvantaged” for purposes of federal contracting provisions that seek to aid disadvantaged business owners. Barack Obama would direct the Small Business Administration to amend regulations under the Small Business Act that provide preferences in federal contracting to small businesses owned by members of socially and economically disadvantaged groups to include individuals with disabilities.

Assuring Workers with Disabilities and Family Caregivers Get the Flexibility at Work They Need

Some workers with disabilities are unable to take or keep jobs, or even to remain in the workforce, because they don't have the scheduling flexibility to tend to their health care needs. Scheduling flexibility, including time off from work, can be an appropriate – even an essential – “accommodation” for many employees with disabilities. In addition, more than 50 million “family caregivers” provide support to older people or to people with disabilities. These families spend an average of twenty-one hours per week caring for a relative with a disability or illness and paid thousands of dollars in extra out-of-pocket expenses, on average. These added responsibilities expose family caregivers to a substantially higher risk of physical and mental health challenges ranging from stress, alcohol abuse, and depression, to heart disease, high blood pressure, and arthritis. Approximately 60 percent of family caregivers are women, and more than half are employed. Family caregivers also need the accommodation of workplace flexibility to help them navigate work and caregiving while also struggling to pay their bills and maintain their households. To provide greater workplace flexibility, Obama will:

□ **Expand the Family and Medical Leave Act:** The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides eligible employees of larger employers (i.e., 50 or more employees) with 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a family member's or their own serious health condition. Barack Obama will guarantee that millions more workers have access to FMLA leave by reducing the threshold for which employers are covered from companies with 50 or more employees to those with 25 or more.

□ **Encourage States to Adopt Paid Leave:** According to the National Partnership for Women and Families, 78 percent of employees covered by the FMLA who have needed leave but have not taken it report that it is because they could not afford to take unpaid leave. Of those employees who could not afford leave, nearly 88 percent report that they would have taken leave if they had been able to receive some pay while away from work. As president, Barack Obama will initiate a 50-state strategy to encourage all of the states to adopt paid-leave systems. Obama will provide a \$1.5 billion fund to assist states with start-up costs and to help states offset the costs for employees and employers. Obama's Department of Labor will also provide technical information to the states on how to craft paid-leave programs consistent with their local needs.

□ **Mandate A Reasonable Amount of Paid Sick Leave:** Half of all private-sector workers have no paid sick days. The problem is worse for employees in low-paying jobs where less than a quarter receive any paid sick days. But sick days can be critical for workers with disabilities. For example, employees with cancer may need to attend chemotherapy sessions or seek other intermittent treatments for their physical or mental impairments. Barack Obama will require that employers provide seven paid sick days per year – which may be taken on an hourly basis – so that Americans with disabilities can take the time off they need without fear of losing their jobs or a paycheck.

□ **Protect Against Caregiver Discrimination:** Workers with family obligations often are discriminated against in the workplace. This is a growing problem, as evidenced by the skyrocketing number of discrimination suits being filed: there has been a 400 percent increase in the number of family responsibility discrimination lawsuits in the last decade. Obama will prevent family members from being discriminated against because of caregiving responsibilities. Barack Obama will commit the government to enforcing recently-enacted Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidelines on caregiver discrimination.

IV. SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT, COMMUNITY-BASED LIVING FOR AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

Assuring the Rights Affirmed in *Olmstead v. L.C.*

Barack Obama believes we still have considerable progress to make in ensuring that the rights affirmed to Americans with disabilities in the *Olmstead v. L.C.* decision, which required states to place people with mental disabilities in community settings rather than in institutions when treatment professionals determine that community placement is appropriate. In addition to supporting the Community Choice Act of 2007 and the CLASS Act of 2007, Obama believes that we should further incentivize states to provide Americans with disabilities the ability to choose the most appropriate care for their individual needs. Obama believes the federal

government should help states increase the supply of high-quality community-based settings for individuals with disabilities by providing additional grants for new communities and community expansions. And he believes the federal government needs to be diligent about making sure the states enforce the rights affirmed by the *Olmstead* decision.

Supporting the Community Choice Act and Direct Care Workers

Barack Obama supports Senator Tom Harkin's (D-IA) Community Choice Act of 2007, which would allow Americans with significant disabilities the choice of living in their community rather than having to live in a nursing home or other institution. The legislation would expand community direct care services, with the goal of ensuring high-quality care for Americans with disabilities. The current shortage of community direct care attendants is related to shortages in other sectors of the economy – low pay, limited or no benefits and inflexible working hours. Obama supports the Fair Home Health Care Act, which would extend minimum wage and overtime protections to direct care attendants, and why he also supports raising the minimum wage and providing these workers – along with all other Americans – access to high-quality, affordable health insurance. He also believes that we should strengthen ties between community direct care settings and federal, state and local job training programs to ensure that individuals receive information about job openings.

Supporting the CLASS Act

Currently 10 million Americans require long-term care, and that number is expected to increase to 15 million by 2020. These Americans are often forced to give up their homes or communities in order to receive the care they need. Barack Obama strongly supports the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) Act to create a voluntary, budget-neutral national insurance program to help adults who have or develop functional disabilities to remain independent and in their communities. Employees would have the option of enrolling through monthly \$30 payroll deductions. Individuals over 18 who had contributed premiums for five or more years would then be eligible for benefits if they are unable to perform two or more activities of daily living (e.g., eating, bathing, dressing). Those benefits could be used for housing modifications, assistive technologies, personal assistance services, transportation or other supports to increase the ability of those with disabilities to find and keep jobs, and remain in their homes and communities.

Streamline the Social Security Approval Process

The Social Security Administration (SSA) has been consistently under-funded, resulting in unconscionable delays in initial claims determinations and hearings for individuals applying for the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Social Security Supplement Security Income (SSI) programs. The SSA's disability claims backlog has reached a record high of 755,000, up from 311,000 in 2000. The average wait time for an appeals hearing averages 505 days and, in some cases, can exceed three years. Barack Obama believes that it is unacceptable to have a system in which individuals lose their homes or are forced to declare bankruptcy because the federal government cannot process their claims quickly enough. Obama is committed to streamlining the current application and appeals procedures to reduce the confusion that surrounds these important programs. As president, Obama will also ensure that the SSA has the funding it needs to hire judges and staff and to invest in technology to expedite final decisions. Obama supported the \$150 million increase in the SSA's budget that was vetoed by

President Bush this year. As president, he will continue to work to ensure that the SSA has the resources it needs for hiring and to more effectively process its caseloads.

Protect Voting Rights

Americans with disabilities have the same right to cast their vote as every other American. That means that all polling places need to be physically accessible and all voting equipment must allow Americans with disabilities to vote with the same privacy and independence as other voters. Yet as of last year, over one third of states still had not provided at least one machine that would allow voters with disabilities to cast a ballot privately and independently. Barack Obama believes this is unacceptable. He supports fully funding the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) so that we can ensure all polling places are accessible. His administration would also assure better enforcement of federal disability rights laws – from HAVA to the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act to the ADA – to make sure the right of Americans with disabilities to vote is fully protected. In addition, Obama forcefully opposes voter ID laws that require mandatory photo identification at polling places, which would have the effect of disproportionately disenfranchising Americans with disabilities, more than 3 million of whom lack a government-issued form of identification. Obama believes voter ID requirements are unconstitutional. Obama led Senate opposition to national photo ID requirements and joined an amicus brief filed with the Supreme Court arguing that Indiana's voter ID law violates the 24th Amendment, which prohibits any form of poll tax. In an Obama Administration, the voting rights of people with disabilities and all Americans will be protected with the full force of the law.

Amending the Medicare “Homebound” Rule

Barack Obama supports amending the Medicare “homebound” rule so that those with disabilities have the freedom to leave their homes without fear of having their government benefits taken away. Obama believes that our Medicare policy must reflect the common sense notion that community engagement and support is a vital component of a meaningful life. He looks forward to amending the law to remove arbitrary measures of “acceptable” time away from home and further ensure that individuals do not have benefits removed unfairly.

Investing in Assistive Technologies

Barack Obama believes we must use technology to make community based living a reality for more people with disabilities. Obama supports the Fostering Independence Through Technology Act, which offers 21st century solutions, such as home monitoring and communications technologies, to overcoming barriers for people with disabilities. In addition, amending the Medicare “Homebound” rule will assure that homebound people with disabilities are not denied certain vital assistive living technologies just because they might occasionally be used outside the home.

Protecting the Safety of Individuals with Special Needs

One of the most devastating aspects of Hurricane Katrina was that most of the stranded victims were society's most vulnerable members – low-income families, the elderly, the homeless, and Americans with disabilities. Too many states and cities do not have adequate plans in place to care for special-needs populations. Obama passed legislation to help states properly plan the evacuation of individuals with special needs. He believes that this is only the

first step in ensuring that the most vulnerable individuals in local and national emergencies are adequately safeguarded.

Supporting Americans Living with Autism Spectrum Disorders

More than one million Americans live with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD), a complex neurobiological condition that has a range of impacts on thinking, feeling, language, and the ability to relate to others. As diagnostic criteria broaden and awareness increases, more cases of ASD have been recognized across the country. Barack Obama believes we need to research treatments and search for the causes of ASD. He has been a strong supporter of more than \$1 billion in federal funding for ASD research on the root causes and treatments. Obama believes we must work to guarantee that Americans with ASD can live independent and fully productive lives and to assure that their families understand and are able to support a loved one with ASD. Obama will fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to ensure that no child with ASD or any other disability is left behind. Obama will also fight to assure that the government and our communities work together to provide a helping hand to people with ASD and their families. Obama has a long record supporting people with ASD. In the state senate, Obama sponsored legislation that became law to create the ASD Program - a systems development initiative designed to promote the implementation of evidence-based practices. And in the U.S. Senate, Obama is also a cosponsor of a measure that would expand federal funding for life-long services for people with ASD, authorizing approximately \$350 million in new federal funding for key programs related to treatments, interventions and services for both children and adults with ASD.

Strengthen VA Specialty Care

Advances in technology have meant that the survival rate for U.S. servicemembers is higher now than in any previous conflict. There will be a long-term need for strengthened specialty care within the VA, including additional polytrauma centers as well as centers of excellence for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), PTSD, vision impairment, prosthetics, spinal cord injury, aging, women's health and other specialized rehabilitative care. In the Senate, Barack Obama has supported the expansion of PTSD and TBI centers of excellence and cosponsored an innovative bipartisan measure to encourage students specializing in vision care and rehabilitation to work in the VA. As president, he will expand the number of these centers of excellence and invest in specialty care.

Senator John McCain

Contact information for Kentucky campaign

No contact information available yet for campaign office in Kentucky

Summary of Campaign Platform

Taken from: <http://www.johnmccain.com/Informing/Issues/>

To read more on a specific issue, click on the blue colored links

[McCain Economic Plan](#)

A Pro-Growth, Pro-Jobs Strategy To Get Our Economy Back On Track. John McCain's strategy includes taking the near-term actions needed to provide immediate help to American families while also taking the longer-term steps necessary to secure America's economic prosperity and leadership in the world.

[Straight Talk on Health System Reform](#)

John McCain is willing to address the fundamental problem: the rapidly rising cost of U.S. health care. Bringing costs under control is the only way to stop the erosion of affordable health insurance, save Medicare and Medicaid, protect private health benefits for retirees, and allow our companies to effectively compete around the world.

[Border Security & Immigration Reform](#)

I have always believed that our border must be secure and that the federal government has utterly failed in its responsibility to ensure that it is secure. If we have learned anything from the recent immigration debate, it is that Americans have little trust that their government will honor a pledge to do the things necessary to make the border secure.

[Lobbying & Ethics Reform](#)

John McCain believes that a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people" must remain ever faithful to that noble charge. America needs leadership devoted to the public interest, not the special interest, and a government that fulfills its duties with unfailing integrity, accountability, and common sense. Those who serve in positions of public trust have a patriotic duty to serve the national interest with integrity and accountability, to conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the people we are privileged to serve, and to devote ourselves to America's agenda, not that of narrow special interests.

[Strategy for Victory in Iraq](#)

John McCain believes that we must not fail in Iraq. Succeeding in the cause of helping the Iraqi people build a stable, secure, representative state is essential to achieving an enduring peace in a region of the world central to American prosperity and national security. Failure in Iraq will endanger America for generations to come. America has a vital interest in a secure, democratic Iraq, at peace with its neighbors, to help stabilize a dangerous and critical region.

[Human Dignity & the Sanctity of Life](#)

During more than five years as a POW in Vietnam, John McCain experienced the worst assaults on human dignity imaginable. Yet each day he also saw in his fellow prisoners the power of human compassion and the will to prevail against unimaginable evil. It is this experience, and a

life dedicated to public service, that has imbued in John McCain a fundamental commitment to the protection of human dignity that will shape his presidency.

[Strict Constructionist Philosophy](#)

John McCain believes that one of the greatest threats to our liberty and the Constitutional framework that safeguards our freedoms are willful judges who usurp the role of the people and their representatives and legislate from the bench. As President, John McCain will nominate judges who understand that their role is to faithfully apply the law as written, not impose their opinions through judicial fiat.

[Commitment To America's Service Members: Past And Present](#)

America owes its liberty, its prosperity, and its future to our veterans who have dedicated their lives to protecting our great country. John McCain has fought to honor our national commitment to our veterans who have given their careers and livelihoods to ensuring our freedom. He believes we must provide for service members and their families while they serve, we must help those who return from combat to adjust to civilian life, and we must honor and never forget the service of those who do not return.

[Stewards of Our Nation's Rich Natural Heritage](#)

John McCain has a proud record of common sense stewardship. Along with his commitment to clean air and water, and to conserving open space, he has been a leader on the issue of global warming with the courage to call the nation to action on an issue we can no longer afford to ignore.

[Education](#)

Excellence, Choice, and Competition in American Education

[National Security](#)

The most sacred responsibility vested in a president - the commander in chief - is to "preserve and protect" American citizens. John McCain has the necessary vision and unrivaled experience to command the United States armed forces and adapt our nation's defenses to the demands of a changing and dangerous world.

[Protecting Second Amendment Rights](#)

John McCain believes that the right of law abiding citizens to keep and bear arms is a fundamental, individual Constitutional right that we have a sacred duty to protect. We have a responsibility to ensure that criminals who violate the law are prosecuted to the fullest, rather than restricting the rights of law abiding citizens. Gun control is a proven failure in fighting crime. Law abiding citizens should not be asked to give up their rights because of criminals - criminals who ignore gun control laws anyway.

[America's Space Program](#)

"Let us now embark upon this great journey into the stars to find whatever may await us."

[Specific Information on Disability Policy](#)

None at the moment

APPENDIX 1 CONTACT INFORMATION OF COUNTY CLERKS

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Franklin County Clerk

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Fulton County Clerk

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Gallatin County Clerk

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Garrard County Clerk

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Grant County Clerk

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Graves County Clerk

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Grayson County Clerk

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Green County Clerk

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Hopkins County Clerk

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Jackson County Clerk

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Jefferson County Clerk

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Jefferson County Board of Elections:

Urban Government Center
 810 Barret Avenue
 Louisville KY 40204

Phone: (502) 574-6100

FAX: (502) 574-5044

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Kenton County Clerk

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Knott County Clerk

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Logan County Clerk

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McCreary County Clerk

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Owsley County Clerk

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Pendleton County Clerk

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Powell County Clerk

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Pulaski County Clerk

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Rowan County Clerk

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Russell County Clerk

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Scott County Clerk

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Simpson County Clerk

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Spencer County Clerk

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Taylor County Clerk

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Todd County Clerk

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Trigg County Clerk

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Trimble County Clerk

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Union County Clerk

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Warren County Clerk

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Washington County Clerk

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Wolfe County Clerk

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Woodford County Clerk

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APPENDIX 2. E-SLATE VOTING MACHINE

Information taken from:

[http://www.hartic.com/files/eSlate is the Most Accessible Voting Sys.pdf](http://www.hartic.com/files/eSlate%20is%20the%20Most%20Accessible%20Voting%20Sys.pdf)

“...We do rate the eSlate as the best machine we looked at. It scored highest in overall usability and our testers liked the easy to use linear ballot and the fact that audio and visual voting can be used simultaneously. We also found the eSlate to have the highest level of cross-disability access, with accessibility features to accommodate people with non-visual disabilities.”

Statement provided by the American Foundation for the Blind Technology and Employment Center to Hart InterCivic following their review of voting systems published in the November 2002 issue of AccessWorld Magazine



The eSlate System has been acclaimed by national organizations representing persons with disabilities. In a recent review of leading electronic voting systems, the American Foundation for the Blind’s Technology and Employment Center rated the eSlate as the most accessible voting system (*AccessWorld*, November 2002). Harris County, Texas, was honored in July 2002 with a joint award from the National Association of Counties and the National Organization on Disability for its efforts to expand the voting process and enable disabled voters to exercise their rights at the polling place independently. The award specifically highlighted the accessibility features of the eSlate Electronic Voting System.

ONE SYSTEM FOR ALL VOTERS

eSlate allows all voters, including voters with physical disabilities, to vote using the same system. An eSlate outfitted with a Disabled Access Unit™ (DAU) interface is virtually indistinguishable from an eSlate used by voters with full physical capabilities. Yet, the eSlate’s DAU interface accommodates even the most severely disabled voters. All disability features can be used interchangeably with the eSlate’s standard interface, allowing the voter to overcome whatever challenges he or she might face in casting a vote privately and independently.

With the eSlate voting system access is not “separate but equal.” It is equal, period. Voters who are sighted or blind vote in the same manner. The eSlate is not a touch screen system that can be adapted to provide accessibility. With the eSlate, all voters use a rotary precision navigation system to turn to their choice and then press a large ENTER button next to the wheel to mark that choice. Both the wheel and the buttons require very little strength or dexterity. Voters who have suffered a stroke that permanently reduced strength and mobility have used the interface without difficulty. Specifically, the eSlate offers accessibility in six ways.

First: An audio component is available to voters who are blind or have a severe visual impairment. Technologists and consumers of various ages who are blind tested the eSlate along with other electronic voting systems on the market today. Working through the American Foundation of the Blind's Technology and Employment Center in Huntington, these testers ranked the eSlate number one because of its ease of use and fully accessible features.

The voter hears the entire ballot using headphones with volume control. The voter may take as long as he or she wants to complete the voting process. And having information repeated is as simple as turning the wheel counter-clockwise. Turning the wheel clockwise moves the voter through the ballot and each "notch" forward triggers the audio. Every choice marked by the voter is verified by the audio. If a voter changes his or her mind, simply turning the wheel until the correct choice is heard and pressing the ENTER button will remove the earlier choice and mark the new selection.



The audio uses a human voice that is usually specific to the locale. A male voice is used in most instances to provide a frequency level most easily heard by those who experience hearing impairments in addition to visual ones.

Although the speed cannot be varied, the voter can turn past any instructions, contests, or candidates as quickly as desired. Listening to every word is not necessary.

Likewise, color contrasts used to display voting instructions and the ballot are not voter options. The colors used were selected, however, to make viewing the easiest for the widest range of visual impairments causing color distinction problems. If an individual needs large print in order to read the ballot independently, he or she may, at the beginning of the voting process, select the large print option.

Second: Two large tactile switches are available for any voter who has limited upper body mobility or dexterity imposed by, for example, Parkinson's disease, cerebral palsy, stroke, amputation or other causes. The switches are light touch and can be placed anywhere the voter chooses. The switches can be activated using an adaptive device or just about any part of the body, including the feet.

Third: Voters who are quadriplegic may also vote privately using a sip 'n puff device to move through the ballot and mark choices. Poll workers are trained to help disconnect the device from the wheelchair and connect it to the eSlate so voting using one's breath can begin.

Fourth: Over 70% of polling sites in the United States are inaccessible to wheelchairs. For those voters who cannot get into the polling site, irrespective of the reason, poll workers can disconnect the eSlate and bring it to a car so that voting can be accomplished without coming

inside. The battery-powered eSlate weighs just 7.7 pounds making it easy for any poll worker to carry curbside.

Fifth: At least one booth at each polling site is ADA compliant. The eSlate booth is the perfect height for a chair or wheelchair and tilts forward for easy viewing of the ballot. The eSlate booths are included as part of the purchase by any jurisdiction.

And finally, if a voter uses a neck loop to increase his or her ability to hear audio emitted from an electronic device (as may be the case with a person who is both blind and has a severe hearing impairment) that voter can use the neck loop to enhance his or her hearing of the eSlate audio system. The voter's hearing aid must be fitted with a telecoil, and the RCA connector must be compatible with the eSlate audio output jack (3.5mm). If it is not, adaptors may be provided by the voter or by the jurisdiction if they are notified of the need to do so.

Literacy and Languages

Although not specifically considered accessibility issues as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, those who cannot read and those who do not read English are also accommodated. Any voter can choose to listen to rather than read the ballot. The ballot is presented in print and auditory form in all languages required by the jurisdiction in charge of elections, whether that is one or eight.

Training

Even with all these accessible features, people with disabilities may still encounter difficulties voting in private at the polling site if poll workers are not properly trained. Working with experts in the field of disabilities, Hart InterCivic has developed and incorporated a disability etiquette section into the training of all poll workers responsible for operating the eSlate system.

Additionally, a two-hour optional training session for poll workers is available that focuses specifically on the accessible features of the system, etiquette, how to provide meaningful verbal instructions, and inspecting the polling site for and removal of physical barriers to accessibility.

Voter Education and Outreach

Taking a "test drive" or receiving information about "How to Vote Using the eSlate" prior to first using the eSlate in a live election increases voters' comfort and confidence. Knowing this, Hart InterCivic developed the first voter education and outreach program in the industry. This program has received national recognition and was awarded first place nationally by PR Week for outstanding marketing.

Hart's Voter Education specialists work with local jurisdictions to evaluate their communities and develop a tailored plan to provide voters with information about the new system. Hart makes sure all plans use a wide variety of communication channels and include a specific emphasis on reaching older voters and voters with disabilities to provide information and an opportunity to use the system. Hart InterCivic has worked closely with groups such as the American Council of the Blind, the American Foundation of the Blind, and the National Federation of the Blind to provide information about the eSlate system and to acquire input from consumers that will improve the system. As a result of these relationships, the most current version includes several improvements to accessibility.