

U.S. SENATOR BOB CASEY



CHAIRMAN Special Committee on Aging

S. 4595 The AID (Accessibility and Inclusion to Diversify) Local Government Leadership Act of 2022

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Why is the AID Local Government Leadership Act Needed?

People with disabilities are underrepresented in [all levels of elected office](#). Often, they are not able to access reasonable accommodations, including sign language interpretation and mobility devices, which would enable them to serve their communities. These barriers to civic and work life prevent people with disabilities from running for and holding elected office, preventing local governments from gaining an important voice in the community and marginalizing people with disabilities.

One barrier to participation in local government is the lack of available funding for accommodations if a local elected official has a disability. Local governments that represent a small population or have high levels of poverty may not have the tax base to support budgets that fully fund the needed accommodations for a local elected official to perform their official duties. Without available accommodation funds, local citizens with disabilities may not be inclined to run for office and residents of communities may be concerned that accommodations will be too costly if a candidate with a disability is elected. To remove such barriers, local municipalities need support for these accommodations and incentives to create on-going accommodations funds to support elected and volunteer officials with disabilities to fulfill their official duties. Ensuring access to reasonable accommodations to perform official duties can help address barriers that affect people with disabilities from seeking elected office or appointed volunteer positions in their local governments.

Supporting Local Elected Official with Disabilities and Creating Accommodations Funds

The AID (Accessibility and Inclusion to Diversify) Local Government Leadership Act will provide the local governments most likely to have limited budgets with a grant to support reasonable accommodations for local elected officials with disabilities. It also supports them in creating an on-going accommodations fund to ensure current and future elected officials with disabilities have access to needed accommodations to perform their duties. This enables small municipalities to fulfill their Americans with Disabilities Act responsibilities to provide accommodations. Eligible communities include those that are rural communities, have a population of less than 10,000 people or are communities with a population between 10,000 and 200,000 with a federal poverty rate of 18 percent or higher.

Supporting Organizations

Association of University Centers on Disabilities, Autism Society of America, Center for American Progress, Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, National Association of the Deaf, National Council on Independent Living, National Disability Rights Network, National Federation of the Blind, The Arc of the U.S. and United Spinal Association

Co-Sponsors

Senators Booker, Klobuchar, Duckworth, Blumenthal, Brown, Wyden, Gillibrand, Padilla, Smith