



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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Democrats Celebrate Americans with Disabilities Act Anniversary

Democratic Weekly Radio Address

By Rep. Jimmy Anderson (D-Fitchburg)

[Audio File of Radio Address](#)

Hello, this is Representative Jimmy Anderson with this week's Democratic Radio Address

Last week marked the 29th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act becoming law.

The aim of that law was pretty straightforward: to ensure people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everybody else. The ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, and transportation.

This landmark legislation changed the lives of so many people across the country. And, it was passed in a bipartisan fashion and signed into law by Republican President George H.W. Bush.

For those of you that don't know my story, I was in a car accident just before my final year at UW Law School when a drunk driver took the lives of my mom, my dad, my little brother, and left me paralyzed from the chest down. Despite the many challenges this presented, I ran for office to represent my community and be a voice for them in the state capitol.

Recently, I requested to phone into certain committee hearings due to health issues associated with my disability. Like any public servant, I want to participate in every meeting, but the reality is, I can't always do so. It can be difficult to find personal-care workers who assist me in getting ready in the morning and getting to my meetings. It's difficult if some of these meetings go late because I can't stay in my chair for long periods of time.

Unfortunately, Speaker Vos denied my request, saying it was "disrespectful" to call in to committee hearings. All I'm asking for are reasonable accommodations related to my disability that ought to be guaranteed under the ADA. And yet, Robin Vos is denying my rights as a disabled American. It's discriminatory, disrespectful, and just wrong.

Since this was made public, it's been so moving to see so many people advocating for me and the rest of the disabled community. I've received messages from Senator Tammy Baldwin, Governor Tony Evers, and people all across this country. I thank you all for these words of support and for the love.

I will continue working hard for my constituents. I will continue to live the promise of the ADA. And I am hopeful that Speaker Vos will have a change of heart.

Thank you.