WE CONGRATULATE President Bush, Attorney General Thornburgh, Senators Harkin, Dole, Kennedy, McCain, Simon, Durenberger, Hatch and all who supported the overwhelming 76-8 vote by the US Senate to pass THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA).

WE URGEP THE PROMPT APPROVAL by the US House of Representatives of this landmark legislation to provide to people with disabilities the comprehensive civil rights protection which other minorities attained more than two decades ago.

WE URGEP THE REJECTION OF WEAKENING AMENDMENTS that would legalize intolerable discrimination which has made people with disabilities this nation’s most isolated, unemployed, impoverished and welfare dependent minority.

REGRETTABLY, OPPONENTS of an effective ADA are claiming that it will impose unaffordable costs and lawsuits on business. These claims are groundless. They reflect the same obsolete, unfounded fears and doomsday predictions that have greeted all previous extensions of basic civil rights protections.

ADA, AS PASSED BY THE SENATE and endorsed by President Bush, strikes a careful balance between the elimination of discrimination and the interests of business. It provides for a gradual transition to an opportunity society, requiring that only new facilities be fully accessible. It specifies that no “significant difficulty or expense” be imposed on businesses. Virtually all of its requirements have been tested for many years under existing federal and local statutes — with no excessive costs or litigation.

IT IS THE PROPOSED WEAKENING AMENDMENTS that are unaffordable. President Bush has estimated that excluding 2/3 of working age people with disabilities from the workforce costs America $300 billion per year.

ADA WILL FREE MILLIONS OF AMERICANS from the bondage of welfare dependency, enabling them to become employees, taxpayers, customers and full participants in our rich culture. It will result in direct economic and life quality benefits to every person in this nation. It will be remembered with the Emancipation Proclamation and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as a historic progress toward the fulfillment of the American dream.

THE CHOICE IS CLEAR. ADA, YES! LEGALIZED DISCRIMINATION, NO!

WE WILL REMEMBER THE PATRIOTS WHO VOTE FOR JUSTICE NOW.

Following is a partial list of the more than 8,500 citizens with disabilities, their advocates and organizations from every state who signed and paid their $5 contribution to support this petition for justice.