STATEMENT OF SENATOR KENNEDY PRAISING SENATE PASSAGE OF
THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

For Immediate Release
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Today's action by the Senate marks an historic step in the
long journey to complete the unfinished business of America and
bring full civil rights and fair opportunity to all our citizens.

In a sense, this legislation is an emancipation proclamation
for the disabled, and America will be a better, fairer, and
stronger nation because of it.

43 million disabled men, women, and children will benefit
from our action. For too long, they have been invisible
Americans -- denied opportunity, victimized by prejudice,
excluded from everyday activities of society.

Our message to America today is that disabled people are not
unable. With all the challenges facing the country, we cannot
afford to ignore the talent of the disabled, or neglect the
skills they have to offer.

Mindless physical barriers and outdated social attitudes have
made them second class citizens for too long. Now, with this
legislation, they will have a fair chance to participate in the
mainstream of American life.

This is a proud day in the history of civil rights. It is
difficult to believe that this Congress will enact a more
far-reaching or more important bill.