

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2009
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO.: 2009-A081
TITLE: Accommodation for People with Disabilities
PROPOSER: Standing Commission on Health
COMMITTEE: Stewardship and Development

Directly Related: (attached)

2006-D070 On the Topic of Programs for Persons with Disabilities (Rejected)
2003-C006 Welcome the Church's Diverse "New Majority"
2003-C027 Make the Church's Audio-visual Materials Accessible to All People
2003-D041 Welcome Service Animals in the Church
1985-A087 Encourage Opportunities Within the Church for Persons with Disabilities
1985-D130 Recommend and Direct Use of Funds for Employing Interpreters for the Deaf

Indirectly Related:

2003-D051 Recommend that Meeting Locations Be Accessible to the Disabled
1997-C046 Re-establish a Resource Center on the Disabled
1988-D004 Commend the Task Force on Accessibility and Encourage Sensitivity to Persons With Disabilities
1985-D044 Require That Church Produced Video Tapes Be Captioned
1982-D120 Establish a Task Force on Disabled and Handicapped Persons

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions of General Convention for the period 1976 through 2006, selecting "direct" resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. Committee members who are interested in obtaining copies of "indirectly related" resolutions, legislative history before 1976, or who require other research assistance should contact the Archives at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.



Resolution Number: 2006-D070
Title: On the Topic of Programs for Persons with Disabilities
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of the Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 75th General Convention reaffirm Resolution 1985-A087 and urge dioceses to convene committees on disability concerns to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act affording access for persons with disabilities to all church properties; and be it further

Resolved, That the Convention urge all congregations to designate a person or persons to be particularly responsible for disability concerns; and be it further

Resolved, That the Convention urge all churches, affiliated organizations, and institutions of The Episcopal Church to use only facilities which are accessible to all persons.



Resolution Number: 2003-C006
Title: Welcome the Church's Diverse "New Majority"
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That in implementing the 20/20 goal of focusing The Episcopal Church on domestic mission and evangelism, this church reach out to groups not traditionally within the scope of these efforts, which include persons who have felt unwelcome or alienated by the church, particularly, though not limited to, those who identify themselves as the "new majority" characterized by diversity of race, ethnicity, language, disability, and sexual orientation; and be it further

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention affirm the work of the Congregational Development Unit of the Church Center, already begun in these efforts, and urge them to continue to include and expand, as components of their ongoing and future programs, elements of diversity, including but not limited to the groups listed above.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 210.



Resolution Number: 2003-C027
Title: Make the Church's Audio-visual Materials Accessible to All People
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention require all audio-visual materials produced by and for the General Convention, and programs of the Executive Council and staff, be made accessible to all people:

- **by providing closed captioning in English for deaf and hard-of-hearing people, as well as subtitling or dubbing in Spanish and other languages where appropriate, and**
- **by urging all producers of religious audio-visual materials to do the same.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 181.



Resolution Number: 2003-D041
Title: Welcome Service Animals in the Church
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 74th General Convention of The Episcopal Church support congregations working toward becoming welcoming and safe places for all people; and be it further

Resolved, That as some people need the assistance of trained, certified service animals to function in daily life, all congregations and institutions of The Episcopal Church open their buildings and facilities to trained, certified service animals, so that no one is excluded from worshiping and otherwise participating in the life of the church.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, 2003* (New York: General Convention, 2004), p. 681f.



Resolution Number: 1985-A087
Title: Encourage Opportunities Within the Church for Persons with Disabilities
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, **That the Task Force on Accessibility of this Church be commended and authorized to continue its work and ministry of providing leadership, training and education throughout this Church;** and be it further

Resolved, **That this Convention again calls on the dioceses which have not yet done so to convene committees on disability concerns;** and be it further

Resolved, **That local vestries be encouraged to conduct accessibility surveys of their buildings with the assistance of people trained in this field and to designate a person or persons to be particularly responsible for disability concerns;** and be it further

Resolved, **That all Episcopal Church properties and all Episcopal Church meeting places be made (so far as possible) accessible to persons with disabilities and barrier-free;** and be it further

Resolved, **That this Church promote the hiring of qualified persons with disabilities within its own structures and within society at large; and that each parish seek as a first step for one person with a disability;** and be it further

Resolved, **That qualified persons with disabilities not be disqualified for postulancy, for Holy Orders, for ordination or for further employment in the Church solely on the basis of their handicaps;** and be it further

Resolved, **That persons in leadership roles of this Church be encouraged to participate at community, state and national levels in advocating legislation that will assist persons with disabilities;** and be it further

Resolved, **That the liturgies, Christian education programs and other forms of meetings throughout this Church be designed for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, using such means as captioning and interpreters for the deaf;** and be it further

Resolved, **That each church seek to focus on awareness/educational issues related to persons with disabilities including informing themselves about architectural and attitudinal barriers which prevent full participation of persons with disabilities in congregational life;** and be it further

Resolved, **That this Church at national, diocesan and local places encourage and support the assumption of leadership roles in both church and community by qualified persons who have disabilities.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 1985* (New York: General Convention, 1986), p. 274.



Resolution Number: 1985-D130
Title: Recommend and Direct Use of Funds for Employing Interpreters for the Deaf
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, **That the 68th General Convention recommend that any and all Dioceses of the Episcopal Church having ministries with deaf people allocate a reasonable sum in the annual budgets to pay for interpreters for the deaf at conventions and other diocesan functions, thereby encouraging and enabling fuller participation in the life of the Church;** and be it further *Resolved*, **That the Executive Council be directed to include sufficient funds in their budgets to pay for interpreters for the deaf for all meetings at which deaf people are official participants; for meetings of the General Convention, should one or more deaf deputies be elected; and for all major addresses, services, and events at the General Convention.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 1985* (New York: General Convention, 1986), p. 260.

17 - Stewardship and Development: HB

A081

TOPIC/TITLE: Disabled Persons: Accomodation for People with Disabilities

PROPOSER: Standing Commission on Health

C&C PAGE:

BB PAGE: 175

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- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That reasonable accommodations, such as sign
2 language interpreters, motorized scooters or similar adaptive equipment, be made available and
3 financed by The Episcopal Church, dioceses or parishes sending staff members or volunteers who
4 are disabled to conferences or meetings on behalf of the Church.
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EXPLANATION:

If "The Episcopal Church Welcomes You" is not merely a sign, but rather a lifestyle and truly welcoming to all people, then it must be possible for all people to take part in the full life of the church. Foreign language interpreters are already available and financed at meetings of the Executive Council and the House of Bishops. Sign language interpreters are available and financed by the General Convention Office during sessions of General Convention. In order for people with disabilities to be fully included in every facet of the life of the church, some of them will need adaptive equipment.