

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

FRANK G. McALEESE,)
)
 Plaintiff,)
)
 v.)
)
 PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF) No. CA99-381 Erie
 CORRECTIONS, ET AL.)
)
 Defendants,)

**THE UNITED STATES' SUPPLEMENTAL OPPOSITION TO
DEFENDANTS' SECOND MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT**

Preliminary Statement

Defendants have moved for summary judgment on four issues. Defendants argue: (1) plaintiff's claim under the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12111 et seq ["ADA"] is barred by the Eleventh Amendment; (2) the individual defendants should be dismissed from this action because there is no individual liability under title II of the ADA or section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. 704; (3) plaintiff is not entitled to punitive damages under the ADA or Rehabilitation Act; and (4) plaintiff's claim for compensatory damages is barred by the Prison Litigation Reform Act.

In response to the Court's request for briefs on the issue of whether Congress properly abrogated the states' Eleventh Amendment immunity when it enacted title II of the ADA, the United States files this supplemental opposition to defendants' second motion for summary judgment.

BACKGROUND

1. **Statutory Framework:** The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Disabilities Act), 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq., established a "comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities." 42 U.S.C. 12101(b)(1). Congress found that "historically, society has tended to isolate and segregate individuals with disabilities," and that "such forms of discrimination * * * continue to be a serious and pervasive social problem." 42 U.S.C. 12101(a)(2). Congress specifically found that discrimination against persons with disabilities "persists in such critical areas as employment, housing, public accommodations, education, transportation, communication, recreation, institutionalization, health services, voting, and access to public services." 42 U.S.C. 12101(a)(3). In addition, persons with disabilities

continually encounter various forms of discrimination, including outright intentional exclusion, the discriminatory effects of architectural, transportation, and communication barriers, overprotective rules and policies, failure to make modifications to existing facilities and practices, exclusionary qualification standards and criteria, segregation, and relegation to lesser services, programs, activities, benefits, jobs, or other opportunities.

42 U.S.C. 12101(a)(5). As a result, "people with disabilities, as a group, occupy an inferior status in our society, and are severely disadvantaged socially, vocationally, economically, and educationally." 42 U.S.C. 12101(a)(6). Congress concluded that persons with disabilities

have been faced with restrictions and limitations, subjected to a history of purposeful unequal treatment, and relegated to a position of political powerlessness in our society, based on characteristics that are beyond the control of such individuals and resulting from stereotypic assumptions not truly indicative of the individual ability of such individuals to participate in, and contribute to, society.

42 U.S.C. 12101(a)(7).

Based on those findings, Congress “invoke[d] the sweep of congressional authority, including the power to enforce the fourteenth amendment” to enact the Disabilities Act. 42 U.S.C. 12101(b)(4). The Disabilities Act targets three particular areas of discrimination against persons with disabilities. Title I, 42 U.S.C. 12111-12117, addresses discrimination by employers affecting interstate commerce; Title II, 42 U.S.C. 12131-12165, addresses discrimination by governmental entities in the operation of public services, programs, and activities, including transportation; and Title III, 42 U.S.C. 12181-12189, addresses discrimination in public accommodations operated by private entities.

This case involves a suit filed under Title II. That Title provides that “no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity.” 42 U.S.C. 12132. A “public entity” is defined to include “any State or local government” and its components. 42 U.S.C. 12131(1)(A) and (B). The term “disability” is defined as “a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of [an] individual”; “a record of such an impairment”; or “being regarded as having such an impairment.” 42 U.S.C. 12102(2). A “qualified individual with a disability” is a person “who, with or without reasonable modifications * * * meets the essential eligibility requirements” for the governmental program or service. 42 U.S.C. 12131(2); 28 C.F.R. 35.140.¹

The discrimination prohibited by Title II of the Disabilities Act includes, among other

¹ Congress instructed the Attorney General to issue regulations to implement Title II, based on prior regulations promulgated under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794. See 42 U.S.C. 12134.

things, denying a government benefit to a qualified individual with a disability because of his disability, providing him with a lesser benefit than is given to others, or limiting his enjoyment of the rights and benefits provided to the public at large. See 28 C.F.R. 35.130(b)(1)(i), (iii), (vii). In addition, a public entity must make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures if the accommodation is necessary to avoid the exclusion of individuals with disabilities and can be accomplished without imposing an undue financial or administrative burden on the government, or fundamentally altering the nature of the service. See 28 C.F.R. 35.130(b)(7). The Disabilities Act does not normally require a public entity to make its existing physical facilities accessible. Public entities need only ensure that “each service, program or activity, * * * when viewed in its entirety, is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities,” unless to do so would fundamentally alter the program or impose an undue financial or administrative burden. 28 C.F.R. 35.150(a). However, facilities altered or constructed after the effective date of the Act must be made accessible. 28 C.F.R. 35.150(a)(1), 35.151.

Title II may be enforced through private suits against public entities. 42 U.S.C. 12133. Congress expressly abrogated the States’ Eleventh Amendment immunity to private suits in federal court. 42 U.S.C. 12202.

ARGUMENT

BECAUSE IT COMBATS AN ENDURING PROBLEM OF UNCONSTITUTIONAL MISTREATMENT AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, TITLE II OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT IS VALID SECTION 5 LEGISLATION

Section 5 of the Fourteenth Amendment is an affirmative grant of legislative power to

Congress, see Kimel v. Florida Bd. of Regents, 528 U.S. 62, 80 (2000), that gives Congress the “authority both to remedy and to deter violation of [Fourteenth Amendment] rights * * * by prohibiting a somewhat broader swath of conduct, including that which is not itself forbidden by the Amendment’s text.” Board of Trs. of the Univ. of Ala. v. Garrett, 531 U.S. 356, 365 (2001); see also City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co., 488 U.S. 469, 488 (1989) (opinion of O’Connor, J.) (“[I]n no organ of government, state or federal, does there repose a more comprehensive remedial power than in the Congress” when enforcing the Fourteenth Amendment.) (citation & emphasis omitted). Section 5 thus grants Congress broad power indeed, including the power to abrogate a State’s Eleventh Amendment immunity, Garrett, 531 U.S. at 364. Although Section 5 empowers Congress to enact prophylactic and remedial legislation to enforce Fourteenth Amendment rights, it also requires a “congruence and proportionality between the injury to be prevented or remedied and the means adopted to that end.” City of Boerne v. Flores, 521 U.S. 507, 520 (1997). Title II of the Disabilities Act is appropriate Section 5 legislation because it responds to a history of pervasive discrimination and deprivation of constitutional rights by States, which has spawned continuing discrimination and the denial of rights in the daily decisions of officials, and because the legislation is reasonably designed to prevent and remedy those constitutional violations.

A. Title II Of The Disabilities Act Is Valid Section 5 Legislation Because It Targets Distinctly Governmental Activities That Often Burden Fundamental Rights

In Garrett, supra, the Supreme Court held that Title I of the Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12111 to 12117, which prohibits public and private employers from discriminating in

employment on the basis of disability, was not valid Section 5 legislation. The arguments of defendants largely assume that the invalidity of Title II's abrogation follows ineluctably from Garrett. See Def.Br. at 3-8. But, if Titles I and II were constitutionally indistinguishable, the Supreme Court would have had no reason to limit its holding in Garrett, 531 U.S. at 360 n.1. Moreover, defendant's argument overlooks three critical distinctions between the two Titles.

First, in enacting Title I, Congress simply included States as employers within a general ban on employment discrimination by private employers, without considering sufficiently whether there was a distinctive problem of unconstitutional employment discrimination by the States. Garrett, 531 U.S. at 369-371.² Title II, by contrast, is a law that Congress enacted specifically and deliberately to regulate the conduct of state and local governments qua governments. Congress thus was singularly focused on the historic and enduring problem of official discrimination and unconstitutional treatment on the basis of disability by "any State or local government," 42 U.S.C. 12131(1)(A) and (B).

For that reason, as Garrett acknowledged, Title II is predicated on a more substantial legislative record pertaining to "discrimination by the States in the provision of public services." 531 U.S. at 371 n.7; see also Section B(2)(b), infra. That legislative record, in turn, led Congress to make specific findings about the historic and enduring problem of discrimination by States and their subdivisions. Contrast Garrett, 531 U.S. at 371 (no findings about state employment discrimination). In particular, Congress found that "discrimination against

² In other recent federalism cases, Congress likewise sought to "place States on the same footing as private parties." Kimel, 528 U.S. at 82 (citation omitted); see Alden v. Maine, 527 U.S. 706, (1999) (Fair Labor Standards Act of 1968); Florida Prepaid Postsecondary Educ. Expense Bd. v. College Sav. Bank, 527 U.S. 627, 631-632 (1999) (patent infringement); College Sav. Bank v. Florida Prepaid Postsecondary Educ. Expense Bd., 527 U.S. 666 (1999) (Lanham Act liability).

individuals with disabilities persists in such critical areas as * * * education, transportation, * * * institutionalization, * * * voting, and access to public services.” 42 U.S.C. 12101(a)(3).

Those are areas for which States and their subdivisions are either exclusively or predominantly responsible. And the same Committee Reports that the Supreme Court in Garrett found lacking with regard to public employment, 531 U.S. at 371-372, are directly on point here, declaring that “there exists a compelling need to establish a clear and comprehensive Federal prohibition of discrimination on the basis of disability in the area[] of * * * public services.” H.R. Rep. No. 485, 101st Cong., 2d Sess. Pt. 2, at 28 (1990); see also S. Rep. No. 116, 101st Cong., 1st Sess. 6 (1989) (“Discrimination still persists in such critical areas as * * * public services.”).

Congress thus specifically concluded, on the basis of a weighty legislative record, that States were contributors to the “history of purposeful unequal treatment” and participants in “the continuing existence of unfair and unnecessary discrimination and prejudice” against individuals with disabilities, 42 U.S.C. 12101(a)(7) and (9). When Congress focuses in that manner on the problem of unconstitutional conduct by States and their subdivisions and determines that “legislation is needed to secure the guarantees of the Fourteenth Amendment,” Congress’s “conclusions are entitled to much deference.” Kimel, 528 U.S. at 81 (citation omitted).

Second, because Title I pertains only to employment, decisions made by state employers concerning individuals with disabilities implicate only the Equal Protection Clause’s guarantee against irrational employment decisions. Garrett, 531 U.S. at 366-368. Like Flores, 521 U.S. at 512-514, and Kimel, 528 U.S. at 83, Title I thus addressed state conduct in an area where the States, as sovereigns, are given an extraordinarily wide berth and constitutional violations are infrequently found.

Title II, by contrast, enforces not only the Equal Protection Clause, but also a wide array of fundamental constitutional rights -- the right to petition the government, the right of access to the courts, the right to vote, Fourth and Eighth Amendment protections, and procedural due process. Indeed, Title I dealt only with the States' denial of an opportunity -- state employment -- to individuals who equally could pursue employment in the private sector. Title II, by contrast, regulates state and local governments when they intervene in and regulate the activities of private citizens, or deprive them of their liberty, property, or parental rights. Title II also regulates a State's ability to deny a class of citizens access to government services upon which all citizens must rely for basic opportunities (and sometimes the necessities) of modern life. The private sector cannot provide medical licenses, or the ability to cast a ballot, file a lawsuit, secure the protection of the police, or seek the enactment of legislation. Title II thus legislates in an area where the States' conduct often is subject to heightened scrutiny, and where its ability to infringe those rights generally, let alone to deny them disparately to one particular segment of the population based on stereotypes, fears, economics, or administrative convenience, is constitutionally curtailed.

Third, unlike Kimel and Garrett, this case potentially implicates concerns beyond abrogation and the ability of individuals to sue the States for money damages. Because both Kimel and Garrett targeted employment discrimination, those decisions only invalidated the statutes' abrogation provisions; the substantive prohibitions of those laws remain applicable to the States under Congress's Commerce Clause power and can be enforced against state officials under Ex parte Young, 209 U.S. 123 (1908). See Garrett, 531 U.S. at 374 n.9; EEOC v. Wyoming, 460 U.S. 226, 235-243 (1983).

For all of those reasons, and especially because this case may implicate the constitutional authority for enactment of Title II's substantive prohibitions as applied to all levels of government, this Court is not constrained, as the Supreme Court was in Garrett, to consider only the legislative evidence of unconstitutional conduct by the States. When Congress specifically focuses the substantive provisions of Section 5 legislation jointly on the operations of state and local governments qua governments, its enforcement powers under Section 5, like the substantive protections of Section 1, can charge the States with some responsibility for the unconstitutional conduct of the subdivisions of government that the States themselves create and empower to act.³ That is, in part, because the line between state and local government is much harder to discern in the context of public services than it is in employment. While state and local employment decisions can be made independently, the operations of state and local governments in the provision of government services, such as voting, education, welfare benefits, zoning, licensing, and the administration of justice are often inextricably intertwined. In education, for example, the State plays a substantial role in directing, supervising and limiting the discretion of local agencies, either by administrative supervision or by statutory direction. The complexity of the relationship between state and local governments in the administration of public services often raises difficult, state-by-state questions regarding whether a particular entity is operating as an "arm of the state." In some cases, the local government officials act at the direct behest of the State government pursuant to State mandates. And in all cases, the local government is able to discriminate only because it exercises power delegated to it by the State.

³ See Atkin v. Kansas, 191 U.S. 207, 220-221 (1903); see also Lawrence County v. Lead-Deadwood Sch. Dist., 469 U.S. 256, 270-271 (1985) (Rehnquist, J., dissenting).

The record of historic and pervasive discrimination and unconstitutional treatment by all levels of government further blurs the line between state and local governmental action, because the conduct of local officials is traceable, at least in part, to the rules of state-mandated discrimination and segregation under which they operated for years.

Indeed, under similar circumstances, the Supreme Court has recognized the relevance of local governmental conduct in assessing the validity of Section 5 legislation as applied to the States. In Garrett, the Court cited the substantive provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which were upheld in South Carolina, supra, as “appropriate” Section 5 legislation regulating the States because it was predicated upon a documented “problem of racial discrimination in voting.” Garrett, 531 U.S. at 373 (citing 383 U.S. at 312-313). Much of the evidence of unconstitutional conduct described in South Carolina, 383 U.S. at 312-314, however, involved the conduct of county and city officials.⁴ Indeed, almost all of the evidence of specific instances of discrimination underlying the Voting Rights Act of 1965 concerned local officials rather than state officials; the rest of the evidence was either statistical evidence or lists of state laws.⁵ See also Flores, 521 U.S. at 530-531 (in analyzing Section 5 as a source of power for

⁴ See 383 U.S. at 312 n.12 (discussing discrimination by Montgomery County Registrar); id. at 312 n.13 (discussing discrimination by Panola County registrar and Forrest County registrar); id. at 313 n.14 (citing a case that documents discrimination by the Dallas County Board of Registrars); id. at 313 n.15 (citing a case that documents discrimination by the Walker County registrar); id. at 314 (“certain local officials have defied and evaded court orders or have simply closed their registration offices to freeze the voting rolls”); id. at 314-315 (discussing discrimination in Selma, Alabama and Dallas County).

⁵ See, e.g., Voting Rights: Hearings Before Subcomm. No. 5 of the House Comm. on the Judiciary, 89th Cong., 1st Sess. 5-8 (1965) (extensive voting discrimination by local officials in Selma, Alabama, and Dallas County); id. at 8 (local sheriff and deputy sheriff in Mississippi, beat three black men when they attempted to register to vote); id. at 36 (21 of 22 voting discrimination lawsuits filed by the Department of Justice in Mississippi were against counties); Voting Rights:

substantive provisions of a law, the Court did not distinguish between evidence of state and local governmental conduct). In sum, while Congress compiled ample evidence of unconstitutional conduct by the States themselves in enacting Title II, the constitutional question presented here, unlike Garrett, compels consideration of the evidence of local government discrimination as well.

B. After An Exhaustive Investigation, Congress Found Ample Evidence Of A Long History And A Continuing Problem Of Unconstitutional Treatment Of Individuals With Disabilities

Defendants argue that “nowhere in the findings does Congress state that the States have engaged in any unconstitutional discrimination against the disabled.” Def. Br. 7. That argument is profoundly mistaken.

1. Congress Exhaustively Investigated Governmental Discrimination On The Basis of Disability

Congress’s “special attribute as a legislative body lies in its broader mission to investigate and consider all facts and opinions that may be relevant to the resolution of an issue.” Fullilove v. Klutznick, 448 U.S. 448, 503 (1980) (Powell, J., concurring). “One appropriate source” of evidence for Congress to consider in combating disability discrimination

is the information and expertise that Congress acquires in the consideration and enactment of earlier legislation. After Congress has legislated repeatedly in an area of national concern, its Members gain experience that may reduce the need for fresh hearings or prolonged debate when Congress again considers action in that area.

Hearings Before the Senate Comm. on the Judiciary, 89th Cong., 1st Sess. 12 (1965) (discrimination in Clarke County, Mississippi, and Wilcox County, Alabama); H.R. Rep. No. 439, 89th Cong., 1st Sess. 16 (1965) (resistance of parish registrars to registration of black citizens); S. Rep. No. 162, 89th Cong., 1st Sess. Pt. 3, at 7-9 (1965) (discrimination and litigation in Dallas County, Alabama); id. at 12 (counties’ discriminatory use of “good moral character” test); id. at 33 (county officials’ discriminatory use of poll tax).

Fullilove, 448 U.S. at 503 (Powell, J., concurring); see also South Carolina, 383 U.S. at 330 (“In identifying past evils, Congress obviously may avail itself of information from any probative source.”).

The Congress that enacted Title II of the Disabilities Act brought to that legislative process more than forty years of experience studying the scope and nature of discrimination against persons with disabilities and testing incremental legislative steps to combat that discrimination. See Garrett, 531 U.S. at 390-391 (Breyer, J., dissenting) (listing prior legislation). Building on that expertise, Congress commissioned two reports from the National Council on the Handicapped, an independent federal agency, to report on the adequacy of existing federal laws and programs addressing discrimination against persons with disabilities.⁶ That study revealed that “the most pervasive and recurrent problem faced by disabled persons appeared to be unfair and unnecessary discrimination.” National Council on the Handicapped, On the Threshold of Independence 2 (1988) (Threshold); see National Council on the Handicapped, Toward Independence: An Assessment of Federal Laws and Programs Affecting Persons with Disabilities (1986). Persons with disabilities reported “denials of educational opportunities, lack of access to public buildings and public bathrooms, [and] the absence of accessible transportation.” Threshold 20-21, 41. Congress also learned of an “alarming rate of poverty,” a dramatic educational gap, a “Great Divide” in employment, and a life of social “isolat[ion]” for persons with disabilities. Id. at 14.⁷

⁶ See Rehabilitation Amendments of 1984, Pub. L. No. 98-221, Title I, § 141(a), 98 Stat. 26; Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-506, Title V, § 502(b), 100 Stat. 1829.

⁷ Twenty percent of persons with disabilities -- more than twice the percentage for the general population -- live below the poverty line, and 15% of disabled persons had incomes of \$15,000 or

Congress itself engaged in extensive study and fact-finding concerning the problem of discrimination against persons with disabilities, holding 13 hearings devoted specifically to consideration of the Disabilities Act. See Garrett, 531 U.S. at 389-390 (Breyer, J., dissenting) (listing hearings). In addition, a congressionally designated Task Force held 63 public forums across the country that were attended by more than 30,000 individuals. Task Force on the Rights and Empowerment of Americans with Disabilities, From ADA to Empowerment 16 (1990) (Task Force Report). The Task Force also presented to Congress evidence submitted by nearly 5,000 individuals documenting the problems with discrimination persons with disabilities face daily -- often at the hands of state and local governments. See 2 Staff of the House Comm. on Educ. and Labor, 101st Cong., 2d Sess., Legis. Hist. of Pub. L. No. 101-336: The Americans with Disabilities Act 1040 (Comm. Print 1990) (Leg. Hist.).⁸ Congress also considered several

less. Threshold 13-14. Forty percent of persons with disabilities -- triple the rate for the general population -- did not finish high school. Only 29% of persons with disabilities had some college education, compared with 48% for the general population. Id. at 14. Two-thirds of all working-age persons with disabilities were unemployed; only one in four worked full-time. Ibid. Two-thirds of persons with disabilities had not attended a movie or sporting event in the past year; three-fourths had not seen live theater or music performances; persons with disabilities were three times more likely not to eat in restaurants; and 13% of persons with disabilities never go to grocery stores. Id. at 16-17.

⁸ See also Task Force Report 16. The Task Force submitted those “several thousand documents” evidencing “massive discrimination and segregation in all aspects of life” to Congress, 2 Leg. Hist. 1324-1325, as part of the official legislative history of the Disabilities Act. See id. at 1336, 1389. Those documents – mostly handwritten letters and commentaries collected during the Task Force’s forums – were part of the official legislative history of the ADA. See id. at 1336, 1389. Both the majority and dissent in Garrett relied on these documents, see 531 U.S. at 369-370, with dissent citing to them by State and Bates stamp number, id. at 389-424 (Breyer, J., Dissenting), a practice we follow.

reports and surveys. See S. Rep. No. 116, supra, at 6; H.R. Rep. No. 485, supra, Pt. 2, at 28; Task Force Report 16.⁹

2. Congress Amassed Voluminous Evidence Of Historic And Enduring Discrimination And Deprivation Of Fundamental Rights By States

a. Historic Discrimination: The “propriety of any § 5 legislation ‘must be judged with reference to the historical experience . . . it reflects.’” Florida Prepaid Postsecondary Educ. Expense Bd. v. College Sav. Bank, 527 U.S. 627, 640 (1999) (quoting Flores, 521 U.S. at 525). While defendants ignore it, Congress and two Justices of the Supreme Court have also acknowledged the Nation’s “history of unfair and often grotesque mistreatment” of persons with disabilities. Cleburne, 473 U.S. at 454 (Stevens, J., concurring); see also Olmstead v. L.C., 527 U.S. 581, 608 (1999) (Kennedy, J., concurring) (“[O]f course, persons with mental disabilities have been subject to historic mistreatment, indifference, and hostility.”); Alexander v. Choate, 469 U.S. 287, 295 n.12 (1985) (“well-cataloged instances of invidious discrimination against the handicapped do exist”).

From the 1920s to the 1960s, the eugenics movement labeled persons with mental and physical disabilities as “sub-human creatures” and “waste products” responsible for poverty and crime. Id. at 20. Every single State, by law, provided for the segregation of persons with mental disabilities and, frequently, epilepsy, and excluded them from public schools and other state

⁹ Those included the United States Civil Rights Comm’n, Accommodating the Spectrum of Individual Abilities (1983); two polls conducted by Louis Harris & Assoc., The ICD Survey Of Disabled Americans: Bringing Disabled Americans into the Mainstream (1986), and Louis Harris & Assocs., The ICD Survey II: Employing Disabled Americans (1987); a report by the Presidential Commission on the Human Immunodeficiency Virus Epidemic (1988); and eleven interim reports submitted by the Task Force.

services and privileges of citizenship.¹⁰ States also fueled the fear and isolation of persons with disabilities by requiring public officials and parents, sometimes at risk of criminal prosecution, to report and segregate into institutions the “feble-minded.”¹¹

Almost every State accompanied forced isolation with compulsory sterilization and prohibitions of marriage. See Buck v. Bell, 274 U.S. 200, 207 (1927) (“It is better for all the world, if * * * society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind. * * * Three generations of imbeciles are enough.”); 3 Leg. Hist. 2242 (James Ellis); M. Burgdorf & R. Burgdorf, A History of Unequal Treatment (Unequal Treatment), 15 Santa Clara Lawyer 855, 887-888 (1975). Children with mental disabilities “were excluded completely from any form of public education.” Board of Educ. v. Rowley, 458 U.S. 176, 191 (1982). Numerous States also restricted the rights of physically disabled people to enter into contracts, Spectrum 40, while a number of large cities enacted “ugly laws,” which prohibited the physically disabled from appearing in public. Chicago’s law provided:

No person who is diseased, maimed, mutilated or in any way deformed so as to be an unsightly or disgusting object or improper person to be allowed in or on the public ways or other public places in this city, shall therein or thereon expose himself to public view, under a penalty of not less than one dollar nor more than fifty dollars for each offense.

¹⁰ See also Cleburne, 473 U.S. at 463 (Marshall, J) (state laws deemed persons with mental disorders “unfit for citizenship”); see also Note, Mental Disability and the Right to Vote, 88 Yale L.J. 1644 (1979).

¹¹ Spectrum 20, 33-34.

Unequal Treatment 863 (quoting ordinance). Such laws were enforced as recently as 1974. Id. at 864.¹²

b. Enduring Discrimination and Deprivation of Fundamental Rights: “

Congress specifically found that “our society is still infected by the ancient, now almost subconscious assumption that people with disabilities are less than fully human and therefore are not fully eligible for the opportunities, services, and support systems which are available to other people as a matter of right. The result is massive, society-wide discrimination.” S. Rep. No. 116, supra, at 8-9.¹³

That is because the process of changing discriminatory laws, policies, practices, and stereotypical conceptions and prejudices did not even begin until the 1970s and 1980s. Even then, “out-dated statutes [were] still on the books, and irrational fears or ignorance, traceable to the prolonged social and cultural isolation” of those with disabilities “continue to stymie recognition of the[ir] dignity and individuality.” Cleburne, 473 U.S. at 467 (Marshall, J., concurring) (emphasis added). The involuntary sterilization of the disabled is not distant history; it continued into the 1970s, and occasionally even into the 1980s -- well within the

¹² See also State v. Board of Educ., 172 N.W. 153, 153 (Wis. 1919) (approving exclusion of a boy with cerebral palsy from public school because he “produces a depressing and nauseating effect upon the teachers and school children”) (noted at 2 Leg. Hist. 2243); see generally T. Cook, The Americans with Disabilities Act: The Move to Integration, 64 Temp. L. Rev. 393, 399-407 (1991).

¹³ See also 3 Leg. Hist. 2020 (Att’y Gen. Thornburgh) (“But persons with disabilities are all too often not allowed to participate because of stereotypical notions held by others in society -- notions that have, in large measure, been created by ignorance and maintained by fear.”); 2 Leg. Hist. 1606 (Arlene Mayerson) (“Most people assume that disabled children are excluded from school or segregated from their non-disabled peers because they cannot learn or because they need special protection. Likewise, the absence of disabled co-workers is simply considered confirmation of the obvious fact that disabled people can’t work. These assumptions are deeply rooted in history.”).

lifetime of many current governmental decision makers. P. Reilly, The Surgical Solution 2, 148 (1991); National Public Radio, “Look Back at Oregon’s History of Sterilizing Residents of State Institutions” (Dec. 2, 2002). As recently as 1983, fifteen States continued to have compulsory sterilization laws on the books. Spectrum 37; see also Stump v. Sparkman, 435 U.S. 349, 351 (1978) (Indiana judge ordered the sterilization of a “somewhat retarded” 15 year old girl); Reilly, supra, at 148-160.

Until the late 1970s, “peonage was a common practice in [Oregon] institutions.” Gov. J. Kitzhaber, “Proclamation of Human Rights Day, and Apology for Oregon’s Forced Sterilization” (Dec. 2, 2002). As of 1979, “most States still categorically disqualified ‘idiots’ from voting, without regard to individual capacity and with discretion to exclude left in the hands of low-level election officials.” Cleburne, 473 U.S. at 464 (Marshall, J., concurring). New Mexico recently reaffirmed its unqualified exclusion of “idiots [and] insane persons” from voting. New Mexico, Official 2002 General Election Results by Office (Dec. 2002).

Based on the evidence it amassed, Congress found, as a matter of present reality and historical fact, that persons with disabilities have been and are subjected to “widespread and persisting deprivation of [their] constitutional rights.” Florida Prepaid, 527 U.S. at 645 (citation omitted); see also 42 U.S.C. 12101(a)(2) and (a)(3). In particular, Congress discerned a substantial risk that persons with disabilities will be unconstitutionally denied an equal opportunity to obtain vital services and to exercise fundamental rights, and will be subjected to unconstitutional treatment in the form of arbitrary or irrational distinctions and exclusions, and disparity in treatment as compared to other similarly situated groups, Garrett, 531 U.S. at 366 n.4.

(i) Education: “[E]ducation is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments” because “it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education.” Brown v. Board of Educ., 347 U.S. 483, 493 (1954). Accordingly, where the State provides a public education, that right “must be made available to all on equal terms.” Ibid. But Congress heard that irrational prejudices, fears, ignorance, and animus still operate to deny persons with disabilities an equal opportunity for public education. As recently as 1975, approximately 1 million disabled students were “excluded entirely from the public school system.” 42 U.S.C. 1400(c)(2)(C). A quadriplegic woman with cerebral palsy and a high intellect, who scored well in school, was branded “retarded” by educators, denied placement in a regular school setting, and placed with emotionally disturbed children, where she was told she was “not college material.” VT 1635. Other school districts also simply labeled as mentally retarded a blind child and a child with cerebral palsy. NB. 1031; AK 38 (child with cerebral palsy subsequently obtained a Masters Degree). “When I was 5,” another witness testified, “my mother proudly pushed my wheelchair to our local public school, where I was promptly refused admission because the principal ruled that I was a fire hazard.” S. Rep. No. 116, supra, at 7.¹⁴

¹⁴ See also 136 Cong. Rec. H2480 (daily ed. May 17, 1990) (Rep. McDermott) (school board excluded Ryan White, who had AIDS, not because the board “thought Ryan would infect the others” but because “some parents were afraid he would”); UT 1556 (disabled student refused admission to first grade because teacher refused to teach student with a disability); NY 1123 (three elementary schools had practice of locking mentally disabled children in a 3’x 3’x 7’ box for punishment); Spectrum 28, 29 (“a great many handicapped children” are “excluded from the public schools” or denied “recreational, athletic, and extracurricular activities provided for non-handicapped students”); Education for All Handicapped Children, 1973-1974: Hearings Before the Subcomm. on the Handicapped of the Senate Comm. on Labor & Pub. Welfare, 93d Cong., 1st Sess. 793 (1973) (Christine Griffith) (first-grade student “was spanked every day” because her deafness prevented her from following instructions); id. at 400 (Mrs. R. Walbridge) (student with spina bifida barred from

State institutions of higher education acted on the same stereotypes and prejudices. Indeed, the “higher one goes on the education scale, the lower the proportion of handicapped people one finds.” Spectrum 28; see also note 10, supra. A person with epilepsy was asked to leave a state college because her seizures were “disrupt[ive]” and, officials said, created a risk of liability. 2 Leg. Hist. 1162 (Barbara Waters). A doctor with multiple sclerosis was denied admission to a psychiatric residency program because the state admissions committee “feared the negative reactions of patients to his disability.” Id. at 1617 (Arlene Mayerson). Another witness explained that, “when I was first injured, my college refused to readmit me” because “it would be ‘disgusting’ to my roommates to have to live with a woman with a disability.” WA 1733. Similarly, an Education student was denied a student teaching assignment because administrators thought the students would react badly to her appearance. OR 1384.¹⁵

For both good and ill, “the law can be a teacher.” Garrett, 531 U.S. at 375 (Kennedy, J., concurring). As with race discrimination, few governmental messages more profoundly affect individuals and their communities than the message that individuals with disabilities should be

the school library for two years “because her braces and crutches made too much noise”). For additional examples, see id. at 384 (Peter Hickey); 2 Leg. Hist. 989 (Mary Ella Linden); PA 1432; NM 1090; OR 1375; AL 32; SD 1481; MO 1014; NC 1144; Garrett, 531 U.S. at 391-424 (Breyer, J., dissenting).

¹⁵ See also 2 Leg. Hist. 1224 (Denise Karuth) (state university professor asked a blind student enrolled in his music class “‘What are you doing in this program if you can’t see’”; student was forced to drop class); id. at 1225 (state commission refuses to sponsor legally blind student for masters degree in rehabilitation counseling because “the State would not hire blind rehabilitation counselors, ‘[s]ince,’ and this is a quote: ‘they could not drive to see their clients’”); J. Shapiro, No Pity 45 (1993) (Dean of the University of California at Berkeley told a prospective student that “[w]e’ve tried cripples before and it didn’t work”). For additional examples, see SD 1476; LA 999; MO 1010; WIS 1757; CO 283; Garrett, 531 U.S. at 391-424 (Breyer, J., dissenting); Cal. Report 138; Appendix A, infra.

segregated in education:

Segregation in education impacts on segregation throughout the community. Generations of citizens attend school with no opportunity to be a friend with persons with disabilities, to grow together, to develop an awareness of capabilities -- all in the name of benevolence! Awareness deficits in our young people who become our community leaders and employers perpetuate the discrimination fostered in the segregated educational system.

MO 1007 (Pat Jones).

(ii) Voting: Because “the right to exercise the franchise in a free and unimpaired manner is preservative of other basic civil and political rights, any alleged infringement of the right of citizens to vote must be carefully and meticulously scrutinized.” Reynolds v. Sims, 377 U.S. 533, 561-562 (1964). But Congress found that persons with disabilities have been “relegated to a position of political powerlessness,” 42 U.S.C. 12101(a)(7), and continue to be subjected to discrimination in voting, 42 U.S.C. 12101(a)(3). Congress made that finding after hearing that “people with disabilities have been turned away from the polling places after they have been registered to vote because they did not look competent.” 2 Leg. Hist. 1220 (Nancy Husted-Jensen) (emphasis added). When one witness turned in the registration card of a voter who has cerebral palsy and is blind, the “clerk of the board of canvassers looked aghast * * * and said to me, ‘Is that person competent? Look at that signature,’” and then invented a reason to reject the registration. Id. at 1219. A deaf voter was told that “you still have to be able to use your voice” to vote. Equal Access to Voting for Elderly and Disabled Persons: Hearings Before the Task Force on Elections of the House Comm. on House Admin., 98th Cong., 1st Sess. 94 (1984) (Equal Voting Hearings).¹⁶ The legislative record also documented that many persons

¹⁶ One voter with a disability was “told to go home once when I came to the poll and found the voting machines down a flight of stairs with no paper ballots available”; on another occasion that

with disabilities “cannot exercise one of your most basic rights as an American” because polling places or voting machines are inaccessible. S. Rep. No. 116, supra, at 12. As a consequence, persons with disabilities “were forced to vote by absentee ballot before key debates by the candidates were held.” Ibid.; see also May 1989 Hearings 76 (Ill. Att’y Gen. Hartigan) (same). Voting by absentee ballot also “deprives the disabled voter of an option available to other absentee voters, the right to change their vote by appearing personally at the polls on election day.” 2 Leg. Hist. 1745 (Nanette Bowling).¹⁷ “How can disabled people have clout with our elected officials when they are aware that many of us are prevented from voting?” ARK 155.

(iii) Access to the courts: The Fourteenth Amendment protects the rights of civil litigants, criminal defendants, and members of the public to have access to the courts. See, e.g., Richmond Newspapers, Inc. v. Virginia, 448 U.S. 555 (1980). Yet, Congress learned that “[t]he courthouse door is still closed to Americans with disabilities” -- literally. 2 Leg. Hist. 936 (Sen. Harkin).

voter “had to shout my choice of candidates over the noise of a crowd to a precinct judge who pushed the levers of the machine for me, feeling all the while as if I had to offer an explanation for my decisions.” Equal Voting Hearings 45. “A blind woman, a new resident of Alabama, went to vote and was refused instructions on the operation of the voting machine.” AL 16; see also Garrett, 531 U.S. at 391-424 (Breyer, J., dissenting) (citing additional examples); Help America Vote Act of 2001: Hearing Before the House Comm. on the Judiciary, 107th Cong., 1st Sess. 13 (Dec. 5, 2001) (James Dickson) (“I am blind, and I have never cast a secret ballot.”); id. at 15 (“Twice in Massachusetts and once in California, while relying on a poll worker to cast my ballot, the poll worker attempted to change my mind about whom I was voting for. * * * [T]o this day I really do not know if they cast my ballot according to my wishes.”).

¹⁷ See also Equal Voting Hearings 17, 461 (criticizing States’ imposition of special absentee voting requirements on persons with disabilities). For examples of inaccessible polling places, see 2 Leg. Hist. 1767 (Rick Edwards); WIS 1756; MT 1024, 1026-1027; MI 922; ND 1185; DE 307; WIS 1756; AL 16; Garrett, 531 U.S. at 395-424 (Breyer, J., dissenting); FEC, Polling Place Accessibility in the 1988 General Election 7 (1989) (21% of polling places inaccessible; 27% were inaccessible in 1986 elections).

I went to the courtroom one day and * * * I could not get into the building because there were about 500 steps to get in there. Then I called for the security guard to help me, who * * * told me there was an entrance at the back door for the handicapped people. * * * I went to the back door and there were three more stairs for me to get over to be able to ring a bell to announce my arrival so that somebody would come and open the door and maybe let me in.* * * This is the court system that is supposed to give me a fair hearing. It took me 2 hours to get in. * * * And when [the judge] finally saw me in the courtroom, he could not look at me because of my wheelchair. * * * The employees of the courtroom came back to me and told me, “You are not the norm. You are not the normal person we see every day.”

Id. at 1071 (Emeka Nwojke). Such differential treatment affects not only the ability to get into the courthouse, but also the ability to be heard and participate effectively and meaningfully in judicial proceedings.¹⁸

(iv) Access to government officials and proceedings: “The very idea of a government, republican in form, implies a right on the part of its citizens to * * * petition for a redress of grievances,” United States v. Cruikshank, 92 U.S. 542, 552-554 (1875), and that right cannot be denied to an entire class of citizens without compelling justification, NAACP v. Claiborne Hardware Co., 458 U.S. 886 (1982). State governments must “act as neutral entities, ready to take instruction and to enact laws when their citizens so demand.” Garrett, 531 U.S. at 375 (Kennedy, J., concurring). But government cannot take instruction from those whom it cannot

¹⁸ See ID 506 (adult victims of abuse with developmental disabilities denied equal rights to testify in court); Consol. Gov’t C.A. Br. at 3, Lane v. Tennessee, No. 98-6730 (6th Cir.) (Lane arrested for two misdemeanors and ordered to report for hearing at inaccessible courthouse; the first day he crawled up the stairs to the courtroom; the second day he was arrested for failure to appear when he refused to crawl or be carried up the stairs; hearing later held with defendant forced to remain outside while counsel shuttled between him and the courtroom). For additional examples of inaccessible courthouses and court proceedings, see AL 15; WV1745; MA 812; CA 254; CO 273; ID 528; PA 1394; LA 998; WA 1690; MS 990; SD 1475; NC 1161-1164; L 15; DE 345; GA 374; HI 455; Garrett, 531 U.S. at 391-424 (Breyer, J., dissenting).

see or hear. The Illinois Attorney General testified that he “had innumerable complaints regarding lack of access to public services -- people unable to meet with their elected representatives because their district office buildings were not accessible or unable to attend public meetings because they are held in an inaccessible building,” and that “individuals who are deaf or hearing impaired call[] our office for assistance because the arm of government they need to reach is not accessible to them.” May 1989 Hearings 488, 491. Another individual, “who has been in a wheelchair for 12 years, tried three times last year to testify before state legislative committees. And three times, he was thwarted by a narrow set of Statehouse stairs, the only route to the small hearing room.” IN 626. Access to other important government buildings and officials depended upon the individual’s willingness to crawl or be carried.¹⁹

(v) **Law Enforcement:** Persons with disabilities have also been victimized in their dealings with law enforcement, in violation of their Fourteenth Amendment right to due process and protection from unreasonable searches and seizures. When police in Kentucky learned that a man they arrested had AIDS, “[i]nstead of putting the man in jail, the officers locked him inside his car to spend the night.” 2 Leg. Hist. 1005 (Belinda Mason). Police refused to accept a rape complaint from a blind woman because she could not make a visual identification. NM

¹⁹ See Spectrum 39 (76% of State-owned buildings offering services and programs for the general public are inaccessible and unusable for persons with disabilities); May 1989 Hearings 663 (Dr. Mary Lynn Fletcher) (to attend town meetings, “I (or anyone with a severe mobility impairment) must crawl up three flights of circular stairs to the ‘Court Room.’ In this room all public business is conducted by the county government whether on taxes, zoning, schools or any type of public business.”); AK 73 (“We have major problems in Seward, regarding accessibility to City and State buildings for the handicapped and disabled.”; City Manager responded that “[H]e runs this town * * * and no one is going to tell him what to do.”). For additional examples of inaccessible government officials and offices, see H.R. Rep. No. 485, supra, Pt. 2, at 40; May 1989 Hearings 76; IN 651; WIS 1758; NY 1119; Cal. Report 70; Garrett, 531 U.S. at 391-424 (Breyer, J., dissenting).

1081. A person in a wheelchair was given a ticket and six-months' probation for obstructing traffic on the street, even though the person could not use the sidewalk because it lacked curb cuts. VA 1684. Task Force Chairman Justin Dart testified, moreover, that persons with hearing impairments "have been arrested and held in jail over night without ever knowing their rights nor what they are being held for." 2 Leg. Hist. 1331. A parole agent "sent a man who uses a wheelchair back to prison since he did not show up for his appointments even though * * * he could not make the appointments because he was unable to get accessible transportation." Cal. Report 103.²⁰

(vi) **Child Custody:** The Supreme Court has long recognized that the Constitution protects and respects the sanctity of the parent-child relationship. See, e.g., Troxel v. Granville, 530 U.S. 57 (2000); Stanley v. Illinois, 405 U.S. 645 (1972). In addition, the Due Process Clause requires States to afford individuals with disabilities fair child custody proceedings, including the opportunity to be heard "at a meaningful time and in a meaningful manner." Goldberg v. Kelly, 397 U.S. 254, 267 (1970) (citation and quotation marks omitted). But the Task Force Chairman testified that "clients whose children have been taken away from them

²⁰ See also 2 Leg. Hist. 1115 (Paul Zapun) (sheriff threatens persons with disabilities who stop in town due to car trouble); id. at 1197 (police officer taunted witness by putting a gun to her head and pulling the trigger on an empty barrel, "because he thought it would be 'funny' since I have quadraparesis and couldn't flee or fight"); Task Force Report 21 (six wheelchair users arrested for failing to leave restaurant after manager complained that "they took up too much space"); TX 1541 (police refused to take an assault complaint from a person with a disability); LA 748 (police called to Burger King because staff believed disabled customer was acting strangely, and made the customer leave town); AL 6, DE 345, KS 673, WV 1746, IL 572 (all: lack of interpreter for deaf arrestee). For additional examples of harassment and inappropriate treatment, see 2 Leg. Hist. 1196 (Cindy Miller); IL 569-570, 583; Cal. Report 101-104; Garrett, 531 U.S. at 391-424 (Breyer, J., dissenting). In addition, persons with disabilities, like epilepsy, are "frequently inappropriately arrested and jailed" and "deprived of medications while in jail." H.R. Rep. No. 485, supra, Pt. 3, at 50.

a[re] told to get parent information, but have no place to go because the services are not accessible. What chance do they ever have to get their children back?" 2 Leg. Hist. 1331 (Justin Dart). Another government agency refused to authorize a couple's adoption of a child solely because the woman had muscular dystrophy. MA 829.²¹

(vii) **Institutionalization:** The Constitution protects individuals with disabilities from unjustified institutionalization and from unduly severe treatment while institutionalized. Youngberg v. Romeo, 457 U.S. 307, 315, 322 (1982). Yet unconstitutional denials of appropriate treatment and unreasonable institutionalization of persons in state mental hospitals were commonplace. See 2 Leg. Hist. 1203 (Lelia Batten) (state law ineffective; state hospitals are "notorious for using medication for controlling the behavior of clients and not for treatment alone. Seclusion rooms and restraints are used to punish clients."); id. at 1262-1263 (Eleanor C. Blake) (detailing the "minimal, custodial, neglectful, abusive" care received at state mental hospital, and willful indifference resulting in rape); Spectrum 34-35.²²

²¹ See also H.R. Rep. No. 485, supra, Pt. 3, at 25 ("These discriminatory policies and practices affect people with disabilities in every aspect of their lives * * * [including] securing custody of their children."); id., Pt. 2, at 41 ("[B]eing paralyzed has meant far more than being unable to walk -- it has meant being * * * deemed an 'unfit parent'" in custody proceedings.); 2 Leg. Hist. 1611 n.10 (Arlene Mayerson) ("Historically, child-custody suits almost always have ended with custody being awarded to the non-disabled parent."); Spectrum 40; Garrett, 531 U.S. at 391-424 (Breyer, J., dissenting) (citing additional examples); No Pity, supra, at 26 (woman with cerebral palsy denied custody of her two sons; children placed in foster care instead); In re Marriage of Carney, 598 P.2d 36, 42 (Cal. 1979) (lower court "stereotype[d] William as a person deemed forever unable to be a good parent simply because he is physically handicapped"); Appendix A, infra.

²² See also Gov. Kitzhaber, supra (admitting the use of "inhumane devices to restrain and control patients" until "the mid 1980's"); Cal. Report 114; 132 Cong. Rec. S5914-01 (daily ed. 1986) (Sen. Kerry) (findings of investigation of State-run mental health facilities "were appalling. The extent of neglect and abuse uncovered in their facilities was beyond belief."); Civil Rights of Instit. Persons: Hearings on S. 1393 Before the Subcomm. on the Const. of the Sen. Comm. on the Judiciary, 95th Cong., 1st Sess. 127 (1977) (Michael D. McGuire, M.D.) ("it became quite clear * * * that the

Indeed, in the years immediately preceding enactment of the Disabilities Act, the Department of Justice found unconstitutional treatment of individuals with disabilities in state institutions for the mentally retarded or mentally ill in more than half of the States. One facility forced mentally retarded residents to inhale ammonia fumes as a form of punishment. See Notice of Findings Regarding Los Lunas Hosp. & Training Sch. 2. Residents in other facilities lacked adequate food, clothing and sanitation. Many state facilities failed to provide basic safety to individuals with mental illness or mental retardation, resulting in serious physical injuries, sexual assaults, and deaths. See Appendix B, infra.

(viii) Zoning: Congress knew that Cleburne, where the Supreme Court found unconstitutional discrimination in a zoning decision based on irrational fears and stereotypes, was not an isolated incident. In Wyoming, a zoning board declined to authorize a group home because of “local residents’ unfounded fears that the residents would be a danger to the children in a nearby school.” WY 1781. In New Jersey, a group home for those who had suffered head injuries was barred because the public perceived such persons as “totally incompetent, sexual deviants, and that they needed ‘room to roam.’ * * * Officially, the application was turned

personnel regarded patients as animals, * * * and that group kicking and beatings were part of the program”); id. at 191-192 (Dr. Philip Roos); Civil Rights for Instit. Persons: Hearings on H.R. 2439 and H.R. 5791 Before the Subcomm. on Courts, Civil Liberties, and the Admin. of Justice, of the House Comm. on the Judiciary, 95th Cong., 1st Sess. 239 (1977) (Stanley C. Van Ness) (describing “pattern and practice of physical assaults and mental abuse of patients, and of unhealthy, unsanitary, and anti-therapeutic living conditions” in New Jersey state institutions); Civil Rights of Instit. Persons: Hearings on H.R. 10 Before the Subcomm. on Courts, Civil Liberties, and the Admin. of Justice of the House Comm. on the Judiciary, 96th Cong., 1st Sess. 34 (1979) (Paul Friedman) (“[A] number of the residents were literally kept in cages. A number of those residents * * * had lost the ability to walk, had become incontinent, and had regressed because of these shockingly inhumane conditions of confinement.”); Garrett, 531 U.S. at 391-424 (Breyer, J., dissenting) (citing additional examples).

down due to lack of parking spaces, even though it was early established that the residents would not have automobiles.” NJ 1068 .²³

(ix) Licensing: The legislative record likewise includes evidence of discriminatory treatment in licensing. The House Report discussed a woman who was denied a teaching credential, not because of her substantive teaching skills, but because of her paralysis. H.R. Rep. No. 485, supra, Pt. 2, at 29. See also 2 Leg Hist. 1611 n.9 (Arlene Mayerson) (teaching license denied “on the grounds that being confined to a wheelchair as a result of polio, she was physically and medically unsuited for teaching”); WY 1786 (individual unable to get a marriage license because the county courthouse was not wheelchair accessible).²⁴

(x) Public Transportation: Individuals reported discriminatory treatment on public transportation that lacked any rational basis and that “made no sense in light of how the [government] treated other groups similarly situated in relevant respects.” Garrett, 531 U.S. at 366 n.4. One student testified:

Some of the drivers are very rude and get mad if I want to take the bus. Can you believe that? I work and part of my taxes pay for public buses and then they get mad just because I am using a wheelchair.* * * It is hard for people to feel good about themselves if they have to crawl up the stairs of a bus, or if the driver passes by without stopping.

2 Leg. Hist. 993 (Jade Category); MA 831 (“Blacks wanted to ride in the front of the bus.

²³ For additional examples, see 2 Leg. Hist. 1230 (Larry Urban); AL 2,31; CO 283; Garrett, 531 U.S. at 391-424 (Breyer, J., dissenting); Appendix A.

²⁴ See also CA 261 (discrimination in licensing teachers); HI 479 (discrimination in licensing); TX 1549 (state licensing requirements for teaching deaf students require the ability to hear); TX 1528 & 1542 (interpreters and readers not allowed for licensing exams); TX 1543 (blind applicant not allowed to take state chiropractor’s exam because she could not read x-ray without assistance); Garrett, 531 U.S. at 391-424 (Breyer, J., dissenting) (citing additional examples).

Disabled people just want[] on.”). A high-level Connecticut transportation official responded to requests for accessibility by asking “Why can’t all the handicapped people live in one place and work in one place? It would make it easier for us.” 2 Leg. Hist. 1085 (Edith Harris).²⁵

(xi) Prison conditions: The Eighth Amendment protects inmates with disabilities against treatment that is deliberately indifferent to their serious medical needs and safety or imposes wanton suffering. Farmer v. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825 (1994); Rhodes v. Chapman, 452 U.S. 337, 347 (1981). But Congress heard that “their jailers rational[ize] taking away their wheelchairs as a form of punishment as if that is different than punishing prisoners by breaking their legs.” 2 Leg. Hist. 1190 (Cindy Miller). Another prison guard repeatedly assaulted paraplegic inmates with a knife, forced them to sit in their own feces, and taunted them with remarks like “crippled bastard” and “[you] should be dead.” Parrish v. Johnson, 800 F.2d 600, 603, 605 (6th Cir. 1986).²⁶

(xii) Other Public Services: The scope of the testimony offered to Congress regarding unconstitutional treatment swept so broadly, touching virtually every aspect of individuals’ encounters with their government, as to defy isolating the problem into select categories of state

²⁵ For additional examples, see 2 Leg. Hist. 1097 (Bill Dorfer); id. at 1190 (Cindy Miller); WA 1716; Garrett, 531 U.S. at 391-424 (Breyer, J., dissenting).

²⁶ See also Spectrum 168 (discrimination in treatment and rehabilitation programs available to inmates with disabilities; inaccessible jail cells and toilet facilities); NM 1091 (prisoners with developmental disabilities subjected to longer terms of imprisonment); Appendices A & B, infra. The Attorney General’s enforcement activities revealed that individuals awaiting placement in State mental institutions in Mississippi were held in a county jail and routinely left for days shackled in a “drunk tank” without any mental health treatment or supervision. Notice of Findings Regarding Hinds County Detention Ctr. 3 (1986).

action. Services and programs as varied as the operation of public libraries,²⁷ public swimming pools and park programs,²⁸ homeless shelters,²⁹ and benefit programs³⁰ exposed the discriminatory attitudes of officials.

3. Other Evidence Confirms the Problem

In Garrett, Justice Kennedy suggested that, if a widespread problem of disability discrimination existed, “one would have expected to find * * * extensive litigation and discussion of the constitutional violations.” 531 U.S. at 968. Appendix A to this brief provides a non-exhaustive list of cases in which courts have found discrimination and the deprivation of

²⁷ See 2 Leg. Hist. 1100 (Shelley Teed-Wargo) (town library refused to let person with mental retardation check out a video “because he lives in a group home,” unless he was accompanied by a staff person or had a written permission slip); PA 1391 (same rule for library cards for “those having physical as well as mental disabilities”).

²⁸ A paraplegic Vietnam veteran was forbidden to use a public pool; the park commissioner explained that “[i]t’s not my fault you went to Vietnam and got crippled.” 3 Leg. Hist. 1872 (Peter Adesso); see also id. at 1995 (Rev. Scott Allen) (woman with AIDS and her children denied entry to a public swimming pool); WIS 1752 (deaf child denied swimming lessons); NC 1156 (mentally retarded child not allowed in pool because of “liability risk”); CA 166 (inaccessible public recreation site); MISS 855 (same); May 1989 Hearings 76 (Ill. Att’y Gen. Hartigan) (visually impaired children with guide dogs “cannot participate in park district programs when the park has a ‘no dogs’ rule”); NC 1155 (blind people told not to participate in regular parks and recreation programs).

²⁹ CA 216 (wheelchair users not allowed in homeless shelter); CA 223 (same); DE 322 (same for mentally ill).

³⁰ See 2 Leg. Hist. 1078 (Ellen Telker) (“State and local municipalities do not make many materials available to a person who is unable to read print.”); id. at 1116 (Virginia Domini) (persons with disabilities “must fight to function in a society where * * * State human resources [sic] yell ‘I can’t understand you,’ to justify leaving a man without food or access to food over the weekend.”); IA 664 (person with mild mental retardation denied access to literacy program); KS 713 (discrimination in state job training program); IL 533 (female disability workshop participants advised to get sterilized); AK 72 (no interpreter for deaf at state motor vehicles department). For examples of inaccessible social service agencies, see AK 145; OH 1218; AZ 116; AZ 127; HI 456; ID 541; see generally Spectrum App. A (identifying 20 broad categories of state-provided or supported services and programs in which discrimination against persons with disabilities arises).

fundamental rights on the basis of disability. Many of the cases specifically found constitutional violations. In others, the facts support that conclusion, but the existence of statutory relief allowed the court to avoid the constitutional question. Federal efforts to enforce the rights of individuals with disabilities offer still more evidence. See South Carolina, 383 U.S. at 312 (considering evidence collected in Department of Justice investigations). In public reports, the Department of Justice has either litigated or settled dozens of cases to ensure access to the courts and other government buildings, reasonable treatment by law enforcement officials, and protection against other forms of discrimination that implicate important constitutional rights.³¹ In addition, the Department of Justice has found unconstitutional treatment of individuals with disabilities in institutions or prisons in more than 30 States. See Appendix B.

4. Special Significance of Discrimination in Government Services.

The foregoing record of extensive state and local discrimination in the provision of government services provides a solid predicate for exercise of Congress's Section 5 enforcement power, for three reasons. First, in Garrett, the Supreme Court held that evidence of "hardheaded[] -- and perhaps hardhearted[]" -- employment discrimination based on disability

³¹ Many of these reports, "Enforcing the ADA: A Status Report from the Department of Justice," are available at www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada. See, e.g., Oct.-Dec. 2001 Report 9 (candidate for city council who uses a wheelchair unable to access a city council platform to address constituents); Apr.-June 1998 Report 8-10 (absence of communication assistance results in longer pre-trial detention for detainees with disabilities and denial of medical treatment and communication with family members); July-Sept. 1997 Report 7-9 (State general assembly inaccessible for lobbyists with mobility impairments; lack of effective participation in court proceedings); Apr.-June 1997 Report 5-7 (blind voters; inaccessible courts; unreasonable treatment during traffic stop of deaf motorist); Oct.-Dec. 1994 Report 4-6 (access to town hall; effective participation in court proceedings; inaccessible polling places); "Enforcing the ADA: Looking Back on a Decade of Progress" 4-8 (July 2000) (access to public meetings and public offices, to courts and court proceedings; fair treatment by law enforcement).

