



National ADAPT

a national grass-roots community that organizes disability rights activists... to assure the civil and human rights of people with disabilities to live in freedom

OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS...

ADAPT is a national grass-roots community that organizes disability rights activists to engage in nonviolent direct action, including civil disobedience, to assure the civil and human rights of people with disabilities to live in freedom. Formed by a collective of local ADAPT Chapters, National ADAPT has worked for the past 30 years to promote community living for aging and disabled people through reform of the long term service and support system. The undersigned represent the collective that constitutes ADAPT, as distinguished from other smaller, unofficial organizations representing themselves and their smaller, discrete groups and specific interests.

Current systems reinforce a “bias” in long term services and supports; Medicaid automatically pays for institutional placement. States have to build a parallel long term services and supports system to allow people to remain in their own homes and communities. Housing development has not kept pace with the need for accessible, usable units for people with disabilities. Wages and benefits for workers in homes are unequal to those offered to workers in facilities. Equipment as simple as shower benches or as essential as wheelchairs require users to navigate complicated payment and authorization systems.

The situation aging and disabled people have confronted with COVID-19 has exposed how the biases in our current system mean death to us. COVID-19 has pointed to an imperative to shore up existing long term services and support systems and community resources to keep out of and deliver from aging and disabled people from institutional settings. ADAPT activists are looking for Presidential leadership through aggressive and explicit immediate plans to address gaps in the current system for aging and disabled people that result in unnecessary institutionalization and create barriers for returning to the community.

National recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic will offer the opportunity and the imperative to re-build the long term services and supports system. We will have the opportunity to evaluate the gaps in the past system that placed aging and disabled people squarely at the center of the tempest. We will be able to clearly identify how systemic racism has meant that Black, Indigenous and People of Color suffered higher rates of exposure, infection, and death. We will value housing that offers safe harbor and security as we are able to control who comes in and out of our homes. As more people learn the reality of living with disability, we will place more value on physical and programmatic access in all areas of community life.

As we have for the past 30 years, ADAPT looks to the next Presidential Administration to lead the way toward building communities that support and fully include aging and



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disabled people. ADAPT challenges all systems and policymakers to promote community integration and aggressively dismantle the system of institutional bias that segregates, isolates, and discriminates against people with all types of disabilities, and compounds the discrimination and exclusion of disabled Black, Indigenous and People of Color. We have long embraced the reality that change does not happen in the absence of demand; social and political progress requires relentless advocacy and activism. ADAPT expects public servants and elected officials to share our commitment to the following and we look to the campaigns to provide concrete plans for moving these issues of our rights, our well-being, and our lives forward that include:

Ending the Institutional Bias in health care and long term services and supports

Money Follows the Person as a permanent program

Housing – stabilizing affordability and expanding accessibility for integrated housing

COVID-19 Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Funding

Direct Support Workforce wages, benefits, recruitment and retention for self-directing aging and disabled people using community-based long term services and supports

Implementation of policies that keep people from going into institutions, rehabilitation facilities, group homes, state hospitals, detention and carceral centers, and any other type of congregate setting.

FREE OUR PEOPLE,

Arizona ADAPT

Philadelphia ADAPT

Kansas ADAPT

Massachusetts ADAPT

Montana ADAPT

ADAPT of Erie, Pennsylvania

North Central Pennsylvania ADAPT

Central Pennsylvania ADAPT

Capitol Region ADAPT, NY

ROC ADAPT, NY

Florida ADAPT

South Carolina ADAPT

Southwest Pennsylvania ADAPT

ADAPT of Texas

Desert ADAPT

D.C. Metro ADAPT

Washington ADAPT

Wisconsin ADAPT

Downstate NY ADAPT

#DisabledNotDisposable #ADAPTandSurvive #LivesWorthyOfLife

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