

February 12th, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Leader Pelosi:

The undersigned organizations, representing nearly 48 million Americans who are Deaf or hard of hearing, strongly oppose H.R. 620, which has been placed on the Union Calendar for a vote in the House of Representatives.

H.R. 620 — unlike the title conferred upon it — neither educates people about the purpose of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), nor does it introduce meaningful reform.

The ADA was written and passed by a bipartisan Congress to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded by public entities or places of public accommodations.

With input from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and business interest groups, the ADA authors established an “undue burden” threshold to prevent the requirement of accessibility from harming businesses. H.R. 620 short-circuits this threshold, and discourages ADA claims by making the process of obtaining relief more torturous and less accessible.

President George H.W. Bush, when signing the ADA in 1990, said that “Legally, (the ADA) will provide our disabled community with a powerful expansion of protections and then basic civil rights. It will guarantee fair and just access to the fruits of American life which we all must be able to enjoy.”

We urge you to keep those protections intact and reaffirm the right of all Americans to the “fruits of American life”.

Please reject H.R. 620.

Very Truly Yours,

Communication Service for the Deaf, Inc. (CSD)

Association of Late-Deafened Adults (ALDA)

Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. (TDI)

Deaf Grassroots Movement (DGM)

Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)

National Association of State Agencies of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NASADHH)

Council de Manos

Cerebral Palsy and Deaf Organization (CPADO)

Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID)

Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools & Programs for the Deaf (CEASD)