

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1502

COMMITTEES:
AGRICULTURE
APPROPRIATIONS
HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS
SMALL BUSINESS

July 28, 2010

Beth Ervin
2105 Highway 9
Lakota, Iowa 50451-7074

Dear Beth:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with my staff to share your experiences. My staff is holding similar meetings across the state, and reporting back to me with stories of the great successes and continuing challenges of Iowans with disabilities.

This summer we celebrate an auspicious occasion - the 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The day it was signed - July 26, 1990 - remains one of the proudest of my legislative career. Back then, we imagined the profound changes this legislation would have on the world. Now, 20 years later, we see the tremendous progress that has been made because of this effort. The landscape was literally changed for countless Americans by requiring buildings and transportation to be accessible, and to provide workplace accommodations for employees with disabilities.

I will never forget President George H.W. Bush's final words before he took up his pen to sign the ADA: "Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down." We've come a long way since that wonderful day in 1990, and we have much to celebrate. But we're not done. That wall is crumbling, and with continued dedication we can grind the last bits of it into dust.

Again, my staff and I appreciate your time and willingness to share. I depend on Iowans like you to keep me informed of the issues of importance to you. If you have an additional personal story to share about the impact of the ADA, feel free to email me at disabilities@harkin.senate.gov.

Sincerely,



Tom Harkin
United States Senator

TH/lmm