

# Human Services Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No:** SB-430 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

**Title:** AN ACT CODIFYING THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT.

**Vote Date:** 3/19/2026

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 3/10/2026

**File No.:**

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## SPONSORS OF BILL:

Human Services Committee

## REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill seeks to incorporate by reference those provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that are not otherwise addressed in state law. Through this bill, the Committee hopes to ensure that laws protecting those with disabilities are holistic, comprehensive, and correlate with federal law.

## RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

**Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS), Amy Porter, Commissioner:** expresses strong support for this bill, as it would adopt provisions of the ADA that are not currently included in the state's general statutes. She testifies that the ADS sees this bill as an opportunity to codify expanded protections for those with disabilities.

**Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO), Tanya Hughes, Executive Director:** supports the intent of the bill along with any effort to strengthen Connecticut's civil rights laws, but voices concern with the statutory complications that this bill could create. Our state courts have already interpreted existing laws regarding disability discrimination to be more expansive than the ADA. She references specific statutes that allow individuals to file claims with the CHRO for ADA violations, alongside mandates that require state agencies to comply with the ADA. Regarding this bill, she testifies that the ADA differs from state provisions in multiple ways. Under federal law, the definition of disability is narrower than the definition under state law. As a result, she argues that the passage of this bill as written could create uncertainty and confusion when the courts are interpreting and applying the state's

disability protections. While there are provisions in the bill that attempt to harmonize multiple standards for disability discrimination claims, she worries that this may not be enough to achieve that goal. She offers her help to the Committee to address these concerns.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**Gretchen Knauff, Director of the New Haven Department of Persons with Disabilities:** strongly urges legislators to support this bill and highlights how the ADA is a comprehensive piece of legislation that has allowed people with disabilities to fully participate and integrate into their communities. This includes access to jobs, reasonable accommodations, and protections against discrimination. She emphasizes the necessity of this legislation due to the lack of civil rights enforcement happening at the federal level.

**Connecticut Legal Services, Jean Mills Aranha, Elder Law Attorney:** after having served on the Governor's Nursing Home and Assisted Living Oversight Working Group, stresses that this bill is needed to protect residents with disabilities. She highlights that the implementation of the ADA is scarce under the current federal administration. Regarding state law, she notes that Connecticut does not include the ADA regulation of an "integration mandate," which bans the unnecessary segregation of people with disabilities. This requires state and local governments to provide the option of administering services to people with disabilities in their homes and communities. She argues that this integration is a key civil rights requirement that works to end the isolation of people with disabilities.

**CT State Advisory Council for Special Education, Missy Wrigley, Chair:**  
**Special Education Equity for Kids in Connecticut (SEEK), Andrew Feinstein,**  
**Legislative Chair:**  
**Special Education Equity for Kids in Connecticut (SEEK), Stacy Tie, Special Education Advocate:**

Advocates for students with disabilities support the intent of the bill but raise several issues with it as written. They say that students with disabilities are protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the ADA, and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The protections under section 504 and the ADA are mostly the same, and thus this bill needs to be adjusted to include references to both pieces of legislation. They advise against changing the general statutes to include every regulatory provision, as this could create confusion and work against the bill's desired goal but maintains that further added language besides section 1 of the bill is needed. Concerning section 2, they worry that the language could be misconstrued and make CHRO the only body to which people can bring school-based complaints of disability discrimination. A similar issue arose with IDEA, which led to Congressional revisions that they believe the state should mirror. However, they recommend avoiding the implementation of an exhaustion requirement that exists for the ADA and section 504 cases because of the division that has resulted in multiple court cases.

**Disability Rights CT, Sheldon Toubman, Litigation Attorney:** supports this bill, noting the lack of the ADA's integration mandate in state law. He argues that it bolsters the state's general statutes while allowing the CHRO to hear ADA violation complaints. Moreover, he testifies that this bill is needed due to the elimination of the Community First Choice Medicaid program, which resulted in limitations in community-based services and longer wait lists for care.

**Disability Rights CT, Carol Sully, Board Member:** supports this bill because it would expedite the remediation process for those with disabilities. Additionally, she states that the bill would address regulatory gaps, mandate accessibility at the local level, and promote equity while reducing discrimination.

Several people voice their support for this bill, and they believe that certain state statutes that offer greater protection than the ADA should supersede federal law. Additionally, they express grave concern about the lack of enforcement of civil rights at the federal level due to cuts to the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice. Therefore, they argue that this bill would aid people with disabilities in advocating for their rights.

**Connecticut Legal Rights Project, Kathy Flaherty, Executive Director:**

**Retired Disability Rights Lawyer, Nancy Alisberg:**

**CT ADAPT, Mary-Ann Langton, Advocate:**

**Citizens Coalition for Equal Access, Ruth Grobe, Secretary and Advocate:**

**Sandra Roberts**

**Susan Yankee**

**Suzanne Garraffa, Self Advocate:** is a constituent living with cerebral palsy who testifies about her experience as a person with a disability and her efforts towards independence. She is worried about the changes to federal civil rights enforcement and argues that this bill is necessary to safeguard people with disabilities.

**High School Student:** An anonymous testifier lends their support for this bill, citing their experience with their brother who is disabled. They state that their brother is subject to consistently unfair treatment, and this bill would provide him with the resources he needs to advocate for himself.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

Two anonymous testifiers oppose the bill because it would increase government taxing and spending.

**Reported by: Mia Giglietti**

**Date: March 30, 2026**