



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Craig M. Johnson

Senator Johnson's Protections for the Disabled Signed into Law

CRAIG M. JOHNSON July 26, 2010

| ISSUE: **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**



Strong legislation sponsored by Senator Craig M. Johnson, (D-Nassau), that will protect disabled New York state residents from discrimination was signed into law last week.

"This state has a rich history of defending the civil rights of its residents," Senator Johnson said. "I am proud to have helped enact a law that follows this tradition and ensures that we protect those who may not be able to protect themselves."

The legislation (S.7329) codifies the rights of individuals to obtain employment, education, public accommodations, housing and commercial space without discrimination because of disability is recognized and declared to be a civil right. This law now makes it illegal to boycott, blacklist, refuse to buy from, sell to, or trade with an individual with a disability also; a protection that is currently provided for age, race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, sex or marital status.

Additional protections are also extended to the disabled with regards to housing. Currently, disabled people across the state struggle to find or maintain adequate housing, largely due to accessibility issues. Under this new law, the State Division of Human Rights will have the authority to require landlords to make reasonable modifications to common areas to provide more suitable access to those who need it. This might include adding brail signage for a tenant who is visually impaired, or a ramp for a wheelchair user.

This legislation passed the Senate June 10. It had earlier passed the Assembly, where it was sponsored by Assemblyman Michael J. Cusick, (D-Staten Island.)