



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake

*Mayor,
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***Mayor Rawlings-Blake and Commission on Disabilities Celebrate the 26th Anniversary
of Americans with Disabilities Act***

*Baltimore continues efforts to improve the lives of local residents with disabilities,
enhancing access to government services, business resources and employment
opportunities.*

BALTIMORE, Md. (July 26, 2016)—Today, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and the Mayor's Commission on Disabilities (MCOB) celebrate the 26th anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As the 6th ranked U.S. city with the highest percentage of people with disabilities among cities with populations between 500,000 and 1,000,000 persons, Baltimore continues to enhance services for impaired residents. The City of Baltimore also strives to protect and enhance the civil rights of individuals with disabilities to ensure access to employment, transportation, local government programs and services, access to business, and accessible telecommunications.

This year's accomplishments include:

- Enhancing accessibility at 21 public school election polling sites through additional accessible entrances and directional signage.
- Partnering with State government, the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center, and the National Federation of the Blind to host a Transportation Summit on the current state of accessibility, best practices, needs, and updates to the Maryland transportation system.

- Increasing the number of disability organizations listed in the Baltimore Emergency Communications Network (BECON) private- public emergency alert database.
- Developing a multi-agency five year employment hiring plan to enhance the recruitment, interviewing, and hiring of persons with a disability and veterans with a disability.
- Expanding Project Space, a program to increase accessible metered street parking to over 200 spaces reserved for people with disabilities.

“We recognize that we must stay vigilant with respect to the civil rights of those with disabilities. Increasing opportunities for employment, public services and private businesses will only make our communities stronger” stated Mayor Rawlings-Blake.

"The American Disabilities Act reduced barriers and provided opportunities for all of us to become full partisans in community life," MCOD Executive Director Nollie Wood added. "Creating an opportunity for independence, diversity, inclusion, and equity for all as equal partners in Baltimore's future is key to our success."

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