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AND ENVIRONMENT

July 31, 2020

Dear Friends,

We gather today to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) being signed into law. While I wish I could be with you in person to honor the passage of this landmark legislation—and join you in celebrating the critically important work done by Taconic Resources for Independence (TRI)—I hope this letter can serve to reflect my deep appreciation for disability advocates across the country.

As you well know, in 1990, the ADA ushered in new civil rights protections that prohibit discrimination based on disabilities. Modeled after the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the ADA's passage marked a watershed moment in American history and in disability advocacy. Subsequently strengthened and broadened by amendments in Congress and upheld and enforced by our nation's federal courts, the ADA is one of America's most comprehensive pieces of civil rights legislation. What's more, the legislation has stood the test of time in the 21st century. Indeed, the ADA's protections now apply not just to brick-and-mortar stores but also to most websites.

That said, our work is far from finished when it comes to ensuring that the more than one in five New Yorkers—and more than 60 million Americans across the country—living with a disability are free from discrimination in employment, housing, education, and more. Far too many barriers still exist between disabled Americans and truly independent living, including economic self-sufficiency. 30 years after the ADA's passage, far too many businesses, services, and transportation systems remain inaccessible to Americans with disabilities.

That's why TRI's work is so important. From its advocacy work on the ground to its independent living skills training programs, TRI helps Dutchess County come closer to meeting the obligation that our country as a whole must meet, as well: that every person with a disability lives an independent, fulfilling life that is free from discrimination. As your representative in Congress, I pledge to bring this spirit to my work on Capitol Hill and continue to be an advocate in this space.

Again, it is my honor to join you in commemorating the ADA's 30th anniversary. I wish all of you, and TRI, the very best.

Sincerely,



Antonio Delgado
Member of Congress