



June 13, 2025

The Honorable Pete Sessions
U.S. House of Representatives
2204 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: ITEM Coalition Support for H.R. 3417, the Websites and Software Applications Accessibility Act

Dear Representative Sessions:

The undersigned members of the Independence Through Enhancement of Medicare and Medicaid (“ITEM”) Coalition write to express our support for H.R. 3417, the *Websites and Software Applications Accessibility Act of 2025* (the “Act”), which would require that websites and applications used by covered entities (employment entities, public entities, public accommodation, or testing entities) to communicate or interact with applicants, employees, participants, customers, or other members of the public be readily accessible to and useable by individuals with disabilities. We applaud your leadership in sponsoring this bill to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities with respect to participation or denial of services, accessibility, employment, and equal enjoyment related to websites and software applications. We look forward to working with you and your House colleagues to pass and enact this important legislation into law.

The ITEM Coalition is a national consumer- and clinician-led coalition advocating for access to and coverage of assistive devices, technologies, and related services for people with injuries, illnesses, disabilities, and chronic conditions of all ages. Our members represent individuals with a wide range of disabling conditions, as well as the providers who serve them, including visual impairments, brain injury, stroke, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, spinal cord injury, paralysis, and other life-altering conditions.

Websites and mobile applications (hereinafter referred to as “mobile apps”) now play an integral role for entities in providing services and information to all members of the community. Websites and mobile apps have the potential to virtually level the playing field for people with disabilities and, to date, have enabled people with disabilities to have greater access to services, health care, and other societal benefits. State and local government entities are increasingly providing services to the public via their websites or mobile apps, particularly after the COVID-19 public health emergency. For example, government entities utilize their websites and mobile apps to announce important public health information; schedule health care visits; apply for state-run health care programs; file complaints in connection with the provision of health care services; and provide information regarding health insurance and providers in the community.

However, these web- and mobile app-based services are not equally accessible to individuals with disabilities. For instance, websites and mobile apps may lack features that enable individuals to convert the visual information on a website into speech via a screen reader. Similarly, websites or mobile apps that do not allow text to be resized or do not provide enough contrast create significant barriers for individuals with low vision.

The *Websites and Software Applications Act of 2025* includes critical provisions—directed towards employment, public accommodation and testing, and covered entities as well as commercial providers—designed to improve access to websites and mobile apps for individuals with disabilities. The ITEM Coalition strongly supports the provisions of this bill, which would:

- Establish accessibility standards for covered entities with respect to websites and software applications made available to individuals with disabilities.
- Establish a private right of action for individuals with disabilities who have been discriminated against under the Act.
- Establish a technical assistance center to help fulfill the purpose of the Act.
- Create a grant program for technical assistance providers and small entities.
- Establish an advisory committee to provide advice, financial assistance, and guidance concerning the creation and maintenance of accessible websites and mobile apps.
- Authorize a study and report on the effect that emerging technologies have on individuals with disabilities' ability to participate in several aspects of society.
- Require the establishment of enforcement standards to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

Establishing these standards, resources, and grant programs would symbolize a significant advancement for individuals with disabilities, especially those with low vision, by allowing them greater and more equal access and participation in the digital world. This legislation, if passed, would also reduce the tremendous barriers for individuals with low vision who use websites and mobile apps and push their rights forward in the rapidly changing technological world.

For these reasons, the ITEM Coalition strongly supports this impactful bill, and we thank you for reintroducing legislation that would expand the protections and rights for individuals with disabilities, including those living with low vision. We stand ready to assist your office to pass and enact this bill into law.

For additional information about the ITEM Coalition, please contact the ITEM Coalition co-coordinators, Peter Thomas at Peter.Thomas@PowersLaw.com, Leela Baggett at Leela.Baggett@PowersLaw.com, and Michael Barnett at Michael.Barnett@PowersLaw.com.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned Members of the ITEM Coalition

Access Ready, Inc.
ACCSES
ACI Alliance
Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
All Wheels Up
American Association on Health and Disability
American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine
American Council of the Blind
Assistive Technology Industry Association
Association for Education & Rehabilitation of the Blind & Visually Impaired
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network
Blinded Veteran Association
Clinician Task Force
Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation
3DA
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
Epilepsy Foundation of America
Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)
Institute for Matching Person and Technology
International Eye Foundation
Lakeshore Foundation
Lighthouse Guild
Long Island Center for Independent Living, Inc. (LCIL)
National Association for the Advancement of Orthotics and Prosthetics
National Association of Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (NARRTC)
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization on Disability
Perkins School for the Blind
Prevent Blindness
Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington
RESNA
Team Gleason*
The Viscardi Center
United Cerebral Palsy
United Spinal Association*
VisionServe Alliance

Additional Supporting Organizations:

Disability Belongs
National Aging and Vision Loss Coalition

****ITEM Coalition Steering Committee Member***