

February 14, 2018
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Member of the House of Representatives:

The Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA) urges you to vote in support of H.R. 620, the ADA Education and Reform Act of 2017. The retail industry remains committed to creating a safe, welcoming environment for all customers and employees alike. However, these efforts could be harmed by an increasing number of lawsuits under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We strongly support the mission of the ADA and appreciate the House's consideration of this bill to ensure the intent of the law is maintained by limiting abusive litigation.

By way of background, RILA is the trade association of the world's largest and most innovative retail companies. Its members include more than 200 retailers, product manufacturers, and service suppliers, which together account for more than \$1.5 trillion in annual sales, millions of American jobs and operate more than 100,000 stores, manufacturing facilities and distribution centers domestically and abroad.

RILA member companies serve the best interests of both their customers and employees by providing access and accommodations for individuals with disabilities. However, there has been a growing trend of "drive-by" lawsuits materializing from alleged ADA access violations. These suits are typically brought about by a single plaintiff looking to charge businesses of public accommodations with technical violations of the ADA with the intent of winning an out of court settlement. Suits of this kind saw a 14 percent increase in 2017, and the number has more than tripled since 2013.

The ADA Education and Reform Act of 2017 can effectively reverse this alarming trend. Specifically, the bill promotes compliance through greater education for businesses and establishes a notice and cure provision that would allow businesses to address alleged ADA access violations quickly and efficiently. If a business fails to correct or make substantial progress in correcting an identified violation following this notice and cure period, the plaintiff's legal rights for seeking legal recourse under the ADA would still apply.

RILA understands the significant impact the ADA has made in opening access for individuals with disabilities. Overall, the bill will ensure that the appropriate resources are focused on improving access rather than being used for unnecessary attorney fees. For these reasons, RILA strongly encourages you to vote in favor of the ADA Education and Reform Act of 2017. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Evan Armstrong
Vice President, Government Affairs, RILA