



PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE
FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

HISTORY

President John F. Kennedy



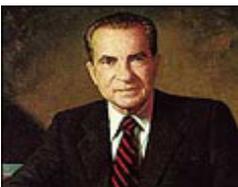
In 1961, President John F. Kennedy created the President's Panel on Mental Retardation and called upon America to address the significant needs of people with intellectual disabilities and their desire to be a part of everyday life in America. The Panel submitted its first report, "Combating Mental Retardation," which led to Congressional action to establish new programs for people with intellectual disabilities, including hospital improvement programs.

President Lyndon B. Johnson



In 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Executive Order 11280, formally establishing the President's Committee on Mental Retardation (PCMR). The first Committee established as its priorities: (1) environmental and biomedical prevention; (2) early recognition and treatment of mental retardation, with emphasis on special education and habilitation services; (3) identification of legal and human rights; and (4) increased public awareness as the key to the realization of their goals.

President Richard M. Nixon



In 1974, President Richard Nixon signed Executive Order 11776, which emphasized deinstitutionalization, and called upon Americans to welcome people with intellectual disabilities into their communities. Under the President's new priorities, the Committee's work reflected greater emphasis on family and community services, prevention of the incidence and severity of intellectual disabilities and strengthening of legal and human rights for people with intellectual disabilities.

President Gerald R. Ford



On October 11, 1974, President Gerald R. Ford met with the Committee and established his priorities. These priorities included: (1) increased bio-medical research into the causes of intellectual disabilities and increased prenatal care and fetal diagnosis; (2) training in academic, vocational and social skills to enable children with intellectual disabilities to live up to their highest potential; (3) legal recognition of the rights of citizens with intellectual disabilities; and (4) the promotion of employment for people with intellectual disabilities through the U.S. Employment Services and private industry.

President Jimmy Carter



President Jimmy Carter brought to the White House a reputation for outstanding work in the field of intellectual disabilities while Governor of Georgia. In 1977, President Carter sponsored the White House Conference on the Handicapped at which the Committee's work was highlighted in the areas of community services, health care, special education and vocational and rehabilitation employment programs. That same year, Mrs. Carter met with members of the Committee and requested a detailed report on the efficacy of prevention and treatment programs.

President Ronald W. Reagan



Under the leadership of President Ronald W. Reagan, from 1981 to 1989, the Committee released several important reports reflecting the priorities of the Reagan administration, most notably, the largely untapped economic resource of workers with intellectual disabilities. The Committee also celebrated its twentieth anniversary with a symposium entitled, "Maximizing the Quality of Life for Individuals with Mental Retardation and other Developmental Disabilities."

President George H. W. Bush



In 1990, President George H. W. Bush supported landmark legislation for protecting the rights of people with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) set forth standards of equal opportunity in the areas of employment, transportation, telecommunications, public accommodations and services. The Committee released a report to the President on a relatively new issue to the intellectual disability community entitled, "Report to the President – Citizens with Mental Retardation and the Criminal Justice System."

President William J. Clinton



In 1996, President William Jefferson Clinton renewed the call of his predecessors for greater community inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities by signing Executive Order 12994. President Clinton encouraged America to see the abilities, not the limitations in every American, and to recognize the worth and dignity that every American contributes to our great nation. The Committee answered this call with a series of reports, including “The Journey to Inclusion: A Resource Guide for State Policymakers” and “Collaborating for Inclusion: 1995 Report to the President.”

President George W. Bush



Almost immediately after taking office, President George W. Bush announced the *New Freedom Initiative* to remove barriers to community living for people with disabilities. The priorities and goals reflected in this landmark policy initiative are reflected in the Committee’s subsequent reports, most notably the 2004 Report to the President, “A Charge We Have to Keep: A Road Map to Personal and Economic Freedom for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities in the 21st Century.” On July 25, 2003, President Bush signed Executive Order 13309, renaming the President’s Committee on Mental Retardation to the President’s Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities.

President Barack H. Obama



On December 11, 2008, President-elect Barack H. Obama unveiled his plan to ensure that Americans with disabilities have an equal opportunity to achieve the American Dream and pledged to make implementing this plan an Obama administration priority. Now President, Barack Obama believes the United States should lead the world in empowering people with disabilities to take full advantage of their talents and become independent, integrated members of society. In addition to reclaiming America’s global leadership on this issue by becoming a signatory to – and having the Senate ratify – the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the President’s plan has four parts that are designed to provide Americans with disabilities the greatest possible access to the same opportunities as those without disabilities: (1) provide Americans with disabilities the educational opportunities they need to succeed, (2) end discrimination and promote equal opportunity, (3) increase the employment rate of workers with disabilities, and (4) support independent, community-based living for Americans with disabilities.