

Protecting the Most Basic American Right

The last presidential election reminded us yet again that "every vote counts." All too often, however, people with disabilities have been unable to cast their ballots - either because of inaccessible voting places or discriminatory voting policies.

In an effort to remedy these problems, protection and advocacy agencies such as the *Disabilities Law Program* have set out to educate and advocate ensuring that people with disabilities share one of the most fundamental rights of our democracy: the right to vote.

People with disabilities continue to be faced with these realities at polling places:

- 40% of polling places are inaccessible for people with disabilities and do not allow many to cast a secret ballot.
- According to the Federal Election Commission, there are at least 20,000 polling places across the country that are physically inaccessible.

Recent statistics suggest that only 45% of Delaware's eligible voters with disabilities go to the polls.

The Disabilities Law Program receives funding to assist in the implementation of the Help America Vote Act and to ensure full participation in the electoral process. The DLP can provide education, training and assistance to people with disabilities to promote their participation in the electoral process, including voter registration training and advocacy and informing the community about their rights on Election Day, including the right to accessible polling places.