

## CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The American Chemical Society (ACS) supports ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). As the world's largest scientific society, ACS supports inclusiveness and equity in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines at all educational and professional levels. It also supports maintaining a healthy American citizenry and freedom of international scientific exchange.

The treaty was passed by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in 2014 but was not ratified. It was referred back to the Committee at the end of the 113th Congress. ACS respectfully requests that the Committee consider the treaty so that it may be brought to the Senate floor for debate as soon as possible.

Approximately 650 million people in the world have disabilities, 57 million of whom live in the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, about 41 percent of working-age people with disabilities were employed in 2010, compared to 79 percent of the non-disabled.

The CRPD provides an international framework for establishing policies and practices that ensure the rights and dignity of all persons with disabilities. It was largely inspired by the United States' leadership in this area and by the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, in particular. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the ADA and thus a quarter century of U.S. leadership in providing equal opportunity to persons with disabilities.

The treaty requires participating parties to implement the means to allow people with disabilities to enjoy equal access to medical facilities, education, workplaces, and communications technologies. It encourages international cooperation and sharing of scientific and technical knowledge. Parties should also support research and development on adaptive goods and services, as well as assistive technologies. The U.S. has made great strides in these areas since passage of the ADA and would maintain its leadership role in ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities by becoming a party to the treaty.

ACS is proud to join over 850 organizations that have expressed support for ratification, including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the National Educational Association, the American Physical Society, and the Council on Undergraduate Research.