



IREM Institute of Real Estate Management

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January 25, 2017

Representative Ted Poe
2132 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Scott Peters
1122 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Ken Calvert
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Jackie Speier
2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Michael Conaway
2430 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Ami Bera
1135 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Poe, Peters, Calvert, Speier, Conaway, and Bera:

On behalf of the 20,000 members of the Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM®) we enthusiastically support your introduction of “The ADA Education and Reform Act” (H.R. 620). This bill is essential in reforming what has become an abuse of the original intent of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and we thank you all, your colleagues, and your staff for quickly re-introducing this crucial legislation.

As you are well aware, Title III of the ADA is intended to make places and opportunities accessible to those with disabilities. However, in some states, a few attorneys have filed lawsuits indiscriminately against commercial property owners on behalf of disabled persons. The lawsuits are being filed without warning to the business owners, who are forced to spend scarce resources preparing a defense rather than addressing and repairing the violation and removing the barrier. Often our members are completely unaware of any violation despite being assured by licensed inspectors that none exist and the property is fully compliant with ADA laws. When these cases are settled, the bulk of the fees collected are going directly to the attorneys since the ADA precludes the disabled person from collecting damages for violations.

IREM Members adhere to a strict code of ethics and are committed to ensuring all properties are compliant and accessible to all people. Our members want the opportunity to remove the barrier, and not automatically be involved in expensive litigation even if the violation is quickly rectified. Your common-sense bill would



strengthen the Americans with Disabilities Act and allow all people the opportunity to access various properties.

For your reference, IREM® is an international community of real estate managers dedicated to ethical business practices, maximizing the value of investment real estate, and promoting superior management through education and information sharing. As an affiliate of the National Association of REALTORS®, IREM® is the home for all industry professionals connected to real estate management – and the only organization serving both the multifamily and commercial sectors. Since 1933, IREM® has set the standard for best practices in real estate management.

Today, IREM® membership includes nearly 20,000 individual members and 550 corporate members. Collectively, CERTIFIED PROPERTY MANAGER® (CPM®) Members manage nearly \$1.8 trillion in real estate assets including 11.6 million residential units and more than 10 billion square feet of commercial space.

We thank you and applaud your efforts at stopping a practice that completely undermines the very important intention of the ADA.

Sincerely,



Michael T. Lanning, CPM®
2017 IREM® President

