



Remove Barriers to Accessible Parking

Request

The Greater Illinois Chapter and Gateway Area Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society advocate for passage of HB6177, sponsored by Representative Esther Golar and SB3309, sponsored by Senator Linda Holmes, to provide people with disabilities greater access to the community. This legislation strengthens penalties for obstructing accessible parking spaces and parking aisles reserved for people with disabilities, following 24 hours after an adverse weather event. It also provides that no property owner shall allow for the accumulation of debris or large objects, such as trash containers, and unreasonably obstruct any designated aisle or parking space, specifically reserved for persons with disabilities, without providing suitable and equivalent alternative parking spaces on-site.

Background

Parking Access: It's the Law! On average, Illinois residents shovel and remove more than 3 feet of snow annually. These winter conditions can pose safety hazards and create undue obstacles for people with disabilities, including compromising their independence and access to the community. Insufficient or delayed removal or ice accumulation not only makes the surface treacherous for balance and maneuvering, but can obliterate the international disability symbol which marks accessible spaces for people with disabilities. In some instances, plowed snow is actually dumped in either accessible spaces, or adjacent access aisles without regard for their purpose.

The small ratio of designated accessible parking spaces, in comparison to non-accessible parking spaces, coupled with the winter holiday shopping season, and illegal or improper use of parking placards by the non-disabled who park in accessible spaces, further exacerbate this issue.

Summary

Please cosponsor HB6177 and SB3309 to provide under all circumstances, access to parking for people with disabilities!

Supportive Information

- The Americans with Disabilities Act identifies nearly one of every five Americans with a disability – many of whom would have better access to the community if HB6177 and SB3309 are enacted
- HB6177 and SB3309 will ensure safe and accessible parking for people with disabilities and will institute a penalty for those that thwart this aim.
- Current law does not specify remedies or penalties for parties responsible for accessible parking spaces and parking aisles. Those charged with enforcement of these laws would benefit from fees violators pay.
- Violators would be guilty of a petty offense and required to pay a fine of not more than \$250. Effective January 1, 2011. This penalty fee can be an additional revenue source for the enforcing municipality

Sponsoring Organization: National Multiple Sclerosis Society-Greater Illinois Chapter and Gateway Area Chapter

Endorsing organizations: Chicago Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities in Illinois, Equip for Equality, Illinois Secretary of State, Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living, Illinois Assistive Technology Project, Lupus Foundation of America, National Coalition for Disability Rights Steering Committee-Region 4, Spinal Cord Injury Association of Illinois