



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES

2007 Report of the CCD Task Force on Telecommunications and Technology

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CCD Telecom-Tech met several times in the early part of the year. Meetings were attended by up to about five members. Most members teleconferenced in from out of state. Activities of members were diverse and addressed telecommunications, technology and assistive technology.

2007 Activities of the Task Force included:

1. Sent letter to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) about its obligations to report on Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. In November we received an answer from DOJ that they would produce some sort of report about Section 508 and get it to the U.S. Access Board.
2. Representation on the Section 508 "Refresh of Guidelines" committee at the U.S. Access Board, i.e., the Telecommunications & Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Committee (TEITAC). TEITAC met over eight times during the year, in full three-day plenary sessions held at NSF and numerous other subcommittee meetings and teleconferences. A TEITAC report is anticipated by end of January 2008 to go to the Access Board.
3. Participation in the Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology (COAT). COAT is an independent coalition of over 90 national groups and 75 community-based organizations. COAT's efforts are targeted at updating the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure that existing mandates for relay services, closed captioning and hearing aid compatibility are applied to new and emerging Internet-Protocol (IP) enabled communications technologies and that the Federal Communications Commission re-instates video description used by persons with vision disabilities. Draft legislation was released 12/21/07. Hooray!
4. Advocacy to ensure that the Assistive Technology Act was properly appropriated.

2008 expected goals and priorities include:

- a. Ensuring sponsorship and passage of the “Twenty First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act,” to update the Communications Act of 1934 so that persons with disabilities are not left behind as phones and television are Internet-Protocol (IP) enabled..
- b. Ensuring assistive technology is properly appropriated.
- c. Ensuring technology within education initiatives addresses concerns of persons with sensory disabilities, such as hearing and vision disability.