



The Quiet Attack on Disability Rights: Why Section 504 Must Be Defended

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For over 50 years, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act has been the bedrock of disability rights in America. It has guaranteed students, workers, and patients' equal access to education, jobs, and essential services. But today, that protection is under direct attack—and few people even know it's happening.

Seventeen states, led by Texas, have filed a lawsuit that doesn't just challenge updates to Section 504 regulations. It seeks to strike down the law itself. If *Texas v. Becerra* succeeds, it could dismantle key civil rights protections for millions of people with disabilities—many of whom don't even realize they are at risk.

A Lifeline for Millions—Now Under Threat

For the 1 in 5 children with dyslexia, Section 504 is more than a policy—it's a lifeline. It ensures they can use audiobooks, assistive technology, and extended test time to access education on an equal footing with their peers. It allows workers with disabilities to use screen readers and speech-to-text tools.

These [accommodations](#) aren't advantages—they're access. They allow people to participate fully in school, work, and society. Without Section 504, many could be shut out entirely.

This lawsuit could erase those rights overnight. Schools could deny support to children with dyslexia, employers could refuse to provide basic accommodations, and patients with disabilities could face greater barriers to access to healthcare—with no clear recourse under federal law.

Why Aren't We Talking About This?

Unlike past fights over civil rights, this one has flown largely under the radar. There have been no viral moments or headline-grabbing protests. Instead, it has unfolded in legal filings and technical arguments—far from public scrutiny.

Some officials supporting the lawsuit have downplayed its consequences, claiming it's just about regulatory overreach. But the actual legal complaint tells a different story. The lawsuit

explicitly argues that Section 504 itself is unconstitutional and demands that the entire rule be thrown out.

This is not just about policy disputes—it's about whether disabled people deserve equal rights under the law.

A Defining Moment for Disability Rights

If *Texas v. Becerra* succeeds, it could set a dangerous precedent to weaken disability protections across the board—including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This is not just about schools or workplaces; it's about ensuring every American with a disability retains their legal rights to fair treatment and equal opportunity.

What Happens in Court on February 25?

The case is pending before Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas. The court has already blocked the updated Section 504 rules while the case continues.

On February 25, 2025, both sides—the 17 states suing to overturn 504 and the U.S. government defending it—will submit a joint report outlining what they believe the court should do next. Supporters of Section 504, including disability advocates and other states, may also file briefs urging the court to protect the law.

It is critically important to realize that this case is not just about technical rule changes. The lawsuit explicitly argues that Section 504 itself is unconstitutional. If this argument succeeds, the consequences could go far beyond this rule—threatening disability rights nationwide.

What Needs to Happen Now

State attorneys general have a choice: **defend disability rights or be remembered for dismantling them.**

If you're concerned about these developments, it's important to stay informed, raise awareness, and advocate for disability rights. Education is key—learn about Section 504, its impact, and what is at stake in this lawsuit.

For those who want to support the protection of Section 504, [click here](#) to learn more and act.

States currently involved in the lawsuit include Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, and West Virginia. If your state is part of this case, you can [click here](#) to see what's happening and explore ways to take action.

Disability rights are fundamental and not negotiable. The future of Section 504 affects us all. Stay engaged, spread the word, and continue to advocate for equal access and protections for individuals with disabilities.