

SENATE, No. 3511

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 9, 2021

Sponsored by:

Senator ANTHONY M. BUCCO

District 25 (Morris and Somerset)

SYNOPSIS

Revises requirements for signage indicating accessible facilities for people with disabilities.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **AN ACT** concerning accessibility signage and supplementing Title
2 39 of the Revised Statutes.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

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7 1. a. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the
8 contrary, a sign, placard, license plate, or other marker that uses a
9 wheelchair symbol to identify for the general public accessible
10 features designed or designated for the use of a person with a
11 disability shall depict, in place of the wheelchair used as the
12 international symbol of access prior to the effective date of this act,
13 a logo with a dynamic character leaning forward with a sense of
14 movement. The logo shall be readily identifiable, simply designed
15 with no secondary meaning, and provide for equivalent facilitation
16 and accessibility as the international symbol of access. In any
17 instance where the word “handicapped” would be used on a sign,
18 placard, license plate, or other marker, the word “accessible” shall
19 be used instead.

20 b. This section shall only apply to new signs, placards, license
21 plates, and other markers being installed or replaced on or after the
22 effective date of this act.

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24 2. This act shall take effect on the 60th day after the date of
25 enactment.

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STATEMENT

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30 This bill would phase in the use of revised symbols and words on
31 all signs, placards, license plates, and other devices used to identify
32 for the general public accessible features designed or designated for
33 the use of persons with disabilities, such as restrooms, access
34 ramps, and parking spaces.

35 The bill would additionally require that all such signs, placards,
36 license plates, and other devices use the word “accessible” in place
37 of the word “handicapped.”

38 This legislation would be part of a growing national and
39 international movement to replace the current international symbol
40 of access, which some advocates suggest conveys a sense of
41 passivity and emphasizes the wheelchair over the person, with a
42 new symbol of access that emphasizes the person in a dynamic
43 posture suggesting mobility, action, and determination.

44 This bill is based on legislation enacted by New York State and
45 Connecticut adopting the phased-in use of the revised symbol of
46 access. The revised symbol has been additionally adopted by towns
47 and cities including El Paso, Texas and Cambridge, Massachusetts,
48 as well as by businesses, universities, hospitals, religious

1 organizations, museums, and other organizations in at least 10
2 different states; those adopting the revised symbol of access include
3 such diverse groups as the Jacksonville Jaguars, Cigna, and a
4 hospital located in India.

5 The Accessible Icon Project has taken a leading role in
6 promoting and supporting the adoption of the revised symbol of
7 access, an example of which can be found on the Project's website.
8 In place of the wheelchair symbol currently used as the
9 international symbol of access, accessibility signs, placards, license
10 plates, and other markers would use a logo depicting a dynamic
11 character leaning forward with a sense of movement. The bill
12 would require this logo to be readily identifiable, simply designed
13 with no secondary meaning, and provide for equivalent facilitation
14 and accessibility as the wheelchair symbol currently in use.

15 This bill would only apply to new signs, placards, license plates,
16 and other devices being installed or replaced on or after the
17 effective date of the bill, which would be the 60th day after the date
18 of enactment. Because it would only apply to signs, placards,
19 license plates, and other devices that are newly-installed or that are
20 being replaced, this bill will not impose any new or additional costs
21 on the State above those it would normally incur installing new and
22 replacement signs, placards, license plates, and other devices.