

SENATE, No. 822

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2024 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Senator ANTHONY M. BUCCO

District 25 (Morris and Passaic)

Senator JAMES BEACH

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

SYNOPSIS

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

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/25/2024)

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 apply to signs, placards, license plates,
21 and other markers being replaced or newly installed on or after the
22 effective date of this act, and shall not be construed to require the
23 replacement of a sign, placard, license plate, or other marker, if
24 replacement is not otherwise necessary or appropriate.

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

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STATEMENT

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

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

40 This legislation would be part of a growing national and
41 international movement to replace the current international symbol
42 of access, which some advocates suggest conveys a sense of
43 passivity and emphasizes the wheelchair over the person, with a
44 new symbol of access that emphasizes the person in a dynamic
45 posture suggesting mobility, action, and determination. The bill is
46 based on legislation enacted by New York State and Connecticut
47 adopting the phased-in use of the revised symbol of access. The
48 revised symbol has been additionally adopted by hundreds of towns

1 and cities, public and private organizations, governmental agencies,
2 and individual citizens across the world.

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

13 This bill would apply to signs, placards, license plates, and other
14 markers being replaced or newly installed on or after the effective
15 date of the bill, which would be the 60th day after the date of
16 enactment. The bill expressly provides that it is not to be construed
17 to require the replacement of a sign, placard, license plate, or other
18 marker if replacement is not otherwise necessary or appropriate.
19 Because it would only apply to signs, placards, license plates, and
20 other devices that are newly-installed or that are being replaced, this
21 bill will not impose any new or additional costs on the State above
22 those it would normally incur installing new and replacement signs,
23 placards, license plates, and other devices.