



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**Georgia Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights  
Releases Report: *Disability Rights and Civil Rights***

The Georgia Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights released [\*Disability Rights and Civil Rights in Georgia\*](#), a report on the status of disability rights in the state. The report is based primarily on testimony collected at a [public meeting](#) in Atlanta in February 2018; a web briefing in July 2018; and written testimony submitted to the Committee during a public comment period.

In this study, the Committee sought to review the state's response to a 1999 Supreme Court decision, *Olmstead v. L.C.*, which upheld the rights of people with disabilities to receive community-based services in the "most integrated setting" possible. The Committee found that while much progress has been made, concerns remain, particularly for: people living in nursing homes; those requiring access to behavioral health services; and those in need of supported and affordable housing. The report also discusses findings regarding employment, education, and incarceration. It concludes with a number of recommendations submitted to Commission, and directed at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services; the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section; Governor Kemp; and the Georgia Legislature -- with the goal of helping to remedy identified concerns.

Committee Chair Jerry Gonzalez said, "The Committee would like to thank all panelists and members of the public who shared their experiences and recommendations with us as a part of this study. We hope the Committee's recommendations will help to strengthen civil rights protections for individuals with disabilities in the State of Georgia."

Georgia Committee member Chanel Haley presented the report's findings and recommendations directly to Commissioners during a Commission business meeting of the Commission last month.

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*The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 51 state Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. The Commission: in our 7th decade, a continuing legacy of influence in civil rights. For information about the Commission, please visit [www.usccr.gov](http://www.usccr.gov) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).*