

ASAN, 35 Advocacy Organizations File Amicus Brief Supporting Civil Rights Laws

Today, the Autistic Self Advocacy Network, ACLU, and thirty-four other advocacy organizations filed an [amicus brief](#) encouraging broad enforcement of civil rights laws protecting people from discrimination based on disability, race, religion, and sex.

The brief asks the Second Circuit Court of Appeals to reconsider a ruling that limited Section 504, an important disability rights law, to just those parts of the New York Unified Court System that directly got federal funding. This meant that the law would not protect people taking the Bar examination - a test that people must pass in order to become lawyers. It also would not protect people in other parts of the court system, such as state courts of appeals. And it would set a dangerous precedent that could weaken other major civil rights laws.

That's because the ruling conflicted with a law called the Civil Rights Restoration Act. This law says that when a state agency gets money from the federal government, *all* parts of that agency need to follow certain civil rights laws that protect against discrimination based on disability, race, religion, and sex. ASAN and other organizations are concerned that the Second Circuit's ruling could affect these other civil rights laws as well.

"We wrote this brief to make sure our rights are enforced as broadly as possible," said Sam Crane, Legal Director at ASAN. "We hope that the Second Circuit reconsiders this frightening decision."

Organizations joining ASAN included the ACLU, National Center for Law and Economic Justice, National Women's Law Center, Autistic Women and Nonbinary Network, National Disability Rights Network, and the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law. A full list of organizations is included in the [brief](#).

The Autistic Self Advocacy Network seeks to advance the principles of the disability rights movement with regard to autism. ASAN believes that the goal of autism advocacy should be a world in which autistic people enjoy equal access, rights, and opportunities. We work to empower autistic people across the world to take control of our own lives and the future of our common community, and seek to organize the autistic community to ensure our voices are heard in the national conversation about us. Nothing About Us, Without Us!