

My name is Agnes McCray and I am a human Rights Advocate. The independent living movement and philosophy as well as the Help Americans Vote Act has helped me and all persons with extravagant differences to responsibly live our own lives, take care of our health, and be in charge of our destiny. I am a mother, an accomplished human rights advocate, a registered voter and citizen for 22 years. I was one of only 3 advocates from Syracuse to select the ballot marking devices which gives people who are differently abled the right to successfully vote in many different ways. I worked with poll workers in sensitivity training along with other advocates, and assisted in writing the sensitivity training manuals that are used to train poll workers.

As a registered voter I take pride going out to my polling place very early in the morning to do my due diligence. As I stated, I have helped pick out the new accessible devices and for the first few years I was successfully able to use these machines, unfortunately, I have been experinal many issues with the accessible ballot devices. For example, if the accessible ballot device is not running first thing and I have to ask to have it turned on, it will take a very long time to start up and this can be very difficult and because the accessible device is connected to the ballot marking machine and when the technicians have to turn on or fix the accessible device, it will pause the marking machine and stop the process of voting for everyone. Last year for the Presidential election I had to vote by paper ballot because the technicians could not get the accessible ballot device to work. This year I had to wait over 45 minutes for the technicians to fix the ballot device and It got to a point where they were blaming me as to why the device was not working. The technicians can become very condescending to me and this made me feel that my choice should only be an absentee ballot. I also do not feel as though I have the opportunity to make the choice on how I would like to vote. As a person with extravagant differences, voting is important because it is my voice and gives me a chance to make change within my community to make it a safe and better place.