
[All ETDs from UAB](#)

[UAB Theses & Dissertations](#)

2006

Attitude and the ADA: A survey of public employees in Alabama.

Amy Philips

University of Alabama at Birmingham

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/etd-collection>



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Philips, Amy, "Attitude and the ADA: A survey of public employees in Alabama." (2006). *All ETDs from UAB*. 4824.

<https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/etd-collection/4824>

This content has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of the UAB Digital Commons, and is provided as a free open access item. All inquiries regarding this item or the UAB Digital Commons should be directed to the [UAB Libraries Office of Scholarly Communication](#).

ATTITUDE AND THE ADA:
A SURVEY OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES IN ALABAMA

by

AMY PHILIPS

DONNA M. HANDLEY, COMMITTEE CHAIR
JEREMY HALL
MICHAEL HOWELL-MORONEY

A THESIS

Submitted to the graduate faculty of The University of Alabama at Birmingham,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Public Administration

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

2006

UMI Number: 1436885

Copyright 2006 by
Philips, Amy

All rights reserved.

INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI[®]

UMI Microform 1436885

Copyright 2006 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

**GRADUATE SCHOOL
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM
THESIS APPROVAL FORM**

Degree M.P.A. **Graduate Program** Public Administration

Name of Candidate Amy Philips

Title of Thesis Attitude and the ADA: A Survey of Public Employees in

Alabama

I certify that I have read this document and examined the student regarding its content. In my opinion, this thesis conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is adequate in scope and quality, and the attainments of this student are such that she may be recommended for the master's degree.

Thesis committee:

Name	Signature
<u>Donna Handley</u> , Chair	<u></u>

<u>Jeremy Hall</u>	<u></u>
--------------------	---

<u>Michael Howell-Moroney</u>	<u></u>
-------------------------------	---

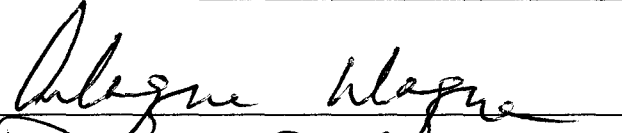
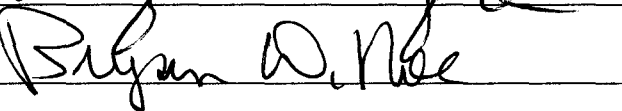
<u></u>	<u></u>
---------	---------

<u></u>	<u></u>
---------	---------

Director of Graduate Program

Dean, UAB Graduate School

Date JUN 16 2006

<u></u>
<u></u>

Copyright by
Amy Philips
2006

ATTITUDE AND THE ADA:
A SURVEY OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES IN ALABAMA

AMY PHILIPS

ABSTRACT

This descriptive research on perceptions of public employees in Alabama explores basic attitudinal qualities of public employees, ADA education, and the potential for marketing a state disability act in Alabama. A quantitative survey composed of 34 questions was administered via internet communication to a sample group of 567 state employees in Alabama.

The survey results indicated that public employees share widespread support for the ADA. The greatest support, however, was found in those public employees who work with someone who has a disability, work for an organization that specifically serves people with disabilities, or have a disability themselves. In addition, public employees contend that even with the national ADA in place, disability discrimination still persists. Despite this perception, there is a lack of support for a state disability act. This condition could be a manifestation of federalism in attitude. Apparent weakness in the ADA education of public employees was also identified, as they seem to possess a false confidence in their sometimes erroneous ADA knowledge. Public employees also have false perceptions of the success of the ADA.

In exploring the potential for marketing a disability act in the State of Alabama, the results of the study offered several opportunities for application; however, consideration was given to the potential risk that some methods of bolstering the support for an Alabama disability act could result in a decline of support for the national ADA. Some high risk options included advertising the functional and legal weaknesses of the

ADA. Low risk options included: enhancing general ADA education with attention to the ambiguity of the policy, the civil rights nature of the law, continued disability discrimination, and the current legal proceedings threatening the viability of the ADA.

DEDICATION

From a young age, I had a vision for my life: to make a positive difference in the world through work in the public service. This thesis is a reflection of the many individuals who have provided me with the tools, encouragement, and inspiration to fulfill my dream. I must, however, dedicate this research to those who inspired it: the 957,055 Alabamians with Disabilities.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The process of completing this research could not have been done alone. I must give first recognition to Dr. Donna M. Handley, chair of the thesis committee. This amazing woman far exceeded her responsibilities as an advisor, and instead, became a partner in the study, experiencing the emotional highs and lows of the process. Her enthusiasm and love for the public service was contagious. Also, I extend my thanks to Dr. Michael Howell-Moroney who was integral in developing my abilities to design this research and conduct the statistical analysis. The final link in the committee chain was Dr. Jeremy Hall, who was always available and responsive in my quest for answers, even to the most miniscule questions. I would be remiss if I did not also mention my parents, Darlene and Thomas Redclift, for their constant efforts to refuel my ambition when the tank was low.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
INTRODUCTION	1
Defining the Question	2
LITERATURE REVIEW	4
Overview of the ADA	4
Issues	6
Vague Definition	6
Case Law Precedent	7
Forced Compliance	7
Financial Burden	8
Attitude-Focused ADA Research	9
METHDOLOGY	10
Sampling	19
Response Rate	21
Representativeness of Sample	22
Method of Analyzing Data	28
Limitations	28
RESULTS	32
General Observations	32
Perception vs. Reality	32
Necessity and Legality of the ADA	33
Success Measures and Support	34
Need for Improvement	35
State-Specific DA Support	36

Base Model- State-Specific DA Support	37
Model #1- State-Specific DA Support.....	38
Model #2- State-Specific DA Support.....	39
Model #3- State-Specific DA Support.....	40
Model #4- State-Specific DA Support.....	41
Model #5- State-Specific DA Support.....	41
Model #6- State-Specific DA Support.....	42
Model #7- State-Specific DA Support.....	43
“Kitchen Sink” Model- State-Specific DA Support	44
Overview of State-Specific DA Support Results.....	47
Favorable Impression Indicators.....	48
Base Model- Favorable Impression Indicators	49
Model #1- Favorable Impression Indicators	50
Model #2- Favorable Impression Indicators	50
Model #3- Favorable Impression Indicators	51
Model #4- Favorable Impression Indicators	53
Model #5- Favorable Impression Indicators	54
Model #6- Favorable Impression Indicators	54
“Kitchen Sink” Model- Favorable Impression Indicators	55
Overview of Favorable Impression Indicators Results.....	57
DISCUSSION.....	58
General Implications.....	58
Public Employees and the ADA	58
Public Employees and ADA Education.....	60
Marketing an Alabama DA.....	61
High Risk Options.....	62
Low Risk Options	64
CONCLUSIONS.....	66
WORKS CITED	68
APPENDIX	
A INTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL.....	71
B SURVEY INSTRUMENT	73
C RESPONSE RATE WORKSHEET	82
D RESPONSE BREAKDOWN- BY DEPARTMENT	84

LIST OF TABLES

<i>Table</i>	<i>Page</i>
1 Gender Comparison of Alabama employees and sample population	24
2 Age Comparison of Alabama employees and sample population	24
3 Ethnicity Comparison of Alabama employees and sample population	25
4 Years in Public Service Comparison of Alabama employees and sample population	26
5 EEO Category Comparison of Alabama employees and sample population	27
6 Success Indicators of the ADA	34
7 Indicators of need for ADA Improvement.....	35
8 Base Model- State-Specific DA Support	38
9 Model #1- State-Specific DA Support.....	38
10 Model #2- State-Specific DA Support.....	39
11 Model #3- State-Specific DA Support.....	40
12 Model #4- State-Specific DA Support.....	41
13 Model #5- State-Specific DA Support.....	42
14 Model #6- State-Specific DA Support.....	43
15 Model #7- State-Specific DA Support.....	44
16 “Kitchen Sink” Model- State-Specific DA Support	46
17 Base Model- Favorable Impression Indicators	49
18 Model #1- Favorable Impression Indicators	50

19	Model #2- Favorable Impression Indicators	51
20	Model #3- Favorable Impression Indicators	52
21	Model #4- Favorable Impression Indicators	53
22	Model #5- Favorable Impression Indicators	54
23	Model #6- Favorable Impression Indicators	55
24	“Kitchen Sink” Model- Favorable Impression Indicators	56

INTRODUCTION

Primarily addressing employment discrimination and access to public services, the ADA has become one of the most contested pieces of legislation due to its vague and ambiguous definitions paired with broad and expensive regulations (Katsiyannis and Yell, 2002). Title II of the ADA sets regulations that deal directly with the relationship between individuals and their state/local governments; this yields a direct impact on public agencies, which are ultimately responsible for implementing all parts of the legislation (Katsiyannis and Yell, 2002). Numerous court decisions have challenged the legitimacy of Title II of the ADA, altering the perceived and real authority of the legislation, bringing into question the ability of the ADA to successfully achieve its goals (Correia, et al., 2003). Due to the reduction of provisions for remedy within the ADA and the attack of the ADA as a violation of states' rights, some states have moved to adopt state-specific disability laws. In the year 2000, disability advocates in Alabama introduced the Alabamians with Disabilities Act to the state legislature. Although the bill passed the Senate, it was never addressed by the House, and thus failed. In an effort to prepare the bill for reintroduction, assessments of public opinion regarding the ADA are necessary to more effectively market the legislation.

Public organizations are the most heavily impacted by Title II of the ADA, and would be similarly impacted by an Alabamians with Disabilities Act. With such controversy surrounding Title II, and the potential for public agencies to influence the success of the ADA through action or inaction, it is important to determine the

perceptions and attitudes of employees within these organizations as to the ADA. Not only does this study help to identify the basic perceptions of state employees in Alabama regarding the ADA, this research also provides insight to the public service in general, helping to more fully understand the public services' relationship with disability legislation and people with disabilities. This study is also aimed to identify areas for improvement in employee education on the ADA and potentially lead to alterations in implementation methods and style. Perception is often more important than reality, thus for the ADA to truly meet its goal of providing equality of opportunity, the attitudes of the individuals delivering services and protecting rights must be assessed. Even if the full implementation of the structural "rules" of the ADA were achieved, the attitudinal barriers of public servants could easily translate to barriers in achieving ADA's ultimate goals of social inclusion.

Another benefit of this research is its potential to help direct the campaign for support for the reintroduction of the Alabamians with Disabilities Act. For instance, if public employees have a favorable view of the ADA, marketing the Alabamians with Disabilities Act may consist of advertisements displaying the weakening of the ADA and the necessity for a state-specific correction. If public employees do not have a favorable impression of the ADA, the Alabamians with Disabilities Act will have to prove that it will correct perceived shortfalls (which will undoubtedly require additional research).

Defining the Question

The question to be addressed by this exploratory research is as follows: What are the attitudes and perceptions of public employees in Alabama towards the Americans with Disabilities Act? As previously mentioned, Title II of the ADA directly impacts

public agencies, and thus public employees. To avoid confusion of those public employees who may not be aware of the specific content of the individual titles of the ADA, this study focuses on perceptions of the ADA as a whole, as opposed to specifying Title II. Further, due to the specific interest in Alabama public employees, the 34-question internet-based survey was conducted exclusively within the state and included only state employees. As the goal of this research was to identify and understand perceptions within the public service, the survey was designed to reveal opinions by utilizing questions regarding the individual employee perception of the necessity, implementation, efficacy, effectiveness, and general attitudes towards the ADA. It is worth note that the true “effectiveness” of the ADA is beyond the scope of the research objective and was therefore excluded from the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reviewing applicable, quality research on this topic is a delicate task, as there is an abundance of literature discussing the ADA; however, only a limited portion of the available information furthers this particular research agenda. In order to appreciate the relevance of the research and its foundations, it is prudent to first consider the general fundamentals of the ADA, its basic legislative history, and then conclude with an appraisal of attitudinal and perception-based ADA research.

Overview of the ADA

The ADA was passed in 1990, as President George Bush signed one of the most progressive and aggressive civil rights laws in America (Mezey, et al., 2002). Intended to protect people with disabilities from discrimination, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) served as an extension of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, calling for an end to prejudice in both the private and public sectors (Katsiyannis and Yell, 2002).

In general terms, the ADA requires an end to discrimination on the basis of disability. Discrimination includes treating someone differently because of a particular characteristic or engaging in “practices that have an unintended, but disparate, impact on people with disabilities” (Clegg, 1999: 101). Employment, being a key area of discrimination, is included in the ADA which promises equal opportunities in employment to all people with disabilities (Katsiyannis and Yell, 2002: 40). In addition, public and private entities must make activities, facilities, and programs accessible regardless of federal funding. An important distinction regarding the type of

modifications required of public and private bodies is necessary, as “reasonable accommodations” are mandated, but making things “the same” for people with disabilities is not the rule (Clegg, 1999: 101). For instance, removing a barrier for an individual with a disability may require modifying the individual’s work schedule or altering the performance of certain functions, which would result in making said employee’s circumstances very different from other employees, yet reasonably accommodated. Essentially, employees with disabilities should have the same opportunities but may require altered means of achieving them.

The ADA is divided into five “Titles” which describe the protections offered by the law (Katsiyannis and Yell, 2002: 40). Title I addresses employment discrimination in the private sector. Employers are bound to make certain accommodations for their workers with disabilities including, but not limited to: making facilities accessible, making appropriate job modifications, adapting schedules, acquiring equipment, and providing readers/interpreters (U.S. Congress, 1990). Title II of the ADA, deals with the relationship between individuals and state/local governments, making it very important to public employees. Title III bars discrimination on public and private services, while Title IV deals with accessibility of telecommunications regardless of provider. Finally, Title V consists of an assortment of terms, including one notable provision which declares that states do not have immunity to the ADA (U.S. Congress, 1990; Katsiyannis and Yell, 2002).

Relevant Issues

Vague Definition

As the requirements of the ADA are notably expansive, it would be assumed that Congress would have clearly defined who qualifies for protection under the legislation to avoid dispute, however, the vague description of what constitutes a disability has resulted in extensive confusion and litigation. A disability, according to the ADA, is “(A) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual; (B) a record of such an impairment; or (C) being regarded as having such impairment” (Clegg, 1999: 101). The lack of clarity in the phrases “substantially limits” and “major life activity” leads to a plethora of debates over diverging interpretations.

While physical impairments such as the loss of limbs, deafness, or blindness are generally accepted as disabilities, a multitude of other conditions have been argued to substantially limit major daily life functions. Everything from cognitive impairments, to alcoholism, to HIV have been approved as meeting the “substantially limiting” standard of the ADA (Clegg, 1999: 101). Some conditions, however, have been excluded from ADA protections. In the 1999 case of *Murphy v. United Parcel Service, Inc.*, high blood pressure was determined not to be a disability because it does not significantly hinder daily activities (Katsiyannis and Yell, 2002: 41). Further, the courts have agreed that if a person is able to function normally when his/her impairment is treated, the person does not qualify for ADA protection (Katsiyannis and Yell, 2002: 42). Most Americans, when considering the ADA, cannot find a definition for the word “disability,” thus influencing their perceptions of the law.

Case Law Precedent

Other complications in defining the word “disability” derive from case law precedents. In the early years of ADA enforcement, courts tended to consider a disability to be a condition which reflected a “significant difference” from the norm of the rest of society. This precedent known as the “significant difference” doctrine, although well known, was nullified in a recent ADA case (Katsiyannis and Yell, 2002: 43). In *Albertsons, Inc. v. Kirkingburg* (527 U.S. 555, 1999), this idea was invalidated by the Supreme Court, which contended that not all significant differences significantly limited daily life functions (Katsiyannis and Yell, 2002: 43). The wide array of possible interpretations for the word “disability,” in addition to the evolving interpretation of the word by the courts, help to explain why there is so much ADA litigation. The constantly changing definition of a single word, “disability,” naturally gives rise to significant disapproval.

Forced Compliance

The legal interpretation of the word “disability” is not the only attribute of the ADA that garners criticism. First, the ambiguity of the legislation leads to natural conflict in interpretation and arguments regarding the burden it places on the judicial system. Further, many believe that Congress acted outside of its discretion in passing the law in the first place (Clegg, 1999). Other opponents consider the ADA to be an unfunded mandate wherein the federal government makes expensive requirements but provides no money to pay for them (Mezey, et al., 2002). The ADA has been accused of seizing state and local fiscal planning by dictating such major financial commitments (Mezey, et al., 2002). According to the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National

Association of Counties, the ADA cost state and local governments over \$10 billion by 1992 and an additional \$3 billion between 1994 and 1995 (Mezey, et al., 2002: 50). Due to the soaring price of ADA compliance, the courts and Congress have been blamed for placing unreasonable expectations on state and local governments.

Financial Burden

Not only have states been forced to finance compliance with ADA standards, but they have also been subject to highly controversial financial penalties under the ADA. In the 2001 case *Board of Trustees v. Garrett*, the Supreme Court addressed rising concerns regarding states' subjectivity to monetary damages through a case in which the injured party sought financial remedy for disability discrimination on the part of a public entity (531 U.S. 356, 13, 2001). This case is credited with shaping both American, and specifically Alabamian, perceptions of the ADA.

Patricia Garrett who served as a Supervising Nurse at the University of Alabama Medical Center in Birmingham was demoted to a lower-paying job after missing work during an intense series of cancer treatments (531 U.S. 356, 13, 2001). Believing that her employer, the University of Alabama, had violated her Title I ADA protections, Garrett filed a suit seeking monetary relief. On February 21, 2001, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the State of Alabama and states' rights, stating that Congress exceeded its authority in allowing monetary damages to be sought against states (531 U.S. 356, 2001). This very recent case concerned disability advocates, as many wondered why states would comply with the ADA if the only possible consequence would be an injunction. So, although the federal government exercised its control to make the ADA, it seems that

a near-compromise was struck between the federal level of government and states by limiting ADA provisions for monetary penalties.

Attitude-Focused ADA Research

A considerable amount of disability and ADA research was conducted influencing the development and passage of the ADA in 1990. Much the information is now admittedly dated and reflects only historical significance, yet it is important to review some of the findings in order to see the evolution of attitudes and understand current research that mirrors outdated studies. Since the ADA's passage, additional research has also been conducted reviewing the first decade of the ADA's impact.

As early as 1962, attitudes toward people with disabilities were considered as a subject of importance (Bell, 1962). Personal interviews of rehabilitation staff, those who provide treatment to people with disabilities, were expected to reveal a sympathetic and favorable perspective of patients, but the hypothesis was nullified (Bell, 1962). In fact, it was discovered that the opinions of the individuals interviewed were no more positive than average citizens. In 1988, the same premise was explored using a different methodology of telephone interviews of members of the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (Noble and McCarthy, 1988). Unfortunately, there was no variation in the findings, and the researchers actually concluded with a graphic description of the ignorance and "prejudicial attitude of many rehabilitation professionals, who should know and behave better" (Noble and McCarthy, 1988: 23). It would be reasonable to expect that rehabilitation careerists who chose to "help" people with disabilities would have an inherently more positive view of these individuals, but

these cases prove that assumptions can be dangerous when they involve the element of human opinion.

Seven years later, in 1995, a similar study was conducted comparing attitudes of rehabilitation service providers, private sector employees, and people with disabilities toward disability rights and the ADA (Moore and Crimando, 1995). This research revealed similar results that rehabilitation service providers possessed generally the same opinions, although in different degrees of intensity, as the other two groups with regard to the clarity of the ADA, the effect of the ADA, and approval of the government in passing the ADA. Showing a change in attitude pattern, the distinction with this research, as opposed to the previous study, is that all groups had generally favorable perceptions in the questioned areas, only diverging in the area of cost of ADA accommodations, where private sector representatives deviated from the other two groups, finding the price tag of compliance with the ADA to be disagreeable (Moore and Crimando, 1995).

Another very early case study assessed the interactions of people without disabilities with an individual who used a wheelchair due to a mobility impairment (Goffman, 1963). The researcher described a specific situation, where he and a man in a wheelchair visited a local restaurant and the waiter would only verbally address the researcher, ignoring the man with the disability (Goffman, 1963). Even when the time came to place their order, the server spoke only to the researcher, expecting him to order for the other adult guest. Generalizing the findings, Goffman asserted that people in wheelchairs are viewed as incapable of functioning, resulting in often being simply ignored (Goffman, 1963). This sense of disregard had not changed by 1981, when another study attempted to assess how people with disabilities are viewed by peers

(Shraver and Curtis, 1981: 209). Overlooking other characteristics, people with disabilities were defined, according to others, almost singularly by their disability. The emotional damage caused by such prevalent alienation is predictable, but in 1986 it was directly assessed. Although the methodology and data-gathering techniques of this study were not transparent, its conclusions seem rather believable: the stigma associated with having a disability is more daunting an obstacle than the disability itself (Larson, 1986: 755).

With the ADA on the horizon, in 1987, the influence that the enforcement of disability rights would have on the perception of the legitimacy of those rights was evaluated (Hahn, 1987). Hahn assembled an inventory of historical civil rights legislation and subsequent changes in public opinion (1987). Identifying a cycle in which the reduction of negative attitudes was positively associated with enforcement of anti-discrimination policy, the idea of improving perceptions of people with disabilities through implementation of the ADA was somewhat substantiated. A few years after the passage of the ADA, a similar question was asked with regard to the influence of the ADA (Kilbury and Benshoff, 1992). Kilbury and Benshoff asked if the “notion of rights” for people with disabilities was improved by policy adoption (1992: 6). The research identified a chain of events that following the adoption ADA, which is argued to lead to the enhancement of attitudes toward people with disabilities: first the ADA passed, thus accessibility increases, resulting in greater social interaction with people with disabilities, which positively influences attitudes towards these individuals (1992: 8). Through this series of assumptions, the study concluded that the ADA would inevitably result in improved attitudes toward people with disabilities.

Indirectly answering the same question of if enforcement of disability rights translates to improvements in the perception of those rights, research was conducted on a sample of 91 college professors (Benham, 1997). Although the original goal of the research was to gauge attitudes toward students with disabilities and knowledge of the ADA, one of the most significant findings of the study was that professors with more experience, 11-20 years had more negative attitudes toward students with disabilities (Benham, 1997: 125). It is this sector of the sample that would have been teaching prior to the implementation of the ADA, and thus may reflect pre-ADA attitudes.

Attitudes towards people with disabilities have also been gauged as a function of the adoption of social services (Hahn, 1985). Although the study did not directly state this connection, it was implied in the rationale of the research that in a representative democracy, policy can reasonably be assumed to reflect public perception. If one accepts this idea, it could be deduced that people with disabilities are actually being deterred from working by the influence of government programs and social services. Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), worker's compensation, and supplemental security income (SSI) all continue to pay while the recipient is unemployed, but they cease when the individual returns to work (Hahn, 1985). In this way, the idea that employment for people with disabilities is more of an option than a requirement can reflect a societal view as to the value of people with disabilities.

Almost 20 years later, this theory was once again reviewed in a study conducted in order to determine the cause of the rising unemployment of people with disabilities (Burkhauser, 2004). Marking the "unprecedented decline in employment" during the 1990's, notably after the passage of the ADA, researchers considered potential catalysts

for the trend (185). Testing the impact of age, gender, race, education, job availability, available job type, health care, ability to work, desire to work, social programs, and civil rights legislation, the study attempted to identify causal relationships. The conclusion: the statistically significant relationship between the increase in SSDI and SSI programs and the corresponding increase in unemployment held some responsibility for the trend, concurring with previous research (Burkhauser, 2004). Ironically, the study also determined that the ADA itself was partially responsible for the decline in the employment of people with disabilities. Apparently, employers recognized that ADA litigation was more commonly linked to discriminatory termination than hiring practices, thus to avoid the risk of litigation from termination or reasonable accommodation, employers opted not to hire people with disabilities at all. This manifestation of attitude in behavior reveals a negative impact of the ADA which results in the increase of a condition that the legislation was intended to remedy.

One of the more comprehensive disability research projects consists of a compilation of thirty-seven peer-reviewed studies that were brought together to make a general assessment of 1.) “attitudes of employers towards workers with disabilities,” and 2.) “employer attitudes toward ADA employment rights” (Hernandez, Keys, and Balcazer, 2000: 4). The types of research designs utilized by the individual studies ranged from surveys, to semi-structured interviews, to responses regarding hypothetical situations (Hernandez, et al., 2000). The first component of the question required a differentiation between two types of attitudes: global attitudes are those which reflect a general affect but require no promise of action, whereas specific attitudes tend to direct behavior. The distinction of attitudes based on an inclination to take action is important,

as employers displayed a variance when considering these two types of attitudes. Appearing to feign acceptance of workers with disabilities, employers reflected positive global attitudes, yet responded negatively when questioned in the area of specific attitude (Hernandez, et al., 2000: 5). The second element of the research question considered ten ADA- related studies (Hernandez, et al., 2000: 9). Employers displayed the same tendency to support general policies that protect people with disabilities, but react with concern for cost when specific interests are mentioned. Six of the ten studies were consistent with this pattern, bringing into question the strength of employers' "positive" perception of people with disabilities, especially when juxtaposed with their own interests. This research identified what has been a true concern of disability rights advocates: there is a disconnect between attitude and behavior with regard to disability and employment.

Additional employer-based research conducted in 2003 identified a similar incongruency (Charles, 2004). Employers reported making accommodations for their employees with disabilities; however, the research also concluded that workers with disabilities "appear to have paid for their accommodations in the form of lower wages" (Charles, 2004: 86). In this way, attitudes may be favorable toward the employability of people with disabilities, but the degree of that attitude is brought into question when compared with issues of cost for accommodations.

It is not only important to investigate the attitudes of employers when reviewing perceptions of the ADA, but also the perceptions of people with disabilities themselves, who are the subjects of the legislation. These individuals, as identified through association with disability-affiliated organizations in Tennessee, were targeted for a

survey (Hinton, 2003). The investigation was intended to reveal if the beneficiaries of ADA protection actually perceived any improvements as a result of the ADA. Neither the survey nor the calculation methods were included in the report, a fault that leaves validity open to criticism. As the individuals participating in the survey have a variety of disabilities that may inhibit involvement or accuracy, the methodology is important to interpreting the results. The researcher admitted that the probability for sampling error in this type of study is considerable (Hinton, 2003: 7). After all, there is no clearinghouse for identifying people with disabilities, and their affiliation with certain organizations may tend to impact or reflect their values. With all of this being stated, the author of the study concluded that the “statistical significance” of the findings was not dependable, but the general comparative attitudes may be relevant (Hinton, 2003: 7). The study concluded that people with disabilities believe that the ADA has greater positive impact on public organizations than their private counterparts (Hinton, 2003: 7). Unfortunately, according to the majority of those surveyed, neither public nor private organizations are “better” since the implementation of the ADA (7). These findings were validated further by a similar study conducted with a sample of 1,000 people with disabilities, a majority of which believed that the ADA has made no real difference in their lives, although they acknowledged some improvements in their consumer interests (Kaufman-Scarborough and Baker, 2005).

Another recent study utilized a four part process to assess current perceptions of disability rights by surveying a diverse group of 133 individuals (Hernandez, Keys, and Balcazar, 2004). The sample was derived from six Chicago-area communities; five with specific ethnic characterization, and one suburban area with no dominant ethnicity

(Hernandez, et al., 2004: 29). Of the 212 individuals approached for the study, 141 participated, but only 133 completed the surveys. A variety of occupations were represented in the sample, 109 private and 24 public.

The design consisted of four parts that are borrowed from previous peer-reviewed research. First, a “Demographic Information Questionnaire” was circulated to identify sample information (Hernandez, et al., 2004: 30). The second part of the study is somewhat irrelevant in view of the ADA, but deals with cultural issues for Hispanic respondents. The third portion, an “ADA Knowledge Survey,” was used to measure actual understanding of the ADA, not attitudes (Hernandez, et al., 2004: 30). Finally, a “Disability Rights Attitude Scale” or DRAS with questions and a six-option scaled response was utilized to code impressions about people with disabilities (Hernandez, et al., 2004: 30). Malleability of attitudes was assessed by utilizing a treatment/control design in which some respondents’ survey instrument included a positive or neutral ADA presentation.

The results could range anywhere from 27, negative attitude, to 162, positive attitude, on the scale (Hernandez, et al., 2004: 32). The average outcome, 125.2, supported a positive attitude towards people with disabilities, although public employees were more positive than private (Hernandez, et al., 2004: 30). Attitudes also exemplified malleability, as the value of the presentation given tended to be associated with the attitude reflected in the survey. As for the ADA knowledge test, on a scale of 0-20, an average score of 8.2 was recorded, illustrating that positive attitudes are not entirely dependent on a total understanding of the ADA (Hernandez, et al., 2004: 30). It was noted, however, that a positive relationship between knowledge of the ADA and attitude

was established through the research, and malleability of attitude was negatively associated with ADA knowledge. Another important finding of this research was that attitude is influenced not only by exposure to people with disabilities, but also by the type of contact an individual has with people with disabilities. Social or familiar contact with a personal with a disability had less impact on attitude than did working experience with a personal with a disability.

In conclusion, it is apparent that disability and ADA research is extensive, identifying a range of perceptions and attitudes across decades, but none is specifically focuses on public employees as the survey population nor specifically addresses the State of Alabama. Public servants are responsible for the implementation of Title II of the ADA, and also may reflect the perceptions of the general population. Further, as the state of Alabama has its own distinctive political culture, it is necessary to move forward and conduct a study which will help determine how the public service in Alabama views people with disabilities. After all, the ADA itself is a response to attitudes toward people with disabilities, thus the importance and relevance of perception is undeniable.

METHODOLOGY

The specific task of this research is to assess the perceptions of the ADA, as viewed by state employees in Alabama. A cross-sectional descriptive design was chosen to provide information about the target population for a bounded point in time. It must be noted that the population of public employees in Alabama is rather large. Excluding higher education, the State of Alabama employs over 33,000 individuals in one hundred separate departments (State of Alabama Personnel Department, 2005). Contacting and appraising opinions of a group of such considerable size makes the use of a survey a practical option. As the State of Alabama funds email addresses for nearly all of its employees, an internet-based survey was a reasonable option for the administration of this study. In order to provide insight as to the patterns of perception in addition to gathering demographic characteristic data, a 34-question quantitative instrument was administered.

Method of Obtaining Data

In order to administer the survey, an electronic, web-based survey engine (www.surveymonkey.com) was employed. First, A pilot survey of 15 volunteers was administered to identify and correct problematic features within the survey. Further, a cognitive pretest was administered in which a volunteer respondent addressed each individual question, explaining any readability or functional problems. The feedback and review of data gathered from both preliminary measures resulted in basic amendments to the survey design, question phrasing, and the replacement of three questions.

The survey was then dispersed to the state employees included in the sample (see Sampling below). In order to increase response rate, the survey was sent out twice, in a ten day interval. Each respondent was prompted by an email to click on a provided link in order to access the survey through his/her computer's connection with the internet. Respondents were also offered the option of using pen/pencil instruments and standard mail to return the survey, however, no requests for this alternative were received.

The survey instrument used to collect data relating to perceptions of the ADA and demographic information included 34 total questions with predominantly Likert-type and ordinal-choice responses, but also included several nominal response questions (See Appendix B). The survey was designed to not only identify attitudinal themes on the necessity, implementation, efficacy, and effectiveness of the ADA, but also to garner control information such as prior contact with people with disabilities, including professional interaction, volunteering, and family. As it was essential to have a comprehensive demographic evaluation instrument to discern relationships in the data, demographic questions were included.

Sampling

The research question specifies the subject population as public employees in Alabama. The inclusion criterion is clear: respondents should be employed by the State of Alabama within an administrative department, excluding higher education. Due to technology, contacting most public employees via email can be managed in an expedient and cost-efficient way. State departments in Alabama support a web-server through which email addresses are distributed for work purposes. The State of Alabama provides a list of all state agencies and employees through its website www.alabama.gov. Further,

a search engine is provided to search individual employee contact information.

Unfortunately, not all employee email addresses are available through the website, and the criteria upon which some are excluded is unknown by the state officials contacted during this research. Additionally, there is no clearinghouse or list of email addresses available through the state, and efforts to obtain such a list for this research were unsuccessful. Although state-provided email addresses are considered public information by the Freedom of Information Act, the State of Alabama resisted requests to provide email addresses stating that there was no existing list-serve for state employees (The Code of Alabama § 36-12-40, 1975).

As the ideal methods of garnering the email addresses for a sample were unsuccessful, an alternative strategy was utilized. On Alabama's official website, there is an electronic version of the state's phone directory for state employees and agencies. According to this document, every state employee is listed within the directory along with public contact information. Although every name was apparently listed, not every employee name was accompanied by an email address, and again, there was no indication as to the criteria by which certain addresses were included; however, within this document, over 6,600 employee email addresses were recorded. The provision of an email address in the directory, as far as could be determined by contacting state agencies and e-government providers, was random. Once the email addresses were extracted from the document, a database of state employee email addresses was compiled.

In order to maintain the continuity of the respondents, higher education addresses were removed. Although higher education faculty and staff are state employees, this research is designed to measure the attitudes of professional public employees in the form

of administration of government. Higher education may also result in skewed data, as the group is diverse in educational interest, yet tends to be homogenous in political/policy views.

Response rate

The response rate is of integral importance to the validity of any research. For this particular study, which was not funded nor sponsored by any outside entity, a goal response rate of 20% was predetermined as both realistic and ambitious. There are important notations to make regarding the responses for this research, thus a detailed worksheet tracking the responses and sample size throughout the process is included in Appendix C.

The original number of survey emails distributed to database addresses was 5,395. Unfortunately, 445 of those addresses were rejected as invalid and 39 individuals requested removal from the study, thus the sample size was reduced to 4,911. Despite the decline, 541 responses were generated during the first ten days of distribution, resulting in a response rate of 11%.

It was at this point, that the Department of Human Resources requested to be eliminated from the research. Due to this development, the 2,106 DHR employee addresses in the database were excluded from the second delivery, resulting in a new sample size of 2,805. Of these, 78 were rejected as invalid addresses, leaving the final sample at 2,727. The second dissemination of emails garnered 315 additional survey responses, a response rate of 11.5% for the adjusted sample.

The final sample size was 2,727 individuals and the survey engine recorded 856 responses; however, due to DHR being excluded after the first round of emails had been

sent, determining the true response rate was moderately complicated. In order to ensure that all DHR responses were eliminated from the sample, each of the 124 surveys reporting DHR as the department of employment was removed. To ensure that there was no possibility of a DHR employee being left in the sample, any respondent not listing his/her state department was also excluded from the data set. This resulted in the removal of an additional 149 respondents, leaving a final count of 583 surveys in the data set. The aforementioned procedures not only protected the rights of DHR employees as research participants, but they also ensured the validity of the sample, and thus results of this study.

A final review of the data set yielded the necessity for an additional consideration; some of the respondents skipped an excessive number of questions in the survey. In order to preserve the statistical capabilities of the data set, it was determined that surveys with less than a 90% completion would be excluded. Thus, the 7 surveys with more than three unanswered questions were taken out. At the conclusion of this process, the final response rate could be determined. Of the 2,727 public employees included in the sample for this research, 576 survey responses were retained, generating a final response rate of 21.4%, meeting the preset response rate goal.

Representativeness of Sample

The representativeness of the sample is of integral importance to the generalizability of the survey results. Prior to the distribution of the surveys, the projected method to be used to ensure representativeness of the sample was to utilize the statistical process of posterior weighting according to departmental affiliation. In this way, responses from a given department would be mathematically altered to be proportionally

equal to the true departmental layout for the state. At the conclusion of the research, however, it was determined that this method was no longer ideal because several departments had no representation. Of the 100 departments listed by the Alabama State Personnel Department, more than 60 had at least one respondent (See Appendix D). To further complicate this process, the Department of Human Resources' withdrawal from participation made posterior waiting less useful, as DHR is the second largest state department, employing 13% of state employees.

Considering these process developments, a strategy of demographic comparison was determined to be a favorable alternative in measuring if the sample population was representative of public employees in Alabama. The demographic statistics for state employees provided by the Alabama State Personnel Department were paralleled with the demographic composition of the sample. By juxtaposing the two sets of indicators for gender, age, ethnicity, years of public service, and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) job category, several significant similarities and limited differences were identified between the sample population and the true population composition.

The gender of respondents in the sample was found to be very closely matched to the actual gender statistics of public employees in Alabama, with women in both samples exceeding the men (see Table 1).

Table 1

Gender Comparison of Alabama employees and sample population

Gender	% in AL	Sample Frequency	% of Sample
Male	44.60%	275	47.74%
Female	55.40%	295	51.22%
No Answer	0.00%	6	1.04%
Total	100.00%	576	100.00%

An examination of age measures found a similar result. Although the percentages were varied, the order of age group frequency was the same, with the exception of a small reversal of the largest group-- 50's in the sample, 40's in the real population. This considered, the distribution of age was strikingly similar between the two groups; however, it does seem that there are more older respondents than would be ideal for the research (see Table 2). Older respondents may have a different perception of the ADA, as their views may be more influenced by pre-ADA attitudes, whereas, younger respondents may be more inclined to assume post-ADA attitudes.

Table 2

Age Comparison of Alabama employees and sample population

Age	% in AL	Sample Frequency	% of Sample
20's	13.00%	42	7.29%
30's	21.00%	99	17.19%
40's	31.00%	150	26.04%
50's	29.00%	228	39.58%
60's +	6.00%	52	9.03%
No Answer	0.00%	5	0.87%
Total	100.00%	576	100.00%

Ethnicity is an area of weakness in the demographic comparison. Although mirroring the same order of prevalence: White, African American, and then others, the percentages were so divergent, as seen in Table 3, it had to be determined that the sample was not ethnically representative of the public service in Alabama. It may be true that the public service in Alabama is not as integrated as it may appear, and perhaps African Americans are in positions that do not warrant email addresses.

Table 3

Ethnicity Comparison of Alabama employees and sample population

Ethnicity	% in AL	Sample Frequency	% of Sample
Caucasian	59.40%	454	78.82%
African American	39.50%	89	15.45%
All Others	1.10%	33	5.73%
Total	100.00%	576	100.00%

As for the number of years of public service employment, the State of Alabama only reports an average, leaving questions regarding the distribution of years. It should be noted that a median would have been a necessary addition for the average to be of particular use. For the sample, 57.64% of survey participants reported having 16 or more years of service as a public employee, reflecting a very high level of experience. It could reasonably be assumed that this weight of experience should enhance the validity of the results of the study; however, this apparent positive must be weighed with the fact that Alabama reports an average of 12.5 years of service for all state employees. As illustrated in Table 4, the 11-15 age range of respondents only made up 15.97% of the sample, a major disparity. Due to the lack of statistical information provided by the state,

no conclusion can be drawn as to the true representative nature for this characteristic; although, the quantity of experience for respondents seems remarkable, and most logically a positive indicator.

Table 4

Years in Public Service Comparison of Alabama employees and sample population

Years in Public Service	Sample Frequency	% of Sample
0 to 5	81	14.06%
6 to 10	66	11.46%
11 to 15	92	15.97%
16 +	332	57.64%
No Answer	5	0.87%
Totals	576	100.00%

EEO Category is another area of review. In accordance with the Equal Employment Opportunities Act, states and local governments are required to annually report not only the demographic information included above, but also must classify employees within the following categories: Officials and Administrators, Professionals, Technicians, Protective Services, Paraprofessionals, Administrative Support, Skilled Crafts, and Service/Maintenance. Remarkably, the layout of the categories for state employees follows the exact same order as that of the sample population. There is a disproportionate number of Professionals, and to a lesser extent Officials and Administrators, in the sample versus the true population, while respondents in other categories are similarly deflated (see Table 5). The fact that the order of size for the two groups mirrors one other does make a solid claim for representativeness.

Table 5

EEO Category Comparison of Alabama employees and sample population

EEO Category	AL Frequency	% in AL	Sample Frequency	% of Sample
Officials & Administrators	5,282	17.64%	135	23.44%
Professionals	7,638	25.51%	319	55.38%
Technicians	2,081	6.95%	23	3.99%
Protective Services	4,413	14.74%	8	1.39%
Paraprofessionals	2,026	6.77%	12	2.08%
Administrative Support	6,100	20.38%	68	11.81%
Skilled Crafts	956	3.19%	1	0.17%
Service/Maintenance	1,440	4.81%	2	0.35%
Don't know	0	0.00%	7	1.22%
No Answer	0	0.00%	1	0.17%
Total	29,936	100.00%	576	100.00%

As per the evidence provided above in the demographic comparison, the sample is adequately representative of the true population of public employees in Alabama.

Between the two groups, gender measures were almost identical, the age levels were consistent, and the size order of EEO Categories were duplicates. An area of discrepancy was race, in which both the sample and the true population followed the same order, but varied considerably in scale. Years of service could not be reliably compared, as the measure of evaluation utilized by the state was too general, yet, as noted, the sample had

very high levels of experience in the public service, enhancing the probability that these individuals reflect the perceptions of career public employees..

Method of Analyzing Data

Analysis for this survey was conducted with the assistance of an electronic statistic-evaluation program, SPSS. The survey responses were directly transferred from the survey engine to a pre-established SPSS database, limiting error and confidentiality issues. No personal identifiers were used in the input of the information, but rather, numeric codes were automatically generated by the survey engine to differentiate each case. Several statistical processes were utilized in the research, as discussed in the Results (see Results).

Limitations

It must be noted, that not every public employee in Alabama has an active email address, a computer, or access to the internet, resulting in a study in which every public employee in Alabama did not have the same probability of being surveyed. Using an email survey created a non-probability convenience sample, as only those people who have computers, internet access, publicly available email addresses, and self-selected to respond were included. Other problems associated with email surveys include everything from a subject not checking email to electronic filters on email accounts.

An unexpected obstacle was obtaining the email addresses for the survey. As mentioned previously, state officials were more than reluctant to share this public information, even when made aware that the intended use of the addresses was academic research. The method of garnering the addresses, extracting them from a public employee electronic phonebook that included random email addresses, left several

questions. What were the criteria by which certain addresses were included or excluded, and to what level of the public service did these employees belong? The latter of the two questions was added into the survey in the form of requesting respondents' EEO category, in order to control for level of employment or determine if this was, in fact, the decision rule for publishing email addresses. The results of the demographic evaluation disproved this theory, as there was diversity in the EEO Category of respondents.

Due to these variables that may confound the results, the sample-size was very important, highlighting the necessity for the database to be extensive and include every possible public employee. Consideration was made to conduct a random sample of the email addresses that were retrieved, shrinking the sample size; however, motivation to minimize sampling error through a larger sample pool proved a more compelling factor. This does tend to improve the reliability of results, but does not circumvent the issue of selectivity. The limitations and exclusion posed by this sampling strategy should not diminish the generalizability of the findings, as the sample-size is considerably large enough to anticipate reliable results, as indicated by the statistical significance of the results. The validity of the results, however, was still heavily dependent on the response rate and the demographic characteristics of respondents.

The decision to decline participation from the Department of Human Resources placed a different constraint on the sample, as over 2000 of the email addresses provided by the state's website were for employees of DHR. Further, DHR is one of the largest departments in the state, employing almost 13% of the state's 31,191 employees (State of Alabama Personnel Department, 2005). Although DHR initially granted approval for the research and was included in the first email round of the survey, approval was later

retracted for unspecified reasons. In response, the second emailing did not include DHR employees: all DHR employees who had responded to the first round of the survey were removed from the data (120 respondents), along with any respondent that did not identify their employment department (147 respondents). In this way, it can be assured that no DHR employee was included in the data, and that the sample truly only included the 2727 public employees that could be associated with a state agency or department.

Unfortunately, there was no indication provided by DHR as to the motivation for abstaining from the study, although the implication was clear that the refusal may have been based on fear of litigation from dealing with such a controversial policy. Despite the efforts to assure DHR leadership otherwise, the fear of addressing the ADA and disability rights appeared too “dangerous,” which reveals an attitude in itself. A benefit to the study, however is that DHR employees, by nature of their job responsibilities, would be disproportionately aware of the ADA, thus their responses may not accurately depict the opinions of the public service in Alabama at large. The removal of this large group did reduce the sample size, and perhaps resulted in milder results.

The response rate previously discussed is another area of potential weakness in this research, as it was 21%. Naturally, there is a non-response error when almost 80% of the sample does not choose to participate. Although the survey did meet the pre-established goal of a 20% response rate, the relatively low participation could be construed as a weakness. To balance the contention that the response rate was too low to expect representative results, the aforementioned demographic analysis was conducted, and concluded that the sample was sufficiently representative of the true population of public employees in Alabama. The breakdown of department affiliation was, however,

not representative, as several departments had no respondents at all. This is not particularly problematic, because the target population was still reached, but individualized expertise, experience, and work subject matter that related to different departments could have been better appraised as a function of ADA perception if the sample had been departmentally representative.

RESULTS

The results of the survey ranged from the predictable to the truly unexpected. Although many of the hypotheses were confirmed, there were several instances in which some of the expected outcomes, or even assumptions, of the research were proven null. General observations based on frequency statistics yielded surprisingly useful results in identifying the pervasiveness of basic perceptions. It is in these areas that a better understanding of the public service's relationship with disability legislation and people with disabilities is developed. All ADA performance appraisal questions received generally favorable responses, leading to the second component of the analysis which involved examining the potential for a state-specific disability act. Utilizing cross tabulation and ordinal logit regression processes, the results diverged from the predicted path. Although many of the factors expected to share a relationship with support for an Alabamians with Disabilities Act, like ideology, were disproved, some unanticipated relationships were also identified. In response, additional analysis was conducted on the newly acknowledged relationships to provide functional results and implications on the promotion of an Alabama-specific disability act within the public service.

General Observations

Perception vs. Reality

As previously described, a general analysis produced several notable observations. First, 70% of public employees reported being familiar with the legal requirements of the ADA. This supports the idea that public agencies are, at least in the

eyes of the employees, meeting their responsibility of training employees on the ADA. Unfortunately, most of those who report having an understanding of the legal aspects of ADA also believe that the ADA is clear and unambiguous. The relationship between familiarity with the legal requirements of the ADA and perception of ADA clarity was statistically significant. Perhaps countering the confidence of the employees in their knowledge of the law, the ADA was actually written to purposely be unclear and vague. In this way, a contradiction is discovered between the perceived education of employees and the actual application of that knowledge. Sometimes false certainty of education can be more dangerous than no education at all, especially where the law is concerned.

Another area in which perception conflicts with reality is employment. More than 78% of the sample agreed that employment opportunities have been improved since the passage of the ADA. Although the consensus in perception was strong, employment statistics show a significant rise in unemployment for people with disabilities since the passage of the ADA. A dissonance is apparent.

Necessity and legality of the ADA

The necessity and legality of the ADA were also validated by the sample in the frequency of responses to several related questions. More than three quarters of those surveyed believe that the ADA was necessary when it was passed, and 85% agreed that there was a history of disability discrimination. A smaller group of two-thirds (66%) considered the ADA to be civil rights legislation, revealing that some respondents', although believing disability discrimination exists, may be unwilling to consider this type of discrimination a civil rights issue. Further, a very small number of respondents, 6%, believed that the ADA violated states' rights with its passage. Although a prominent

legal critique and challenge, the sample seemed either unaware or unconvinced by the argument.

Success measures and Support

Several questions in the survey probed the perceived success of the ADA: the results consistently supported the idea that public employees believe the ADA has been effective (see Table 6). Considering that the sample is entirely made of public employees, one of the more revealing measures was that more than 64% of respondents agreed that the ADA “placed reasonable requirements on public agencies” and that compliance with the ADA was “worth the cost.” Also, as public employees are often charged with the responsibility of distributing disability-related aid, it was important to gauge if they believed that the ADA has been used for financial gain rather than civil rights, as this perception could impact attitude towards the ADA. The answer was a resounding “no,” as only 8% agreed with that idea, and a solid majority disagreed.

Table 6

Success Indicators of the ADA

Measures	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Protects Against Disability Discrimination	70.20%	14.10%	9.70%
Improved Employment Opportunities	78.10%	11.50%	3.50%
Made facilities and programs accessible	85.80%	5.60%	3.40%
Have seen ADA enforced	70.10%	16.30%	6.90%
Requirements on public agencies are reasonable	64.90%	17.00%	9.90%
Compliance is worth the cost	64.30%	22.20%	4.30%
Used for financial profit, not civil rights	8.00%	27.10%	56.10%

Considering the uniformity of opinion that the ADA has been worthwhile, it would be reasonable to expect that the ADA would also enjoy widespread support. This assumption is confirmed by the 76.7% agreement (and miniscule 3.3% disagreement) from respondents that they have a favorable impression of the ADA. Further corroborating the positive opinions of the ADA, nearly three-fourths of the sample said that if “the ADA were proposed today, I would support its passage.”

Need for improvement

The ADA did not receive faultless reviews. Although most tend to think that the ADA should not be abolished, there is little oppose to the idea that the ADA may need revision. Further, a majority of respondents think that disability discrimination is still present (see Table 7).

Table 7

Indicators of need for ADA improvement

Measures	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
The ADA should be abolished	2.50%	9.90%	82.10%
The ADA needs revision	30.10%	39.80%	8.20%
There is still disability discrimination	66.30%	17.90%	4.50%

According to survey results, most public employees seem to appreciate the changes the ADA has incited, and they would support its passage today; yet, they also still see room for improvement. The high success ratings reported for the ADA paired with a general agreement that the situation could be improved would logically provide a

window of opportunity for approving a state disability act. This leads to the second part of the research analysis: examining the potential for a state-specific disability act (state-specific DA) according to survey responses.

State-Specific DA Support

Despite the rational assumptions described above, support for an Alabama-specific disability act was not as widespread or easily explained as predicted. In fact, general support for an Alabama-specific DA was evenly divided between those who agreed, disagreed, and were neutral. Only 6.4% of respondents strongly agreed that “Alabama should adopt its own state-specific disability act,” while an additional 25% joined in the general agreement category (totaling 31.4%). An almost equal number of 29% were neutral. Those disagreeing totaled 28.3%, with 6.1% in strong disagreement. In truth, those who vigorously support the idea for a state law are countered by an almost identical number of people who vigorously oppose the concept.

As no consensus in support or opposition to a state DA was apparent, identifying those factors which shared a relationship with each perspective became an important task. Utilizing ordinal logit regression processes, several hypothesis were confirmed, yet some were surprisingly invalidated. A series of ordinal logit models was designed including: 1) a base model of basic demographic information, 2) seven multivariate models, and 3) a “kitchen sink” model, in which all factors from the individual groupings are put together into a single regression. The multivariate models were composed of factors grouped by theme, in order to better isolate the effect of the variable in question. This method does have risks, as it carries the potential of producing correlation between independent variables that could impede the ability to isolate the individual effect of the variables. To

ensure that correlation did not negatively impact the regression output, each model was inspected using the Pearson Correlation Index. All models exhibiting a correlation statistic greater than .60 were redesigned.

Base Model- State-Specific DA Support

The base model included a grouping of basic demographic characteristics. Dummy variables were used for two categorical factors in order to represent multiple groups: for gender, a dummy variable for female was created, while race was broken into categories for African American and “other ethnicity” (included all ethnic groups excluding white and black). These variables were included as controls in every other model. As visible in Table 8, the results indicated that older individuals and people in the “other ethnicity” group (not white or African American) were less likely to support a state disability act. The significance and direction of these relationships were consistent in the individual models as noted in the third column of Table 8. African Americans were indicated in three of the models to be less supportive of a state DA than whites.

Table 8

Base Model- State-Specific DA Support

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)	% of Models Significant
African American	-.246 (.222)	33%
Other Ethnicity	-1.280 (.617)**	78%
Female	0.98 (.164)	0%
Age	-.192 (.076)**	67%
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01,** p<.05,* p<.1		

Model #1- State-Specific DA Support

The first model included three variables that were each predicted to share a significant relationship with support for a state DA. First, ideology is traditionally expected to influence an individual's policy preferences, and thus attitude about a state DA. Surprisingly, public employees' personal identification with a specific ideological group, ranging from liberal to conservative, played no significant role in shaping state DA preference. The model also nullified the hypothesis that the stronger a public employee believes that the national ADA violated states' rights, then the more they would support a state disability act. Although a natural conclusion, there was no statistically identified relationship. Finally, the model showed that years working in the public service had no impact on support, although one might suspect public employees with more experience to be more aware of the controversies and need for a state DA.

Table 9

Model #1- State-Specific DA Support

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)
	-.415
African American	(.270)
	-.513
Other Ethnicity	(.701)
	.008
Female	(.181)
	-.056
Age	(.109)
	-.012
ADA Violated States Rights	(.113)
	-.175
Years in the public service	(.107)
	.049
Ideology	(.078)
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01,** p<.05,* p<.1	

Model #2- State-Specific DA Support

The second model dealt specifically with those factors of experience with people who have disabilities: working with someone who has a disability, working for an organization that specifically serves people with disabilities, having a friend or relative with a disability, having volunteered for a disability-related event or organization, and personally having a disability. The goal of these inquiries was to determine the effect of different types of experience on state DA support. The hypothesis was that all experience would have a positive impact on support, however, only one type of experience showed a significant relationship (See Table 10). Public employees who have a disability themselves were more likely to support a state DA.

Table 10

Model #2- State-Specific DA Support

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)
	-.261
African American	(.226)
	-1.827
Other Ethnicity	(.669)***
	0.85
Female	(.168)
	-.258
Age	(.080)***
	.136
Works with someone who has a disability	(.196)
Works for an organization that specifically serves people with disabilities	.210
	(.180)
	.112
Has a relative or friend with a disability	(.198)
	-.205
Has volunteered for a disability- related event of organization	(.173)
	.454
Has a disability	(.259)*
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01,** p<.05,* p<.1	

Model #3- State-Specific DA Support

Examining success measures of the ADA as an indicator of support for a state DA was the objective of Model #3. Perceived success of the ADA was expected to share a relationship with state DA support, although the direction was unknown. One might expect that individuals who believe the national ADA was successful would be more supportive of a state DA because of the added potential for results. The alternative is also possible; if the individual thinks that the ADA has failed and an improved version could remedy the shortfalls. Support was found in two of the variables. When public employees agreed that access to facilities and programs has been improved by the national ADA, they were less likely to approve of a state DA, yet, those who thought that ADA compliance was worth the cost were more apt to support a state act.

Table 11

Model #3- State-Specific DA Support

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)
	-.398 (.245)
African American	-1.179 (.625)*
Other Ethnicity	-.015 (.176)
Female	-.182 (.081)**
Age	-.060 (.167)
The ADA protects people with disabilities against discrimination	.060 (.167)
The ADA has improved employment opportunities for people with disabilities	-.352 (.150)**
The ADA has made facilities and programs accessible to people with disabilities	.530 (.117)***
Compliance with the ADA is worth the cost	
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01,** p<.05,* p<.1	

Model #4- State-Specific DA Support

Model #4 examined the perceived necessity of the national ADA and the perception of its basic composition. As illustrated in Table 12, a direct relationship was identified between the belief that the ADA was necessary when it was passed and support for a state DA, but all other non-demographic factors were not found to be significant.

Table 12

Model #4- State-Specific DA Support

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)
	-.481
African American	(.241)**
	-1.340
Other Ethnicity	(.623)**
	-.012
Female	(.175)
	-.202
Age	(.082)**
	.252
The ADA was necessary when it was passed	(.147)*
People with disabilities have historically experienced discrimination based on disability	.100
	(.132)
	.147
The ADA places reasonable requirements on public agencies	(.120)
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01,** p<.05,* p<.1	

Model #5- State-Specific DA Support

This model included two variables that were most expected to predict state DA support: belief that there is still disability discrimination and belief that the ADA should be revised. The prediction was that if people believe that disability discrimination is still present, they would be more likely to support a state DA as a solution. Further, if individuals saw a need to revise the ADA, a state DA could provide the opportunity, thus increasing support. The results in Table 13 illustrate that the belief disability

discrimination persists shares a positive relationship with support. Surprisingly, the view that the ADA needs revision did not have a significant relationship with state DA support. Perhaps those who agree that the ADA needs edit have an alternative method of revision in mind.

Table 13

Model #5- State-Specific DA Support

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)
African American	-.336 (.253)
Other Ethnicity	-1.530 (.662)**
Female	.098 (.193)
Age	-.198 (.089)**
The ADA has been used for the purpose of financial profit rather than civil rights	.100 (.112)
Despite the passage of the ADA, people with disabilities are still experiencing discrimination based on their disability	.570 (.133)***
The ADA should be revised	-.012 (.133)
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1	

Model #6- State-Specific DA Support

Two significant relationships with state disability act perception were found in this ordinal logit regression model, as indicated in Table 14. Support increased in those who identify the ADA as “civil rights” legislation. Perhaps contradicting an aforementioned relationship in which accessibility improvements were found to have an indirect relationship with state DA support, those who indicated having a generally favorable impression of the national ADA in this model, also favored an Alabama-specific DA. A potential explanation for this apparent disagreement in results could be

that general favorability is based on a variety of factors, of which success in the area of accessibility may only play a small role. In this way, state DA support could increase based on the other factors implicit in one's favorable impression, irrelevant of the relationship between accessibility and support.

Table 14

Model #6- State-Specific DA Support

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)
	-.419
African American	(.244)*
	-2.049
Other Ethnicity	(.670)***
	-.038
Female	(.174)
	-.207
Age	(.084)**
	-.055
I am familiar with the goals of the ADA	(.137)
	.177
I consider the ADA to be civil rights legislation	(.097)*
	.494
In general, I have a favorable impression of the ADA	(.137)***
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1	

Model #7- State-Specific DA Support

The final individual regression model revealed two important findings. First, coupling results from Model #6 regarding the familiarity with the goals of the ADA with the familiarity with legal requirements of the ADA included in this model lead to the conclusion that knowledge of the national ADA does not have a relationship with state DA perception, although one might think that awareness would breed approval. Those who report that they would support the ADA if passed today, however, do have a higher probability of supporting a state version as well.

Table 15

Model #7- State-Specific DA Support

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)
African American	-.497 (.246)**
Other Ethnicity	-1.452 (.623)**
Female	.045 (.177)
Age	-.138 (.085)
I am familiar with the legal requirements of the ADA	-.030 (.123)
The ADA is clear and unambiguous	.004 (.111)
If the ADA were proposed today, I would support its passage	.514 (.122)***
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1	

“Kitchen Sink” Mode- State-Specific DA Support I

The “Kitchen Sink” model is a compilation of all variables from the individual regressions, placed in a single model, as if they had all been thrown into the kitchen sink together. For this process, correlation rates higher than .60 were present in one set of variables: familiarity with goals of the ADA and familiarity with the legal requirements of the ADA. Despite this, the results were computed, as reported in Table 16 below. The output was inconsistent with the individual models, perhaps as a result of highly correlated independent variables coupled with the high volume of variables that has the potential to muddle results. Half of the variables that are significant in the “kitchen sink” model were not found to be significant in their individual models. For instance, the factor dealing with the belief that the ADA violated states’ rights was significant in this model, and the direction of the relationship is shockingly negative. This means that

people who think that the national ADA violated states' rights are less likely to support a state DA. The experience variable for volunteering with a disability-related event or organization was also significant and unexpectedly, those who say that they have volunteered are less likely to support a state DA. Finally, public employees who think that the ADA has been used more for financial gain than civil rights are more likely to support a state DA. Again, the cognitive dissonance is apparent. Perhaps these individuals view a state DA as an opportunity to reduce provisions for financial damage awards.

Some of the results in this model were similar to those found in the individual groupings. Again, belief that that ADA is civil rights legislation and having a general favorable impression of the national ADA showed a positive relationship with backing an Alabama disability act, while the perception that the ADA has improved access led to decreased support.

Table 16

“Kitchen Sink” Model- State-Specific DA Support

Variable	“Kitchen Sink” Model
African American	-0.485 (-0.325)
Other Ethnicity	-1.926 (-1.006)*
Female	0.111 (-0.23)
Age	-0.205 (.139)
ADA Violated States Rights	0.323 (0.189)*
Years in the public service	-0.05 (.128)
Ideology	0.079 (.102)
Works with someone who has a disability	-0.164 (.278)
Works for an organization that specifically serves people with disabilities	0.302 (.242)
Has a relative or friend with a disability	0.071 (.275)
Has volunteered for a disability- related event of organization	-0.477 (0.235)**
Has a disability	0.346 (.34)
The ADA protects people with disabilities against discrimination	-0.269 (.182)
The ADA has improved employment opportunities for people with disabilities	0.051 (.235)
The ADA has made facilities and programs accessible to people with disabilities	-0.481 (0.198)**
Compliance with the ADA is worth the cost	0.257 (.226)
The ADA was necessary when it was passed	0.254 (.249)
People with disabilities have historically experienced discrimination based on disability	0.052 (.199)
The ADA places reasonable requirements on public agencies	-0.057 (.179)
The ADA has been used for the purpose of financial profit rather than civil rights	0.312 (0.154)**
Despite the ADA, people with disabilities are still experiencing discrimination based on their disability	0.154 (.189)
The ADA should be revised	-0.084 (.171)
I am familiar with the goals of the ADA	-0.119 (.235)
I consider the ADA to be civil rights legislation	0.22 (0.13)*
In general, I have a favorable impression of the ADA	0.623 (0.242)**
I am familiar with the legal requirements of the ADA	0.046 (.188)
The ADA is clear and unambiguous	-0.098 (.148)
If the ADA were proposed today, I would support its passage	0.099 (.263)

Two-tailed significance ***p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

Overview of State DA Support Results

The survey yielded valuable insight to those factors which share a relationship with support for a state DA, yet several of the variables expected to show significance did not. A summary of the most salient results is included below.

Shared a relationship:

- Ethnic groups, other than white, are less likely to support an Alabama DA
- Blacks are less likely to support an Alabama DA
- Older people are less likely to support an Alabama DA
- Those who think the ADA has improved accessibility are less likely to support an Alabama DA
- People who think that disability discrimination is still present are more likely to support an Alabama DA
- Those who have a favorable impression of the ADA are more likely to support an Alabama DA
- Those who would support passage of the ADA today are more likely to support an Alabama DA

Did not share a relationship:

- Ideology
- Years in the public service
- Experience with people with disabilities
- Perception that the ADA protects against disabilities discrimination
- Perception that the ADA should be revised

The results of research, such as this, often lead to additional inquiries, making the investigative process organic in nature. This study is no exception, as the findings raised additional questions to consider. If general favorability for the national ADA can indicate support for the state DA, what are the factors which increase national ADA approval? Answering this question could not only lead to better planning for an Alabama disability act, but it can also help to better identify and understand those variables which influence public employee perception. The following section of this study explores this idea.

Favorable Impression Indicators

As discussed above, determining those factors which share a relationship with having a favorable impression of the national ADA can enhance understanding of the behavioral components of the public service, as well as offer insight into improving support for a state disability act. In terms of frequency, a very large 76.7% of survey respondents agreed that they have a generally favorable impression of the ADA, while 15.3% were neutral, and a very small 3.3% did not have a favorable impression of the law.

Similar to the statistical analysis of state DA support, ordinal logit regression processes were utilized to explore the potential indicators for having a favorable impression of the ADA. Again, a series of models was designed including: 1) a base model of basic demographic information, 2) six multivariate models grouped by theme, and 3) a “kitchen sink” model, in which all factors from the individual groupings are put together into a single regression. The Pearson Correlation Index was, once again, consulted to ensure levels of correlation below .60. The eight ordinal logit regressions will be introduced below, followed by an overview of the most salient findings.

Base Model- Favorable Impression Indicators

The base model for identifying indicators of “favorable impression” was identical to the base model used in the “state DA support” section. Including a grouping of basic demographic characteristics, dummy variables were used for two categorical factors in order to represent multiple groups: for gender, a dummy variable for female was created, while race was broken into categories for African American and “other ethnicity” (included all ethnic groups excluding white and black). Age was not significant in the base model, nor was it found to be significant in any of the multivariate models. It may have been reasonable to expect age to have an impact on a favorable impression, as older individuals would have seen the “before” and “after” of the ADA, thus developing a tendency to either approve or disapprove of the legislation. African Americans and other ethnic groups were more likely to have a favorable impression of the ADA, the inverse of the relationship with state DA support. Further, females were more likely to have a favorable impression than men in more than 60% of the models.

Table 17

Base Model- Favorable Impression Indicators

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)	% of Models Significant
African American	.912 (.264)***	25%
Other Ethnicity	1.682 (.685)*	12.5%
Female	.521 (.188)***	62.5%
Age	.139 (.086)	0%
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01,** p<.05,* p<.1		

Model #1- Favorable Impression Indicators

The first model identified three factors which share a relationship with a favorable impression of the ADA. With regards to ideology, the more liberal the respondent, the more favorable his/her impression, which is somewhat predictable. Two other very predictable outcomes were included in this model: both belief that the ADA should be revised and should be abolished showed a negative relationship with favorability.

Table 18

Model #1- Favorable Impression Indicators

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)
	.445
African American	(.343)
	.941
Other Ethnicity	(.858)
	-.055
Female	(.232)
	.027
Age	(.138)
	.184
Ideology	(.101)*
	-.011
Years in the public service	(.136)
	-.625
The ADA should be revised	(.158)***
	-1.597
The ADA should be abolished	(.173)***
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1	

Model #2- Favorable Impression Indicators

Five different factors for experience with people with disabilities were incorporated into the second model to identify differences in varying types of experience. Public employees who have a disability, work with someone who has a disability, or work for an organization that specifically serves people with disabilities are more likely to have a favorable impression of the ADA (see Table 19). As these people would utilize

and witness the functions of the ADA most often, their impression shows a type of attitudinal approval for the ADA. The relationships that have less formal interaction with the ADA, such as people who volunteer for a disability-related organization or have a friend/relative with a disability were insignificant. It is clear that the ADA plays a different role within the different types of experience.

Table 19

Model #2- Favorable Impression Indicators

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)
	.830
African American	(.274)***
	1.234
Other Ethnicity	(.763)
	.571
Female	(.195)***
	.046
Age	(.090)
	-.083
Has volunteered for a disability- related event of organization	(.198)
	.674
Has a disability	(.307)**
	.206
Has a relative or friend with a disability	(.224)
	.417
Works with someone who has a disability	(.223)*
Works for an organization that specifically serves people with disabilities	.455
	(.208)**
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01,** p<.05,* p<.1	

Model #3- Favorable Impression Indicators

Examining success measures for the ADA, Model #3 shown in Table 20 had an expected output that as perception of success increased, so would having a favorable impression of the ADA. The results confirmed this hypothesis, as three key areas of success measurement-- accessibility improvement, employment opportunity

improvement, and enforcement of the law-- each shared a positive relationship with favorability. A perplexing result was also indicated through this model, as perception that disability discrimination still exists also had a positive relationship with favorability. This is quite surprising, because one would expect that favorability would fall as an individual believed discrimination was able to continue after the ADA. The result could be construed to mean that although public employees believe that the ADA has been successful in improvements, it has not removed the presence of disability discrimination, yet they maintain that it has made a positive overall impact.

Table 20

Model #3- Favorable Impression Indicators

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)
	.457
African American	(.303)
	.909
Other Ethnicity	(.762)
	.431
Female	(.213)**
	.036
Age	(.099)
The ADA has improved employment opportunities for people with disabilities	.710 (.180)***
The ADA has made facilities and programs accessible to people with disabilities	.790 (.192)***
	.428
Have seen evidence that the ADA is being enforced	(.150)***
Despite the ADA, people with disabilities are still experiencing discrimination based on their disability	1.084 (.156)***
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01,** p<.05,* p<.1	

Model #4- Favorable Impression Indicators

Testing the perceived necessity and legality of the ADA at its passage was the theme of Model #4. The results conformed to reason, as those who agreed that the ADA was necessary and those who agreed that there was a history of disability discrimination had a more favorable opinion of the ADA. Further, those who thought that the ADA violated state' rights when it was passed continue to have a less favorable impression of the ADA. Although these results are predictable, there is an important observation to make when viewing Table 21: for public employees, there seems to be a lasting impact on perception from the original conceptions of the ADA at its enactment.

Table 21

Model #4-

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)
	-.146
African American	(.314)
	1.848
Other Ethnicity	(.795)
	.055
Female	(.218)**
	.076
Age	(.102)
People with disabilities have historically experienced discrimination based on disability	.477
	(.168)***
	1.536
The ADA was necessary when it was passed	(.193)***
	-.856
The ADA Violated States Rights	(.161)***
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1	

Model #5- Favorable Impression Indicators

Familiarity of ADA goals was inspected, and contrary to the findings regarding support for a state DA, as this knowledge increases so does favorability. Much like the state DA examination, those who consider the ADA to be “civil rights” legislation have a more positive opinion of the law.

Table 22

Model #5- Favorable Impression Indicators

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)
	.568
African American	(.284)
	1.075
Other Ethnicity	(.782)
	.487
Female	(.201)**
	.044
Age	(.094)
	.650
I am familiar with the goals of the ADA	(.149)***
	.335
I consider the ADA to be civil rights legislation	(.110)***
	.627
The ADA protects people with disabilities against discrimination	(.126)***
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01,** p<.05,* p<.1	

Model #6- Favorable Impression Indicators

Continuing the exploration into ADA knowledge as an indicator for a favorable impression, Model #6 further supported the idea that ADA knowledge initiates approval, much like familiarity with the legal requirements of the ADA shared a direct relationship with having a positive impression. A caveat to this finding is that perceived clarity of the ADA did not share a significant relationship with a favorable impression, which is a very

useful finding, because those who realize this area of weakness in the ADA are apparently not affected in their overall impression of the legislation.

Table 23

Model #6- Favorable Impression Indicators

Variable	Coefficient (Std. Error)
	.486
African American	(.305)
	1.041
Other Ethnicity	(.733)
	.213
Female	(.215)
	.114
Age	(.101)
	.484
I am familiar with the legal requirements of the ADA	(.150)***
	.187
The ADA is clear and unambiguous	(.135)
	1.50
The ADA places reasonable requirements on public agencies	(.146)***
Two-tailed significance ***p<.01,** p<.05,* p<.1	

"Kitchen Sink" Model- Favorable Impression Indicators I

The "Kitchen Sink" model again included all variables listed in the individual regression groupings. The findings of this model seen in Table 24 are generally parallel to those in the more compact regressions. All of the significant relationships marked in the kitchen sink model were also significant in the individual model, however, there were only six identified in the comprehensive groups as opposed to the 21 found in the original regressions.

Table 24

"Kitchen Sink" Model- Favorable Impression Indicators

Variable	"Kitchen Sink"Model
	-.225
African American	(.452)
	1.060
Other Ethnicity	(1.208)
	-.105
Female	(.302)
	-.150
Age	(.183)
	.245
Ideology	(.141)*
	-.068
Years in the public service	(.170)
	-.285
The ADA should be revised	(.216)
	-.580
The ADA should be abolished	(.258)**
	.068
Has volunteered for a disability- related event of organization	(.310)
	-.235
Has a disability	(.471)
	.560
Has a relative or friend with a disability	(.367)
	.096
Works with someone who has a disability	(.365)
	.266
Works for an organization that specifically serves people with disabilities	(.324)
	.343
The ADA has improved employment opportunities for people with disabilities	(.298)
	.532
The ADA has made facilities and programs accessible to people with disabilities	(.274)*
	.493
Have seen evidence that the ADA is being enforced	(.228)**
	.324
Despite the ADA, people with disabilities are still experiencing discrimination based on their disability	(.226)
	.446
People with disabilities have historically experienced discrimination based on disability	(.240)*
	.546
The ADA was necessary when it was passed	(.280)*
	-.791
The ADA Violated States Rights	(.239)***
	.442
I am familiar with the goals of the ADA	(.307)
	.063
I consider the ADA to be civil rights legislation	(.162)
	-.019
The ADA protects people with disabilities against discrimination	(.228)
	.088
I am familiar with the legal requirements of the ADA	(.236)
	.069
The ADA is clear and unambiguous	(.194)
	.602
The ADA places reasonable requirements on public agencies	(.215)***

Two-tailed significance ***p<.01,** p<.05,* p<.1

Overview of Favorable Impression Indicators Results

The survey yielded valuable insight by helping to identify those factors which share a relationship with a favorable impression of the ADA. A summary of the most noteworthy findings are as follows:

Shared a relationship:

- All ethnic groups, other than white, are more likely to have a favorable impression of the ADA.
- Women are more likely than men to have a favorable impression of the ADA.
- The more closely public employees identify themselves to liberal ideology, the more likely he/she is to have a favorable impression of the ADA.
- Those who have a disability, work with someone who has a disability, or work for an organization that specifically serves people with disabilities are more likely to have a favorable impression of the ADA.
- All ADA success measures yielded a positive relationship with favorable impression.
- Those recognizing a history of discrimination before the ADA and think it was necessary are more likely to have a favorable impression of the ADA now.
- Those familiar with the goals and legal requirements of the ADA are more likely to have a favorable impression of the law.

Did not share a relationship:

- Years in the public service
- Has volunteered for a disability-related event of organization
- Has a friend or relative with a disability

DISCUSSION

The results of this research are expansive and thus yield a variety of applications. First, there are general implications derived from the findings. These observations deal with basic attitudinal qualities of public employees, ADA education, and public employee trust in different levels of government. The other implications for the research deal specifically with marketing a state disability act in Alabama.

General Implications

The entire body of this research can improve the understanding of the public service and its relationship with disability legislation; however, a large portion of this research is dedicated specifically to investigating the potential for an Alabama-specific DA. Despite the focus on a state disability act, there are several general implications derived from this research with regard to the public service and the ADA.

Public Employees and the ADA

Generally, it is clear that public employees share widespread support the ADA. Prior to its passage, they recognized the need to reduce disability discrimination, and after its passage, public employees have acknowledged the successes of the legislation in improving conditions for people with disabilities. The greatest support, however, revealed by this research, was found in those public employees who deal directly with the ADA in their formal lives. Those who either work with someone who has a disability, work for an organization that specifically serves people with disabilities, or have a disability themselves exemplify the idea that utilization and experience with the ADA

improves the general perception of the law. This is a true mark of success for the ADA, as those who observe its functions most often are also most likely to approve.

Public employees, through this survey, also revealed an interesting chain of perception. First, they agreed that the ADA set reasonable requirements for public agencies and that compliance was worth the cost. These beliefs are complimented by the agreement that the ADA has been enforced and has thus improved employment opportunities and accessibility for people with disabilities. With an overwhelming favorable impression of the ADA, it is quite odd that public employees also contend that despite the ADA, disability discrimination still persists. One would assume that this seeming failure of the ADA would cause favorability to decline, but it does not. In fact, the two factors share a positive relationship rising and falling together. When coupling these opinions with the response that public employees would support the passage of the ADA today, it is again odd, that there is a total lack of support for a state DA. Undoubtedly, this chain of perception, the somewhat irrational, typifies the essence of human subjects research. Public employees are not unlike the general population, they do not always operate on logic, nor are they always predictable.

Perhaps an explanation for this tendency to support the national ADA but disapprove (or be neutral) on a state DA is in perceptions of federalism. It seems that in matters of discrimination and civil rights, states defer to the federal government. This could lead to a reliance on and elevated sense of confidence in national legislation versus state laws. The condition may, however, only be giving insight to a distrust of the Alabama government, although that cannot be determined by this research.

There is an interesting consistency, however, found in the responses of this research. Those who recognized the history of discrimination suffered by people with disabilities before the ADA were more likely to possess a more positive view of the ADA now. Further, the public employees that agreed there was a need for the ADA were also more likely to reflect approval of the ADA. The statistically significant relationships between these variables indicate that there is a lasting impact created by the original conceptions of the ADA. This may help in understanding basic perceptions of public employees, as they could be a function of a previous attitude, although additional research would be necessary to prove this theory.

Public Employee ADA Education

As noted in the results of this study, perception does not always parallel reality. There is apparent weakness in the ADA education of public employees, as they seem to possess a false confidence in their ADA knowledge. After all, many strongly agreed that they were familiar with the legal requirements and goals of the ADA, yet they also reported that the ADA was clear and unambiguous. Certainly, public agencies must focus employee training on developing a functional understanding of the ADA, as to prepare them for their professional roles; however, disregarding a general ADA education which would teach that the ADA is unclear, puts the organizations at risk of violation. Another added benefit of improved ADA education, as indicated by this research, is that as familiarity with the legal requirements and goals of the ADA increases, so will approval for the law.

Although not necessarily an organizational training responsibility, public employees have some false perceptions of the success of the ADA. It is a benefit that

much of the perception is skewed to advance perception of the ADA, however, it is erroneous. Clarification in some of the weak areas of the ADA such as: legal authority and employment improvement would provide a more balanced and realistic perspective of the ADA. If public employees can understand these weaknesses, they may be apt to assert themselves to ensure better results or otherwise pursue methods of remedying the shortfalls.

Marketing an Alabama DA

One of the goals of this research was to explore the potential for marketing a disability act in the State of Alabama, and the results of the study offer several opportunities for application in this area. The window of opportunity to elicit support for a state DA, at least in the public service, is wide open, as those neutral on the subject dominated the sample. Before introducing the alternatives for promoting a state DA, however, a review of some demographic content is necessary.

First, the study presented an interesting, and unexpected, result: endorsement of a state DA is not related to ideology. Knowing that support is not divided by ideology opens the playing field for eliciting support to all political groups. In addition, experience with people who have disabilities, in either personal or professional life, does not lead to support for an Alabama DA. Attempting to catalyze groups who have experience with people with disabilities would be somewhat useless, as they are no more likely to offer their support. In fact, the only experience factor that does increase support is actually having a disability.

Minority groups in the public service displayed a type of flip-flop between appreciating the national ADA and supporting a state DA. While blacks and other ethnic

groups were more likely to have a favorable impression of the national ADA than whites, they were inversely less likely to support a state DA. Several conclusions could be proposed to explain this phenomenon, regarding attitudes towards federalism or a lack of confidence in state governance; however, the fact that minorities feel this way may give view to a belief that the national government is a better protector and advocate for minority rights.

A theory developed by this research is that the initial opinions of a law may influence the perceptions of that law in the long term. In consideration of a disability act in Alabama, the marketing for the law may determine its continued appeal. The method and targets of the promotion are of integral importance, as their lasting impact may be greater than previously expected. Selecting the optimal support-building options is imperative for this reason, but there is another consideration: risk of adverse secondary effects. Advertising the weaknesses or negative aspects of the ADA may have the intended benefit of advancing a state DA, but there is a danger that such methods could also result in a deterioration of national ADA support (which could, in turn, hamper efforts to maintain any disability at all). The backlash could also create an opportunity for opponents of the ADA, both state and national, to pursue their own agenda. Winning a state DA is not worth losing support for the national policy. For these reasons, not all options are equally appealing, and each should recognize the potential risks.

High risk options

There are several marketing strategies for a state DA which the study designates as potentially effective, yet within the same research, associated risks of using some of these alternatives is also apparent. As previously discussed, public employees do not

have an entirely accurate picture of the weaknesses, and even failures, of the ADA. Advertising these areas for improvement, according to the survey, could bolster a state DA initiative. As the belief that the ADA has made programs and facilities more accessible increases, state DA support decreases, thus the inverse could be expected to be true. Perhaps showing the areas in which accessibility is still deficient, such as historical landmarks like public courthouses and university classrooms, public employees may look to a state disability act for improvements. The difficulty is that the accessibility variable also has a positive relationship with having a favorable impression of the national ADA, so as the marketing that accessibility has not been adequately improved succeeds, one would expect ADA approval to decline. Comparing the coefficients for the two relationships: 1.) state DA support and accessibility (-.352**), and 2.) national ADA impression and accessibility (.79***) is perhaps an exercise in futility, but worth mention. Viewing the comparative strength of the second variable, one may determine that the risk outweighs the potential benefit with this option.

Another risky, but potentially fruitful, option is in advertising what many in the legal community already argue: the ADA violated states' rights. Again, the relationships with support for a state DA and perception of the national ADA go in opposite directions. Looking at the coefficients in the "kitchen sink" models for each, the risk of a one unit change in the belief that the ADA violated states' rights to national ADA impression (-.791***) seems much higher than the same one unit benefit (.323*) to the state DA cause. In terms of logic, how could a supporter of the national ADA propose that it was illegal, risking inciting an abolition movement, on the chance that people would look to a state DA as the proper course of action?

Low risk options

There are some options that do not stimulate a “zero sum game” in support as seen in high risk options. After all, having a favorable impression of the national ADA does share a relationship with state DA support. Other variables share a direct relationship with both national ADA impression and state DA support, while others pose no apparent risk at all.

First, a lower risk alternative to those already listed would be in teaching public employees that the ADA is not clear and leaves room for discrimination and unnecessary litigation. Because the variable for ADA clarity was not significant, the true impact is unknown, but the absence of a significant relationship with national ADA impression does indicate a lower level of risk in this method.

In both the state and national ADA cases, perception that the ADA is civil rights legislation shares a positive relationship. Although, not suspected to be incredibly influential, promoting the ADA and disability discrimination as a civil rights issue would likely yield uniformly positive results. Another option which shares a direct relationship with state and national ADA support deals with persistent discrimination. Those who thought that despite the ADA, disability discrimination still exists were more likely to support a state DA and have a favorable impression of the national ADA. A campaign to identify and bring attention to current disability discrimination may be useful. It should be noted that the relationship shared between the variables for current discrimination and the national ADA makes little sense, however, considering that public employees widely believe that the ADA was reasonable, worth the cost, and not abused for financial gain, this option should be considered.

Finally, an untested, but worthwhile opportunity is found in the pervasive belief that the ADA has improved conditions for people with disabilities. By spreading the word that legal proceedings are jeopardizing the future viability, and thus continued success, of the legislation, there may be an upswing in favorability and state DA support (both directly and indirectly- through the national ADA favorability factor).

CONCLUSIONS

This descriptive research on perceptions of Alabama public employees' perception explored the basic attitudinal qualities of public employees, ADA education, and the potential for marketing a state disability act in Alabama. The study found that generally public employees share widespread support for the ADA. The greatest support, however, was found in those public employees who either work with someone who has a disability, work for an organization that specifically serves people with disabilities, or have a disability themselves. In addition, public employees contend that despite the ADA, disability discrimination still persists, yet there is a lack of support for a state DA. This condition could be a manifestation of federalism in attitude. There is also apparent weakness in the ADA education of public employees, as they seem to possess a false confidence in their sometimes erroneous ADA knowledge. Public employees also have false perceptions of the success of the ADA. It is a benefit that much of the perception is skewed to advance perception of the ADA, however, it is still presents a false reality.

In exploring the potential for marketing a disability act in the State of Alabama, the results of the study offered several opportunities for application; however, consideration was given to the potential risks that some methods of bolstering the support for a state DA could also result in a decline of support for the national ADA. Some high risk options included advertising the functional and legal weaknesses of the ADA. Low risk options included: enhancing general ADA education with attention to the ambiguity

of the legislation, the civil rights nature of the law, continued disability discrimination, and the current legal proceedings threatening the viability of the ADA.

The hope embedded in this research is to aid in building a better understanding of the public service and to further build support for a state DA in the public service.

Perhaps once public employees believe in the cause for an Alabama disability act, they can help to better implement the current ADA and also pursue the passage of a state disability act for the enhanced protection of Alabamians with disabilities.

WORKS CITED

- Bell, A.H. (1962). Attitudes of selected rehabilitation workers and other hospital employees toward the physically disabled. *Psychological Reports*. 10, 183-186
- Benham, N.E. (1997). Faculty attitudes and knowledge regarding specific disabilities and the Americans with Disabilities Act. *College Student Journal*. 31 (1), 124-129.
- Board of Trustees of the University of Alabama v. Garrett* (2001), 531 U.S. 356
- Burkhauser, R.V. (2004). The decline in the employment rate for people with disabilities: Bad data, bad health, or bad policy? *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*. 20 (3), 185-201.
- Charles, K.K. (2004). The Extent and Effect of Employer Compliance with the Accommodations Mandates of the Americans with Disabilities Act. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*. 15 (2), 86-96.
- Clegg, R. (1999). The Costly Compassion of the ADA. *Public Interest*. 136: 100- 113.
- Correia, E., Golden, M., Middleton, C., & Weinstein, R. (2003). Tennessee v. Lane: The Legal Issues and the Implications for People with Disabilities. *National Council on Disability: Newsroom*. Retrieved April 4, 2004, from <http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/publications/2003/legalissues.htm>.
- Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the management of a spoiled identity*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Hahn, H. (1985). Disability policy and the problem of discrimination. *American*

Behavioral Scientist. 28 (3), 293-318.

Hahn, H. (1987). Civil rights for disabled Americans: The foundation of a political agenda. In A. Gartner & T. Joe (Eds.), *Images of the Disabled. Disabling images* (pp. 191-203). New York: NY: Praeger.

Hernandez, B., Keys, C., & Balcazar, F. (2000). Employer attitudes toward workers with disabilities and their ADA employment rights: A literature review. *Journal of Rehabilitation*. 66 (4), 4-17.

Hernandez, B., Keys, C., & Balcazar, F. (2004). Disability Rights: Attitudes of Private and Public Sector Representatives. *Journal of Rehabilitation*. 70 (1), 28-37.

Hinton, C.A. (2003). The perceptions of people with disabilities as to the effectiveness of the Americans with disabilities act. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*. 13 (4), 210-222.

Katsiyannis, A. & Yell, M. (2002). Americans with Disabilities Act and the Supreme Court: Implications for Practice. *Preventing School Failure*. 47 (1), 39-43.

Kaufman-Scarborough, C & Baker, S.M. (2005). So people with disabilities believe the ADA has served their consumer interests? *Journal of Consumer Affairs*. 39 (1), 1-26.

Kilbury, R.F. & Benshoff, J.J. (1992). The interaction of legislation, public attitudes, and access to opportunities for persons with disabilities. *Journal of Rehabilitation*. 58 (4), 6-10.

Larson, D.A. (1986). What disabilities are protected under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973? *Labor Law Journal*. 137, 752-766.

Mezey, S., Jordan, W., Thie, C., & Davis, D. (2002). The Americans with Disabilities

Act in Federal Court: litigating against public entities. *Disability and Society*. 17 (1), 49-65.

Moore, T.J., & Crimando, W. (1995). Attitudes toward Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*. 38 (3), 232-248.

Noble, J.H., & McCarthy, C.M. (1988). Organizational accommodation and rehabilitation values. In S.E. Rubin & N.M. Rebin (Eds.), *Contemporary challenges to the rehabilitation counseling profession* (pp. 15-29). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Olmstead v L.C. (1999), 527 U.S. 581

Shraver J., & Curtis C. (1981). Hanidcapism: Another challenge for social studies, *Social Education*. 45 (3), 208-211.

State of Alabama Personnel Department. (2005). *2005 Annual Report*. Retrieved February 1, 2006, from <http://www.personnel.state.al.us>.

The Code of Alabama § 36-12-40 (1975).

U.S. Congress. (1990). Public Law 101-336: *The Americans with disabilities act*. Washington D.C.: 101st Congress.

APPENDIX A
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



Form 4: IRB Approval Form
Identification and Certification of Research
Projects Involving Human Subjects

UAB's Institutional Review Boards for Human Use (IRBs) have an approved Federalwide Assurance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP). The UAB IRBs are also in compliance with 21 CFR Parts 50 and 56 and ICH GCP Guidelines. The Assurance became effective on November 24, 2003 and the approval period is for three years. The Assurance number is FWA00005960.

Principal Investigator: PHILIPS, AMY M

Co-Investigator(s):

Protocol Number: X051130004

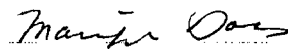
Protocol Title: *Attitude and the ADA: A Survey of the Perceptions of Public Administrators in Alabama*

The IRB reviewed and approved the above named project on 01/10/06. The review was conducted in accordance with UAB's Assurance of Compliance approved by the Department of Health and Human Services. This Project will be subject to Annual continuing review as provided in that Assurance.

This project received EXPEDITED review.

IRB Approval Date: 1-6-06

Date IRB Approval Issued: 01/10/06


Marilyn Doss, M.A.
Vice Chair of the Institutional Review
Board for Human Use (IRB)

Investigators please note:

The IRB approved consent form used in the study must contain the IRB approval date and expiration date.

IRB approval is given for one year unless otherwise noted. For projects subject to annual review research activities may not continue past the one year anniversary of the IRB approval date.

Any modifications in the study methodology, protocol and/or consent form must be submitted for review and approval to the IRB prior to implementation.

Adverse Events and/or unanticipated risks to subjects or others at UAB or other participating institutions must be reported promptly to the IRB.

470 Administration Building
701 20th Street South
205.934.3789
Fax 205.934.1301
irb@uab.edu

The University of
Alabama at Birmingham
Mailing Address:
AB 470
1530 3RD AVE S
BIRMINGHAM AL 35294-0104

APPENDIX B
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

ATTITUDE AND THE ADA

Introduction

TITLE OF STUDY:

Attitude and the ADA: A survey of the perceptions of public administrators in Alabama

INVESTIGATOR:

Amy Philips-Redclift, UAB MPA Student Researcher

PURPOSE

You are being asked to participate in a research study to measure the opinions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) held by public administrators in Alabama. You have been chosen as a potential participant in this study because you have been identified as a public administrator in Alabama.

PROCEDURES

If you choose to participate in this study, you are asked to complete the following survey, which includes questions regarding your opinions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and some basic demographic information.

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

As the survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete, it may pose an inconvenience. The survey includes some personal questions regarding your personal opinions, characteristics, and history; however, no personal identifiers will be used in this research. You do not have to answer every question in the survey to participate. You are free to leave any question blank.

BENEFITS

You may not directly benefit from participation in this research; however, your participation may provide valuable information towards the development of future disability-related public policy.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information gathered through this study that may be used to identify you or your responses will be kept confidential. Your name will not be connected to your responses, and all surveys will be destroyed at the completion of the study.

PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

This is a student research project with no sponsor funding. Although your involvement is appreciated, you will not receive payment for participation.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT PREJUDICE

You are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation in this research at any time without prejudice. You are a volunteer and are free to refuse the survey or any question in the survey. If you feel the need to withdraw at any time, you may without fear

of reproach. Also, the researcher may remove you from the study if circumstances warrant such action, but you will be notified.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact any of the following:

Researcher- Amy Philips-Redclift, (205)-317-7628 or amypr@uab.edu

Research Advisor- Dr. Donna Handley, (205)-945-8417 or dhandley@uab.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact:

Director of the Office of the Institutional Review Board for Human Use (IRB)-
Ms. Sheila Moore, (205) 934-3789 or 1-800-822-8816,
press the option for an operator and ask for extension 4-3789,
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. CT, Monday- Friday.

Survey

Please complete the following 34 questions by clicking on the appropriate response or typing in a response in the space provided. You do not have to answer every question to participate. If you have any questions, or would prefer to use a pen/pencil survey, please feel free to email the researcher (amypr@uab.edu) or call (205-934-7771). After answering questions, you may click "next" to proceed to the following page.

1.) I have heard of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I do not know

2.) I am familiar with the legal requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

3.) I am familiar with the goals of the ADA.

- ☐ Strongly Agree

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

4.) The ADA is clear and unambiguous.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

5.) I consider the ADA to be civil rights legislation.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

6.) People with disabilities have historically experienced discrimination based on their disability.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

7.) The ADA was necessary legislation when it was passed.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

8.) Passage of the ADA by the Federal government violated states' rights.

- ☐ Strongly Agree

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

9.) The ADA protects people with disabilities against discrimination.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

10.) The ADA has improved employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

11.) The ADA has made facilities and programs accessible to people with disabilities.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

12.) I have seen evidence that the ADA is being enforced.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

13.) The ADA places reasonable requirements on public agencies.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree

- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

14.) Compliance with the ADA has been very expensive.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

15.) Compliance with the ADA is worth the cost.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

16.) The ADA has been used for the purpose of financial profit rather than civil rights.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

17.) The ADA should be revised.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

18.) The ADA should be abolished.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree

- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

19.) Despite the passage of the ADA, people with disabilities are still experiencing discrimination based on their disability.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

20.) If the ADA were proposed today, I would support its passage.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

21.) Alabama should adopt its own state-specific disability act.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

22.) In general, I have a favorable impression of the ADA.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I do not know

23.) What is your gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Rather not say

- 24.) What is your age:
- ☐ 18-29
 - ☐ 30-39
 - ☐ 40-49
 - ☐ 50-59
 - ☐ 60 or older
 - ☐ Rather not say
- 25.) What best describes your ethnicity:
- ☐ European
 - ☐ Asian
 - ☐ Latino/Hispanic
 - ☐ African American
 - ☐ Native American
 - ☐ Rather not say
 - ☐ Other (please specify) _____
- 26.) Which EEO Category best describes your position?
- ☐ Officials and Administration
 - ☐ Professionals
 - ☐ Technicians
 - ☐ Protective Services
 - ☐ Paraprofessionals
 - ☐ Administrative Support
 - ☐ Skilled Crafts
 - ☐ Service/Maintenance
 - ☐ I do not know
- 27.) How many years have you been a public employee?
- ☐ 0-5
 - ☐ 6-10
 - ☐ 11-15
 - ☐ 16 and over
 - ☐ Rather not say
- 27.) In what department do you work?
- ☐ _____
- 29.) Within which ideology do you most closely align?

- ☐ Liberal
 - ☐ Somewhere between Liberal and Moderate
 - ☐ Moderate
 - ☐ Somewhere between Conservative and Moderate
 - ☐ Conservative
 - ☐ Rather not say
- 30.) Do you currently, or have you ever worked for an organization that specifically served people with disabilities?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Rather not say
- 31.) Have you ever volunteered for a disability-related event or organization?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Rather not say
- 32.) Do you have previous experience working with a person with a disability (co-worker)?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Rather not say
- 33.) Do you have any other relatives or friends with a disability?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Rather not say
- 34.) Do you have a disability?
- ☐ Rather not say Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Rather not say

APPENDIX C
RESPONSE RATE WORKSHEET

Response rate worksheet

Database Adjustments	Number	Process	Total
Original Email Database	6635	⇒	6635
Higher Education Addresses	1240	-1240	5395

First Distribution	Number	Process	Total
Original Sample	5,395	⇒	5395
Distributed Sample	5,395	⇒	5395
Invalid Addresses	445	-445	4950
Requested Removal	39	-39	4911
Adjusted Sample	4,911	⇒	4911
Responses	541		
Response rate	11.02%		

Second Distribution	Number	Process	Total
Original Sample	4,911	⇒	4911
Department of Human Resources	2,106	-2106	2805
Distributed Sample	2,805	⇒	2805
Invalid Addresses (removed)	78	-78	2727
Adjusted Sample	2,727	⇒	2727
Responses	315		
Response Rate	11.55%		

Response Adjustments	Number	Process	Total
Total Responses	856	⇒	856
Dept. of Human Resources Responses	124	-124	732
Unreported department	149	-149	583
Less than 90% Completion of Survey	7	-7	576
Remaining Responses	576		576

Response Rates Summary	Sample	Responses	Rate
First Distrubution	4911	541	11.02%
Second Distrubution	2,727	315	11.55%
Total Distrubution	2,727	576	21.12%

APPENDIX D
REPONSE BREAKDOWN- BY DEPARTMENT

Response Breakdown- by Department

DEPARTMENT	2004	% in 2004	Frequency	Percent
Accountancy Board	0	0.00%	1	0.17
Ag & Conservation Develop Comm	1	0.00%	0	0.00
Agricultural Museum Board	1	0.00%	0	0.00
Agriculture & Industries	543	1.64%	0	0.00
Agriculture Center Board	59	0.18%	0	0.00
Alcoholic Beverage Control Board	753	2.27%	0	0.00
Architects Registration Board	2	0.01%	1	0.17
Archives and History	37	0.11%	13	2.26
Assisted Living Examiners Board	0	0.00%	0	0.00
Attorney General	173	0.52%	10	1.74
Auditor	11	0.03%	0	0.00
Banking	105	0.32%	0	0.00
Building Commission	18	0.05%	0	0.00
Children's Affairs	11	0.03%	3	0.52
Children's Trust Fund	16	0.05%	3	0.52
Chiropractic Examiners Board	2	0.01%	0	0.00
Choct., Pea & Yellow Rivers Watershed	2	0.01%	0	0.00
Conservation & Natural Resources	1,394	4.20%	53	9.20
Corrections	3,660	11.03%	1	0.17
Cosmetology Board	23	0.07%	0	0.00
Council on the Arts	16	0.05%	7	1.22
Counseling Examiners Board	1	0.00%	0	0.00
Credit Union Administration	6	0.02%	0	0.00
Crime Victims Compensation Commission	27	0.08%	4	0.69
Criminal Justice Information Center	49	0.15%	0	0.00
Development Office	33	0.10%	3	0.52
Dietetics/Nutrition Practice Examiners	1	0.00%	0	0.00
Economic & Community Affairs	227	0.68%	35	6.08
Education	756	2.28%	26	4.51
Educational Television Commission	55	0.17%	6	1.04
Electrical Contractors Board	1	0.00%	0	0.00
Emergency Management Agency	64	0.19%	11	1.91
Environmental Management	557	1.68%	1	0.17
Ethics Commission	11	0.03%	1	0.17
Examiners of Public Accounts	186	0.56%	0	0.00
Farmers' Market Authority	5	0.02%	2	0.35
Finance	484	1.46%	27	4.69
Foreign Trade Relations Comm	0	0.00%	0	0.00
Forensic Sciences	191	0.58%	33	5.73
Foresters Registration Board	1	0.00%	1	0.17

Response Breakdown- by Department (Page 2)

DEPARTMENT	2004	% in 2004	Frequency	Percent
Forestry Commission	327	0.99%	13	2.26
Funeral Services Board	3	0.01%	0	0.00
General Contractors Licensing Board	19	0.06%	0	0.00
Geological Survey	36	0.11%	0	0.00
Governor	69	0.21%	2	0.35
Health Planning & Development	8	0.02%	0	0.00
Heating & AC Contractors Board	8	0.02%	1	0.17
Historical Commission	109	0.33%	0	0.00
Home Builders Licensure Board	17	0.05%	0	0.00
Homeland Security Office	13	0.04%	6	1.04
Human Resources	4,244	12.79%	Removed	0.00
Indian Affairs Commission	3	0.01%	2	0.35
Industrial Relations	1,231	3.71%	109	18.92
Insurance	137	0.41%	0	0.00
Judicial Inquiry Commission	3	0.01%	1	0.17
Labor	8	0.02%	4	0.69
Liquefied Petroleum Gas Board	7	0.02%	0	0.00
Manufactured Housing Commission	30	0.09%	0	0.00
Medicaid Agency	662	1.99%	1	0.17
Mental Health & Retardation	2,830	8.53%	70	12.15
Military	195	0.59%	0	0.00
Nursing Board	37	0.11%	3	0.52
Nursing Home Admin Exam Board	1	0.00%	0	0.00
Occupational Therapy Board	1	0.00%	0	0.00
Oil & Gas Board	36	0.11%	0	0.00
Onsite Wastewater Board	5	0.02%	0	0.00
Pardons and Paroles	551	1.66%	0	0.00
Peace Off Standards & Training	5	0.02%	1	0.17
Peace Officers Annuity & Benefit	4	0.01%	0	0.00
Personnel	95	0.29%	0	0.00
Physical Fitness Commission	3	0.01%	0	0.00
Physical Therapy Board	2	0.01%	0	0.00
Plumbers & Gas Fitters Exam Board	16	0.05%	0	0.00
Professional Engineers Regist Board	7	0.02%	1	0.17
Public Edu Empl. Health Insurance Bd	15	0.05%	0	0.00
Public Health	3,590	10.82%	5	0.87
Public Library Services	39	0.12%	4	0.69
Public Safety	1,271	3.83%	6	1.04
Public Service Commission	120	0.36%	0	0.00
Real Estate Appraisers Board	7	0.02%	0	0.00

Response Breakdown- by Department (Page 3)

DEPARTMENT	2004	% in 2004	Frequency	Percent
Real Estate Commission	28	0.08%	1	0.17
Rehabilitation Services	819	2.47%	5	0.87
Retirement Systems	240	0.72%	33	5.73
Revenue	1,337	4.03%	14	2.43
Secretary of State	39	0.12%	1	0.17
Securities Commission	38	0.11%	5	0.87
Senior Services	28	0.08%	5	0.87
Social Work Examiners Board	3	0.01%	1	0.17
Soil & Water Conservation Commission	2	0.01%	0	0.00
Speech Pathology & Audiology Exam Bd	1	0.00%	0	0.00
State Docks/Port Authority	142	0.43%	0	0.00
State Employees Insurance Board	36	0.11%	4	0.69
Surface Mining Commission	26	0.08%	2	0.35
Tourism & Travel	64	0.19%	4	0.69
Transportation	4,369	13.16%	1	0.17
Treasurer	54	0.16%	9	1.56
Veterinary Medical Examiners Board	2	0.01%	0	0.00
Veterans Affairs	56	0.17%	1	0.17
Voter Registration	0	0.00%	0	0.00
Youth Services	661	1.99%	0	0.00
Other- Write in	NR	NR	19	3.30
Totals	33,191	100.00%	576	100.00

(State of Alabama Personnel Department, 2005)