

# DRC DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER - NH

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## **Disability Unscripted: 2020 Candidates on Inclusion & Accessibility Transcript of Beto O'Rourke: Manchester, NH March 21, 2019**

<https://drcnh.org/videos/beto-orourke-video-campaign-inclusion-and-accessibility/>

**DRC-NH Staff:** With one in five Americans experiencing a disability what efforts have you taken to employ those, reach out and employ those with disabilities on your campaign, and what efforts would you take if you were given the chance to have an administration? And then also what efforts are you guys taking to make sure that your stops on the campaign are in accessible venues like Consuelo's?

**Beto O'Rourke:** Okay thank you, really great question. One in five Americans living with a disability. How do we ensure that their potential their genius is reflected in the campaign that we run and in an administration that I would lead? How do we make sure that we have campaign stops that are accessible to everyone who wants to come to them?

The short answer to your question is I've got to do a lot better job of making sure that everyone can come forward and contribute. My sister, in special education classes every single year of her education. Now living in an assisted living community. Now you know doing her best to find purpose and function and work. I've seen what that's done for her life to be able to meet some of those challenges.

I know from a federal perspective, when it comes to IDEA funding in our public schools, the mandate is 40%. Right now the federal government is spending seventeen percent. Those special education teachers those teachers who work with children with disabilities are asking to be to do more without having the resources or the support or the additional staffing to meet that challenge.

I want to make sure and this is an open call, that everyone from every part of the country from every set of experiences and background can join this campaign and can be in positions of leadership in this campaign. And so, through you and others who are watching this, I want to ensure that more Americans living with disabilities are part of the leadership of this campaign. I want to make sure that in our administration in senior positions of trust and authority there are people living with disabilities who are there. It's the best way to ensure that we have policies that match the needs and the opportunities that we have in our communities and in our country.

Thank you for being here and for asking the question.

*Candidate video fades out to informational slide*

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