

January 11, 2013

Dear Constituent,

My connection and association with Persons with Disabilities is deep, long-lasting and very personal. In fact, it has been a natural aspect of my life since the day when I was told that my younger sister had been born with a hearing and, consequently, a speech impairment. I was and remain extremely close to my sister. Her disability has shaped my thinking and character significantly.

I therefore vowed from an early age that I would do my best in whatever way possible to help improve the quality of life of Persons with Disabilities in Barbados.

That pledge led me, shortly after returning to Barbados from my legal studies in 1986, to enroll as a member of the Lions Clubs of Barbados. It was this service organisation which primarily established the School for the Deaf, now known as the Irving Wilson School, the School for the Blind and assisted in the foundation of the Challenor Creative Arts and Training Centre.

Over the last fifteen years, I have volunteered as a legal and policy advisor to many of the associations and bodies which seek to advance the cause of Persons with Disabilities in Barbados. I also served for three years between 2005-2008 as the Deputy Chairman of the National Advisory Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Today, Persons with Disabilities continue to hold a very special place in my heart and I remain as committed as ever to assisting them in any way to live improved lives.

My vision and hope is that Persons with Disabilities in our Country will live in a just society providing them with opportunities for more expansive education and vocational training, greater avenues for meaningful employment, better social security arrangements, adequate housing and public transportation, easier access to the built physical environment and better facilitation for special sporting and recreational activities. I am exceedingly proud to be one of the few persons publicly pushing for the enactment in Barbados of Disabilities legislation.

I will, with God's help, continue to fight passionately for these rights as long as I have the strength, capacity and ability to do so. This is one of the main motivating factors for my entry into elective politics.

A vote for me and for the Barbados Labour Party would ensure that the agenda for enhancing the quality of life of Persons with Disabilities is achievable. I therefore look forward to receiving your support and vote as well as the support and vote of your care providers, relatives and friends in St. James North so that I can have the opportunity to be your next Parliamentary Representative and to further advance your interests, this time at the level of government policy.

Yours faithfully,

EDMUND G. HINKSON
Caring Committed Capable