

WHY CAN'T WE SERVE

A Documentary

For over twenty years I have had a desire to help upgrade the standard of living for all people with disabilities by getting the people of our country to see how our government has been, and still is, discriminating against the disabled in one very specific way. Since the passing of the "American with Disabilities Act" in 1990 and the most recent incredible advances in technology, there is absolutely no reason why the military couldn't allow intelligent, enthusiastic and responsible people with disabilities to join the armed forces in non-combat positions, and get the opportunity to serve our country. At this moment it is not possible.

I lost my sight while serving in the Air Force, and over the years have become a respected published author as well as a strong advocate for empowering people with disabilities. Now seems to be the perfect time for me to combine my skills and bring this important issue into the light.

I'm also deeply saddened by the daily acts of suicide committed by our veterans, many who have returned from combat with permanent disabilities. I'd like those wounded veterans to have the option of staying in the military, if they choose, with a chance to make a career out of it. I'm sure this would help reduce the rate of suicides and boost the morale among vets. Right now this is also not possible.

I believe a full length documentary about this whole subject would, at the very least expose the inequity and start a national conversation, and at best, could cause sweeping changes in how the public views people with disabilities. In addition, the documentary may very well be a catalyst that helps raise the consciousness regarding disabled vets, as well as raise the standard of living bar for the disabled.

I have contracted with a wonderful filmmaker, and together we plan to combine my life story as an inspirational model of what is possible, with images of past American heroes who were disabled. Additionally we want to interview senators and congressmen who would like to support this issue.

We would like to raise \$75,000 for the project. This is the amount needed, as we best see it at this time, to pay for all the expenses involved with our plans for approximately a 90-minute documentary. This money will cover a small honorarium for me, the salary for the filmmaker, as well as expenses for travel, room and board to Washington, D.C. and Tallahassee, Florida for important interviews.

I want to thank you all for showing interest in this project and willing to be so generous with your financial support.