Dear Business Owner,

I am a graduate of the Guide Dog Foundation in Smithtown, New York, and thanks to the assistance of my trained service dog, I am here today as a patron of your establishment.

As you may know, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ensures that persons with disabilities – including those with service dogs – have the right to equal access to all public places and businesses. When an individual enters your place of business with a service dog, neither you nor your staff may ask about the person’s disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or the task.

If it is not obvious what service the dog provides, the law permits you or your staff to ask two questions:

1. Is your dog a service dog that is required because of a disability?
2. What work or task has the dog been trained to perform for you?

If the person with the dog doesn’t answer these questions, you have a right to not allow the dog into your business.

The ADA permits you to request that the handler control his or her service dog if that dog is disruptive, and you have the legal right to ask the handler to remove the dog from the premises if the handler is unable to control the dog.

Thank you for making your business an accessible, positive, and welcoming environment for those of us who must rely upon service dogs for our independence.