

MAY NOT  
BE EASILY  
ACCESSIBLE

## Assuring Safety for Everyone

Safe-proofing the home isn't just for children. Adults and those with disabilities may need modifications for safety and accessibility, too. Today, with more knowledge about and devotion to understanding the safety concerns of the elderly and people with limited mobility, modifying your home to suit your lifestyle is more feasible than ever.

Former Georgia Sen. Max Cleland, 64, recently finished remodeling his two-bedroom flat in Buckhead to make it safer and more accessible for wheelchairs. The entire process took about four weeks to complete, and when Cleland and his contractor, Jim Karl of All In One Accessibility, finished the project, the new space was a roomy haven fit for Cleland's personal needs.

Karl added safety features such as a brace bar over the bathtub and toilet and special access to the balcony. "Jim alleviated the bump that's normally in a doorway where the surface changes," Cleland says. "Now I don't have to pick up speed to go over the bump and risk knocking into something."

Cleland, a Vietnam veteran who lost two legs and part of one arm during the war, has laminate floors in his apartment because a surface like carpet would snag or bunch under

the pressure of a wheelchair, making it difficult to get around and causing strain on his hand and shoulders. "After age 60, the body is a maintenance problem," Cleland says.

Other safety features Cleland installed include a lowered peephole in the door, a wider vanity with a sink slanted at a 45-degree angle to fit his knees, and sensor lighting in the dressing area so he doesn't have to feel around in the dark and risk bumping into anything or having overhead objects fall on him.

Karl suggests you take the range of mobility and stability of yourself and your family members into consideration when making safety renovations. "There are a variety of products that allow you to have an enjoyable life as you get older," Karl says.

Since the renovations, Cleland's apartment is not only safer but also more practical for his lifestyle. "It's my dream space, and Jim has made my dream come true."



Former Georgia Sen. Max Cleland

— Ashley Paige Jones