



October 15, 2019

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit  
2136 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Davis  
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit  
1740 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Norton and Ranking Member Davis,

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Transportation Task Force co-chairs write to thank you for holding the October 16<sup>th</sup> Subcommittee hearing, titled “Examining the Future of Transportation Network Companies: Challenges and Opportunities”. CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for Federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

Nearly 1 in 5 people in the U.S. has a disability (more than 57 million). Significant barriers to accessible, affordable, reliable transportation remain across modes. Lack of transportation is reported as the biggest barrier to employment for people with disabilities.<sup>1</sup> Access to transportation is necessary for people with disabilities to contribute to and participate in their communities, support and spend time with family and friends, and live their lives to the fullest.

We ask you to consider the impacts Transportation Network Companies’ (TNCs) service has had on mobility for travelers with disabilities. While TNCs have dramatically improved mobility for ambulatory disabled passengers, accessibility has largely been an afterthought. There is limited availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles and continued denial of service for wheelchair and service dog users.<sup>2</sup> This is especially problematic when cities, states and transit agencies partner with TNCs to provide transportation options to the public;<sup>3</sup> and when automated vehicles are likely to be provided through TNCs and a TNC model. TNCs will need to ensure fully accessible

---

<sup>1</sup> Jaime Rall. Getting to Work: Effective State Solutions. *NCSL*, May 2015. <http://www.ncsl.org/research/transportation/getting-to-work-effective-solutions-to-help-people-with-transportation-challenges-access-jobs.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Molly Taft. Why can’t Uber and Lyft be more wheelchair accessible? *CityLab*, December 11, 2018. <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2018/12/ride-hailing-users-disabilities-wheelchair-access-uber/577855/>

<sup>3</sup> Government Accountability Office. Public Transit Partnerships: Additional Information needed to Clarify Data Reporting and Share Best Practice Practices, July 2018. <https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/693518.pdf>

service, through provision of wheelchair accessible vehicles and accessible human machine interfaces that allow people with sensory and cognitive disabilities to ride.

Equity and accessibility must be prioritized. Expanding inaccessible options harms system resilience during climate disasters, transit system shutdowns, or other emergencies. Lack of accessible transportation can lead to increased institutionalization when residents are unable to return to an undamaged home, or travel to a shelter provided by Temporary Shelter Assistance.<sup>4</sup> Travelers with disabilities must be able to access on demand transportation options like everyone else. In addition, we ask you to consider the need for TNC service to be available to travelers without a smartphone and those who are unbanked.

The CCD Transportation Task Force recently compiled surface transportation priorities that include assessing and increasing the availability of fully-accessible, integrated on-demand mobility services; and assessing and addressing continued discrimination in new mobility services. The priorities are attached for reference.

Thank you for holding a hearing and discussion on the topic of TNC services. We look forward to working with you to ensure access to TNCs and the future of mobility for the disability community. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Claire Stanley  
American Council of the Blind  
[cstanley@acb.org](mailto:cstanley@acb.org)

Lee Page  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
[Leep@pva.org](mailto:Leep@pva.org)

Carol Tyson  
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund  
[ctyson@dredf.org](mailto:ctyson@dredf.org)

CC: The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio, The Honorable Sam Graves

Enclosed: CCD Transportation Task Force Surface Transportation Legislative Proposals and Priorities

---

<sup>4</sup> National Council on Disability. Preserving our Freedom: Ending Institutionalization of People with Disabilities During and After Disasters, May 2019. <https://ncd.gov/publications/2019/preserving-our-freedom>