



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0607-2006, **Version:** *

Res. No. 607

Resolution urging the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to act more swiftly in making the renovations, upgrades and repairs necessary to ensure that people with disabilities are able to fully utilize New York City's subways, buses, stations and facilities, in the spirit of the 16th anniversary of the passage of the Americans With Disabilities Act.

By Council Members James, Dickens, Felder, Fidler, Foster, Gennaro, Gentile, Gerson, Gonzalez, Koppell, Liu, Nelson, Recchia Jr., Sanders Jr., Seabrook, Sears, Vann and White Jr.

Whereas, The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (the "ADA") prohibits discrimination and requires equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities, and is a comprehensive civil rights law for people with disabilities, enforced by the United States Department of Justice; and

Whereas, In passing the ADA, the United States Congress found that historically, society has tended to isolate and segregate individuals with disabilities, and, despite some improvements, such forms of discrimination against individuals with disabilities continue to be a serious and pervasive social problem; and

Whereas, Since the ADA permits transportation facilities to phase-in full compliance with its requirements over a long period of time, people with disabilities still face significant obstacles with respect to accessing many of the New York City transit systems facilities, including subways, buses, terminals and stations; and

Whereas, For example, according to the MTA website, while the nearly 4,500 buses in the City's fleet are equipped with wheelchair lifts, have "kneeling" features that lower the front entrance of the bus, or are designed with low-floor entrances, many advocates indicate that despite such improvements, many people with disabilities still find accessibility to public buses unreliable as a result of poor maintenance and negative attitudes sometimes displayed by certain bus operators; and

Whereas, The MTA website also indicates that there are only around 60 accessible or wheelchair accessible subway and Staten Island Railway stations; and

Whereas, While the MTA has been gradually adding access for persons with disabilities to its major subway stations as renovations take place, having identified stations and facilities where compliance with the ADA would benefit the most people, those stations and facilities that have not been so identified will have to wait even longer in order to be made fully accessible to disabled individuals; and

Whereas, Further, although since the year 2000, according to the MTA website, thousands of new subway cars have been placed in service which offer greater accessibility to people with disabilities, including designated areas for wheelchairs, computer-controlled announcement systems and improved signage, many cars still exist in the subway system that lack these helpful features; and

Whereas, Some advocates also point out that poor maintenance of the elevator systems in the subway stations leads to frequent elevator breakdowns, which in turn makes the subways less accessible or inaccessible to disabled riders; and

Whereas, This year's observation of the 16th anniversary of the passage of the ADA highlights the need for the MTA to hasten efforts to provide transportation facilities and services that are fully accessible to disabled individuals; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to act more swiftly in making the renovations, upgrades and repairs necessary to ensure that people with disabilities are able to fully utilize New York City's subways, buses, stations and facilities, in the spirit of the 16th anniversary of the passage of the Americans With Disabilities Act.

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