



TESTIMONY

Presented by

**Caryn Resnick
Deputy Commissioner, External Affairs**

on

**Oversight: Transportation Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities in
New York City**

before the

**New York City Council
Committee on Aging, Committee on Transportation & Committee on Mental Health,
Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services**

on

**Thursday, April 23, 2015
10:00 A.M.**

at

**Council Chambers, City Hall
New York, NY 10007**

Good morning, Chairperson Chin, Chairperson Rodriguez, Chairperson Cohen and members of the Aging, Transportation and Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services Committees. I am Caryn Resnick, Deputy Commissioner for External Affairs at the New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA). I am joined today by Karen Taylor, Assistant Commissioner for the Bureau of Community Services at DFTA. On behalf of Commissioner Donna Corrado, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to discuss transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities in New York City.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR SENIORS & PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In New York City, the largest programs that are geared toward meeting the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities are not under the jurisdiction of DFTA. As a point of clarification, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) New York City Transit, and not DFTA, administers Access-A-Ride, the City's paratransit service. Access-A-Ride provides transportation for people with disabilities who are unable to use mass transit for some or for the entirety of their trip. Another MTA program is the Reduced-Fare MetroCard discount for individuals who are 65 years of age or older or who have a qualifying disability. There are also various forms of medical transportation paid for by Medicaid and other health insurance plans.

DFTA TRANSPORTATION SERVICES PROGRAM

DFTA currently funds 14 transportation-only programs that vary in size and scope. These programs serve 39 community districts citywide. The DFTA Transportation Services Program, with approximately 250,000 contracted units or one-way trips per person, is a complement to the transportation services available to seniors in New York City. In addition to the 14 transportation-only programs sponsored by DFTA, about 80 of DFTA's 250 senior centers have some form of transportation for seniors to access the center and travel from the center to participate in activities, such as retail and grocery shopping, educational workshops, cultural events and social gatherings.

The objective of DFTA's Transportation Services Program is to prevent seniors who are unable to travel or access public transportation from becoming socially isolated or from declining physically by assisting them in getting to and from places they need to go in their communities,

which is referred to as Individual Transportation. Seniors are eligible for Individual Transportation trips if: 1) the trip is beyond walking or driving ability; 2) a permanent or temporary physical, mental or sensory limitation prevents utilization of public transportation; or 3) a trip by public transportation requires transfers beyond the individual's ability. At the same time, DFTA's Transportation Services Program also offers Group Transportation to enhance community engagement for seniors by offering recreational, social and educational trips.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES CONCEPT PAPER

In advance of the forthcoming Transportation Services Program RFP, DFTA released a concept paper last February. The concept paper highlights some of the defined and developing parameters, expectations and standards of the transportation services program funded by DFTA. It is our plan to test new transportation models that exploit technologies to broaden the scope and increase the efficiency of a very limited service. Responses to the concept paper were accepted from interested parties until 5:00 pm on April 16, 2015. DFTA plans to take into consideration the feedback, suggestions and comments offered by the community when crafting the upcoming transportation services solicitation. We expect to issue the solicitation this summer for contracts to commence on July 1, 2016. Current anticipated funding for the DFTA Transportation Services Program is \$4.8 million.

Relative to other transportation programs, the DFTA Transportation Services Program is limited in resources and capacity. To maximize available funding for the program, DFTA is seeking innovation, creativity and formal linkages to and communication with other transportation resources and service providers within the communities being served. DFTA is looking to contract with providers who can resourcefully operate a program that augments the City's ability to achieve the following objectives:

- Help ensure the health and safety of the senior population being served;
- Enable access to medical appointments, grocery stores, banks, food pantries and pharmacies;

- Facilitate access to social, cultural and religious programs that maintain and enhance quality of life; and
- Establish and maintain linkages and partnerships with other appropriate services.

CONCLUSION

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify about transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities. I am pleased to answer any questions you may have.

New York City Council Committee on Aging, jointly with the Committee on
Transportation and the Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disability,
Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services

Hearing on Oversight: Transportation Services for Seniors and People with
Disabilities in New York City

Margaret Chin, Chair, Committee on Aging

April 23, 2015

Testimony presented by

Matt Kudish, LMSW

Senior Vice President of Caregiver Services

Alzheimer's Association, New York City Chapter

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the issues of Transportation Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities in New York City. I am Matt Kudish, Senior Vice President of Caregiver Services at the Alzheimer's Association, New York City Chapter. Founded in 1978, the Chapter is one of seven statewide and 83 nationally that deliver services and provide care and support, free of charge. The New York City Chapter serves an estimated 500,000 New Yorkers—those with Alzheimer's and related disorders and their caregivers.

Alzheimer's is a progressive and fatal brain disease, mostly affecting the elderly, which threatens to overwhelm the health care system, if we do not find a way of preventing, or hopefully curing it one day. Approximately 5 million people in the United States are living with Alzheimer's disease – 5% reside in New York City. That number is expected to grow to as many as 16 million by mid-century. Every 67 seconds a person in the United States develops Alzheimer's disease and we expect by 2030 there will be 7 million people age 65 and older living with Alzheimer's. The financial ramifications of the disease are daunting and currently cost America \$214 billion annually.

Today, an estimated 250,000 people in the New York City area, living with dementia or Alzheimer's disease, are experiencing losses that are unimaginable to those of us who do not suffer from this illness. This debilitating disease not only robs persons with dementia (PWD) of their memory but also causes problems with thinking and behavior severe enough to adversely impact nearly every aspect of their daily lives. The PWD is no longer able to work, enjoy lifelong hobbies or social life. The lives of their family members are profoundly affected as well. They become increasingly isolated as their caregiving responsibilities escalate. Alzheimer's and other dementias are one of the leading causes of dependency and disability in older adults.

The Alzheimer's Association, NYC Chapter is on the front lines every day providing a wide variety of educational and support programs including over 110 monthly support groups, the MedicAlert® + Safe Return® Program, a 24-hour Helpline and Care Consultation services with professional counselors all designed to assist caregivers, family members and persons with dementia develop methods for successfully coping with this progressive and terminal illness. We also train home care workers and others to better care for persons with dementia. A major focus for the Chapter is outreach to the Latino, Chinese, African-American, Russian, LGBT, and Orthodox Jewish communities and other underserved and immigrant populations.

Today's hearing is focused on transportation services, and my testimony will address the Access A Ride program from the perspective of our clients who are living with early stage Alzheimer's disease.

Resources for this population are incredibly limited throughout the City. The NYC Chapter offers programs specifically designed for this population which take place at our midtown Manhattan office. We are grateful for the Access A Ride program because, without it, many of our clients would simply be unable to attend our programs. However, our clients who utilize the Access A Ride program often experience a bumpy ride, if you will forgive the pun.

If I were to categorize the issues our clients are experiencing, the overarching theme would be communication challenges. People living with early stage Alzheimer's are experiencing short term memory loss, changes in their ability to communicate most effectively, and impaired judgment. However, they are able to function independently in myriad ways, and we encourage them to do so. They must, however, be set up for success.

From rude dispatchers and drivers, to errors on pick up times and locations, to late arrivals at destinations, to complete no-shows, our clients are met with difficulties nearly every time they rely on AAR to attend our programs.

The use of unmarked vehicles is another significant stressor for our clients. Despite the fact that early stage individuals are experiencing cognitive impairment, they are generally able to live quite independently, when they are set up for success. Appropriately marked AAR vehicles are easy for them to identify. All too often, however, we find that the vehicles are unmarked. This means that a vulnerable adult is approaching countless unmarked vehicles in an attempt to locate the vehicle that is there to take her home. Imaging what might happen if someone gets in the wrong vehicle.

New York City's population is aging rapidly. As of 2010 there are an estimated 1 million New Yorkers over the age of 65, with that number set to rise in the coming years. With this aging population, New York City must pay specific attention to the social and health concerns of seniors, which include Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

To increase and improve access to New York City's transportation services for older adults and the disabled the Alzheimer's Association recommends the following action items:

- Require and ensure that vehicles clearly display easy-to-read signage at all times.
- Allow vehicles to utilize bus lanes in order to pick up and drop off passengers at their exact intended address.
- Access A Ride staff should be trained to better understand Alzheimer's disease so they can better address the needs of our early stage clients and of those who care for them.

The Alzheimer's Association, New York City Chapter stands ready to provide expert guidance and assistance in considering these matters.

To hear more about the caregiver experience, I refer you to the testimony of our client, and caregiver for her husband, Linbania Jacobson.

Thank you.

**Statement by
Thomas J. Charles,
Vice President - Paratransit Service
MTA New York City Transit
before the
New York City Council
Aging Committee,
Transportation Committee, and
Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse, and Disability
Services Committee
April 23, 2015 - 10:00 a.m.**

Good morning, Chairpersons Chin, Rodriguez, and Cohen and all City Council members who are present. I am Thomas Charles, Vice President of the Paratransit Division within MTA New York City Transit's Department of Buses, which is responsible for Access-A-Ride (AAR) service. The subject of this hearing is billed in the Council hearing notice as, "*Transportation Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities in New York City.*" I, therefore, wish to first establish that while many Access-A-Ride customers are indeed senior citizens, being elderly in and of itself does not qualify an individual for this service.

Paratransit service is provided for people who meet the eligibility criteria set forth in the American Disabilities Act of 1990--those who cannot use public buses or subways for some or all of their trips because of physical or mental disabilities. Federal regulation Title 49, Part 37 details the eligibility rules and the requirements governing how the service must be provided. Age is not a factor in the ADA criteria for eligibility, nor is medical diagnosis. Every Access-A-Ride applicant must undergo an in-person assessment conducted by a medical professional who is thoroughly familiar with their reported medical condition. In addition to a face-to-face interview and application review, each applicant undergoes a functional assessment that is pivotal in determining whether their medical condition prevents the use of regular fixed-route transit service.

Access-A-Ride is a shared-ride, door-to-door, or feeder service that requires customers to make reservations one or two days in advance. NYC Transit administers Access-A-Ride using private contractors, including taxis and car and livery services, to deliver the service. Our paratransit program is the largest in the United States; its operating budget is larger than the full transit system budgets of several mid-size cities, including Denver, San Jose, San Diego, St. Louis, and Milwaukee. Last year's budget for this service was approximately \$465 million; in July 1993 when responsibility for the service was transferred to NYC Transit from NYCDOT, the program budget was approximately \$14 million. There were only 92 vehicles in the fleet when NYC Transit assumed responsibility for the service, whereas there are now more than 2,000 vehicles in service. We currently provide service to 136,802 Access-a-Ride registrants, and on an average weekday there are approximately 125,000-126,000 trip requests. More than 14,000 calls are received by the Access-A-Ride reservation center each weekday.

To maintain the fiscal and operating integrity of this costly, rapidly expanding program for those who rely on it to meet their transportation needs, NYC Transit makes every effort to operate the service efficiently. Since our last testimony before the Council on Access-A-Ride five years ago, we have implemented several successful service-enhancing initiatives that have significantly improved the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of the services we provide. Despite many claims to the contrary, there have been no across-the-board cuts in Access-A-Ride service. Although the cost to operate AAR has significantly decreased due to our efforts to operate the service more efficiently, we continue to operate fully within the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act for the delivery of paratransit service.

At present, 33,291 AAR customers, or 23 percent, do not qualify as fully eligible for the service but are deemed to be conditionally eligible. Conditional eligibility is the category for persons who can use fixed-route service, but who, because of specific impairment-related issues, cannot get to or from a bus stop or subway station. Conditional eligibility categories include distance, stair-restricted, cold weather, and hot weather. Distance is the most common eligibility condition. If an individual's most limiting symptoms prevent them from traveling significantly more than a specific distance (e.g., two blocks or five blocks) to access transit, then they are determined to be conditionally eligible for trips with a specific travel distance.

Feeder service is a component of AAR service for customers with conditional eligibility. It entails the integration of paratransit service with accessible fixed-route service to accommodate customers who need transportation to the originating bus stop or subway station for their trip or those who need transportation from the bus stop or subway station to reach their final destination. This feeder component of Access-A-Ride is facilitated by the significant capital investment that NYC Transit has made in 85 completed ADA-accessible key subway stations, the 15 that are pending, and our 100-percent accessible bus fleet.

To support the conditional eligibility component of Access-A-Ride, a trip-by-trip eligibility process is in place to determine whether door-to-door-service or feeder service is appropriate when a trip is requested. Under trip-by-trip eligibility, some customers may not receive a trip because a nearby accessible bus line will satisfy the customer's transportation from origin to destination without exceeding their functional restrictions. Feeder service is engaged when the distance between the point of origin and the nearest bus stop for an appropriate accessible bus line exceeds the customer's restriction but not so for the destination. In this case, the customer will be connected to the accessible bus fixed-route service which will then complete the trip to their destination. It is important to note that this is a sanctioned approach under the ADA regulations for serving certain paratransit-eligible customers.

When we first introduced feeder service and the trip-by-trip eligibility process, our customers were extremely concerned, but that concern has quelled over time, as we have made a great effort to judiciously implement these relatively new components. As evidence of our deliberate approach, in 2014, we provided approximately 6.4 million trips, of which only 24,816 (.04 percent) were trip-by-trip-eligible and only 46,665 (.07 percent) were feeder service trips.

A growing component of NYC Transit's paratransit service is the use of taxis and car service to deliver AAR service, because it provides the flexibility needed to address same-day service issues via an additional on-demand transportation resource. This effort includes an ongoing pilot program on the use of a prepaid debit card system on regulated taxis. We are continuing to learn from our customers' experiences with car service and taxis and to work with the NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission and our car service contractors to address areas of concern.

Our continuing efforts to improve the quality of AAR include more efficient real-time control of paratransit service using the Automatic Vehicle Location Monitoring (AVLM) system, a Global Positioning Satellite System (GPS) and a wireless data communication network. Mobile data terminals are installed in all of the Access-A-Ride vehicles, giving drivers maps of their routes and real-time information. This gives us the ability to re-route vehicles in response to issues that arise on the day of travel.

We have also added an IVR (Interactive Voice Response) system as an element of our customer service. This provides a feature that has long been desired by AAR customers--the ability to be notified in advance of their vehicle's impending arrival. In addition, customers now have direct access to conduct transactions through their phone or their personal computer. Among the functions offered are advance reservations, trip confirmations, trip cancellations, and trip status. Our recent customer satisfaction survey reports highly favorable ratings for our drivers, the conditions of our vehicles, and our call center operations. The areas that continue to require our attention are on-time performance with respect to both the dedicated and taxi/car service. To address these concerns, we are working with our dedicated contractors to provide additional training for their dispatch workforce, and we are working with our car service providers to maximize the use of GPS technology.

Thank you for providing a forum to discuss NYC Transit's Access-A-Ride service. I am now happy to answer any questions you may have.



New York City Council

Committee on Aging, Committee on Transportation and the Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services

Oversight: How Access-A-Ride Serves the City's Senior Population

Thursday, April 23, 2015

Remarks on behalf of JASA by Molly Krakowski, JASA Director of Legislative Affairs

Good afternoon. My name is Molly Krakowski, and I am Director of Legislative Affairs at JASA. I'd like to thank Council Member Chin, Chair of the City Council Committee on Aging; Council Member Rodriguez, Chair of the Committee on Transportation, and Council Member Cohen, Chair of the Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services for holding this important hearing on Access-A-Ride (AAR), and for allowing me to submit this testimony on behalf of JASA.

In preparing for today's hearing, I searched my computer files for Access-A-Ride, as many issues involving accessible service are not new, and discovered complaints dating back to 1999. Prior to that, they were likely not computerized! I remember attending taskforce meetings relating to this subject in 2003 when I began at JASA, and so here we are today, still looking at AAR and trying to improve the services available to individuals in need of transportation assistance in New York City.

JASA's mission is to sustain and enrich the lives of the aging in the New York metropolitan area so that they can remain in the community with dignity and autonomy. In support of this mission, JASA offers a broad continuum of services to support elders as they age in their homes and communities. Not surprisingly, many of our 45,000 plus clients/members/participants are AAR users or have been eligible for services at some point in their lives.

Over the years, the MTA has made a number of modifications to the AAR service. It is now more complicated to apply, eligibility requirements have shifted, door to door service was replaced with feeder service to fixed transit routes, and a variety of obstacles have been introduced. I will not go into more detail as you are obviously hearing from many experts and riders today.

I would like to share a quick story that highlights a typical AAR experience. Last month I received a call from one of our long-time advocates – a retired teacher and very active

person. She recently fell while getting off a NYC bus, using the lowered platform. She said that she lost her balance and the result was a broken hip. She should have had an application for AAR filled out while in the hospital prior to discharge, and in my mind, her doctor should have been able to clearly state her need for AAR upon return to the community. Neither of these things happened. Once home, she requested an AAR form, filled it out, but informed me that she could not complete it because she is required to submit an updated passport photo along with the application. She was ready to throw out the application, because she had no such photo and no way of getting a photo easily. I offered to come and take the picture for her, but she said that even if she is approved, she fears they will tell her that she lives close enough to 34th street to take the bus. She is afraid of getting on a bus right now, due to her last bus experience.

Why can't we make life a little easier for people in need of this service? Would it be possible to have a DMV style photo booth at the AAR center so that the picture was taken on the spot? Could we allow hospitals to make a determination for patients before discharge to ease their transition and avoid their re-hospitalization?

In December, a number of AAR users who attend the Sundays at JASA program drafted a letter and petition, which was circulated and signed by 164 seniors who attend the courses at John Jay College in Manhattan. They detailed the difficulty getting to the JASA program and particularly in going home. In addition, they drafted a survey to AAR users, which we are still collecting. Some of those participants are here today and plan to testify, but I'd like to highlight a couple of the complaints mentioned in the survey. Nearly all surveys detailed excessive wait times, often resulting in missed appointments and embarrassingly late arrivals at meetings; there were multiple references to frustrating experiences with no-shows and nonsensical routing; and a number of surveys described dangerous behaviors, namely drivers talking and texting on cell-phones while operating the vehicles.

The time has come for a shift in our approach to paratransit. The subway system is still a long way from accessible, but we have more accessible taxis than ever before. JASA supports any effort to expand the City's Taxi Smart Card Program, which offers an alternative to Access-A-Ride to disabled residents of Canarsie/Flatlands and Astoria. This program would save the City money by reducing the expenses related to the AAR van service, decrease the wait time for passengers, and allow people to more freely navigate the City with dignity and autonomy. It is a win-win endeavor that ought to be expanded.

On behalf of the tens of thousands of older New Yorkers that JASA serves annually, I thank you for the opportunity to voice JASA's concerns and suggested changes to the Access-A-Ride program. We hope this hearing leads to significant changes and resolves outstanding issues associated with what is ultimately an extremely valuable service in New York.

Thank you.

**Committee on Transportation
Committee on Aging
Committee on Mental Health & Hygiene, Disabilities &**

HEARING

New York City Council
Thursday, April 23, 2013

Good Afternoon:

My name is *Mela V. McDonald*. Thank you for this opportunity to speak before the committee today. I am representing the Senior Citizen and Health Committee of Community Board 12 in Queens. The members of the committee are from housing developments for senior citizens, moderate income co-ops with high percentages of older adults, community based organizations serving older adults, senior centers, health organizations and community board members.

One of the issues very important to us is Access-A-Ride. We are grateful for this vital para-transit service supported by the City of NY. Some on our committee members have used it for more than 15 years.

Over the course of the past three years customer service has declined tremendously. I'm sure you are aware of problems related to pick-up and return times that have plagued the service since its inception. However another area of concern has to do with the training of drivers for taxi and car services the City now contracts with. Simple acts of courtesy do not always translate culturally and therefore must be taught.

Presently drivers will:

- Drivers will disembark a passenger on the other side of the street from where they were picked up and left to navigate wide boulevards using canes and other traveling devices.
- Drivers do not get out and open the door for an older adult passenger entering or debarking.
- Some do not speak the English language adequately.
- If the driver is from another country they are not attuned to the most basic of traveling courtesies to the extent one could interpret that actions and responses as racist.

We feel training and proper monitoring should be part of the contract and not just contracted as a regular taxi service with no responsibility regarding customer care which is part and partial of services to individuals in need of a services such as Access-A-Rice.

Our committee was fortunate to have Councilman Deneek Miller to meet with us to discuss this need and on his suggestion he thought the MTA which has a state of the art training department would be ideal to train drivers of car and taxi services. It would begin to be a solution to the above issues. We request the Transportation Committee of the Council look into this and see if there is a possibility for this to happen.

Thank You.

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE – JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE
ON AGING AND THE COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH,
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY, ALCOHOLISM, SUBSTANCE ABUSE
AND DISABILITY SERVICES

Oversight hearing – April 23, 2015
on Transportation Services
for Seniors and People with Disabilities in New York City

We represent independent, non-profit organizations or citizen advocates with extensive professional and personal experience representing people with disabilities or older adults who live in New York City or travel here regularly. (See list, page 4.)

We are testifying today because the City and the Council have that rare chance to both reduce costs *and* improve transportation services for people with disabilities and seniors.

Our communities are appearing together—something that happens infrequently—because we are united in suggesting how these cost savings and improvement to Access-A-Ride and city taxi service can be achieved.

Access-A-Ride is expensive and inconvenient. But it doesn't have to be that way. Much of the service could be switched to accessible taxis. The same may be true of other City-funded transportation services, such as those underwritten by DFTA. Jim Weisman of the United Spinal Association is going to speak to this issue in greater detail.

But there is an obstacle to making this switch. The taxi selected by the City—the Nissan NV-200—has significant design flaws that negatively impact the ability of people with disabilities and seniors to ride in them. Amy Paul, a senior advocate, will speak to what some of these problems are.

In its oversight role, the Council should ensure that this historic opportunity for better, cheaper transportation for seniors and people with disabilities is not squandered for another decade. I now turn to Jim and Amy for their comments.

Testimony of Amy Paul on concerns about the Taxi of Tomorrow

What brings us together today is to convey to you, the Committees with oversight and accountability over such matters, a profound consensus that the TLC's current Taxi of Tomorrow program must be totally rethought. As the State Court of Appeals considers a legal challenge to the "Taxi of Tomorrow," questions continue to arise about the vehicle's safety and accessibility.

We urge the City Council to reconsider the wisdom of the TLC's decision to impose a flawed vehicle on the riding public, taxi operators and drivers. We have arrived at this point largely because the TLC chose to ignore the good advice and urgent protestations from the people of the city and the TLC unfortunately continues to ignore grassroots voices.

The TLC promised that the Taxi Of Tomorrow would meet standards of universal accessibility. However, to our surprise and notwithstanding its awareness of our objections, the TLC adopted a wheelchair accessible design that utilizes a Nissan van but merely adds on a retrofit that permits wheelchair users only rear entry/exit to the taxi. This design utilizes a steep ramp in the rear of the vehicles and forces riders to back out of the taxi, without being able to see where they're going when they exit the vehicle. This dangerously exposes wheelchair users to oncoming cars and trucks and cyclists since wheelchair users will actually be in traffic when they enter and exit the vehicle. There are also additional problems with this vehicle for wheelchair users. I refer you to the attached statement on these important issues presented to the City Council and to other statements addressed to the TLC from the *Taxis for All Campaign* for further edification.

As you know, ignored and frustrated in our efforts to persuade the TLC, a lawsuit was brought against the TLC by city wheelchair users. In settling the suit the TLC agreed to provide wheelchair accessible taxis in 50% of its fleet by 2020. The impact of any design flaws will be compounded as the number of accessible taxis on the street increases dramatically in coming years.

For seniors, the Taxi of Tomorrow vehicle is similarly unsafe and inaccessible but for different reasons. Seniors commonly experience frailty, poor balance, skeletal joint difficulties, cognitive challenges, and many other challenges as part of the aging process, each of which presents its

own access barriers to this vehicle.

As one example, the Nissan NV taxi essentially requires the passenger to negotiate two steps for entry and exit- one only four (4) inches wide at its widest and the other a high step up/down from the cab floor. Common sense will question how an older person reliant on a walker or cane will be able to manage this safely?

Add the fact that entering and exiting is effectively devoid of an appropriate grab bar to guide or help balance the older passenger throughout his or her movements and you have a prescription for trouble.

In fact, we are already aware of a 72-year-old senior, who lives independently, who did not notice any grab bar when trying to negotiate the steps out of the vehicle. She reports that she felt she had nothing to hold onto when exiting, lost her balance trying to step out onto the bottom step, and fell from the height of the cab flat onto her face into the street. She not only incurred multiple stitches in her head and face and a stint in the hospital but she sustained an injury that still today threatens her sight with blindness.

Despite the city's stated aspirations to be an 'Age-Friendly city,' this taxi situation will make a mockery of these efforts, along with the moniker.

As you know, New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer raised several of these concerns in a February 19, 2015 letter to the TLC about the safety of the Nissan NV200, whether as a non-accessible vehicle or retrofitted for wheelchair use. Comptroller Stringer offers the following approach to deal with these questions:

"Under Section 6.4 of the Taxi of Tomorrow contract, Mandate to Continually Provide a Competitive Accessible Vehicle, if the City identifies a superior competing accessible vehicle suitable for New York City taxi use, it has the right to notify Nissan no sooner than October 31, 2017 and to approve the vehicle no sooner than October 31, 2018. After the initial notification, the TLC is required to seek authorization to conduct a pilot to test up to ten superior accessible vehicles ... Rather than waiting until 2017, I urge you to negotiate with Nissan the ability to immediately road test other accessible taxi designs that reflect the input of the disability and senior communities. If Nissan is unable to propose alterations or improvements that match or exceed the tested accessible vehicles and to satisfy other conditions established in the contract, the TLC should pursue

all of its available options to select the best possible accessible vehicle for use at the earliest possible date.”

This strong statement from the Comptroller recognizes the importance of the taxi in city life and the essential requirement that it serve all peoples in the city, wheelchair users and seniors alike. We urge this Committee to also appreciate that there are significant financial costs to be borne by the city if the mobility needs of these populations are ignored, in addition to the restraint placed upon quality of life.

The TLC sent an answer to the Comptroller but offered no response to his suggestion. Instead, the TLC stated that they have held stakeholder meetings but are in the process of “including passengers with disabilities.” The TLC also says that it is in the process now of forming an Accessibility Committee.

To my knowledge no individuals who are advocates for seniors have yet been contacted by the TLC for feedback on the vehicle design. Similarly, the TLC has not proactively sought input from wheelchair users (although disability advocates identified one individual for TLC discussions but long after the Nissan vehicle was selected). Representatives of both communities need to be affirmatively, regularly, robustly and respectfully brought into the process of evaluating the taxi design and their feedback must be given due consideration.

Given that these critical issues (and the Taxis For All Campaign’s letter) remain unanswered, we have now joined together to appeal to your Committees to act to protect New Yorkers and help us to adopt a true, universally accessible taxi that can be a model for all cities and towns everywhere.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit these comments. Thank you for considering our views.

Submitted by:

Taxis for All Campaign
LiveOn NY

Amy Paul, former Exec Dir. of FRIA and of the Center for Aging in Place
Ethel Paley, MSW, former Exec. Dir of FRIA
United Spinal Association



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
SCOTT M. STRINGER

February 19, 2015

Meera Joshi
Commissioner
New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission
33 Beaver Street
New York, New York 10004

Dear Commissioner Joshi,

In December 2014, the administration announced its decision to move forward with the Taxi of Tomorrow program. The disability and senior communities have raised serious concerns about the design of the selected vehicle, the Nissan NV200. As you know, we now have a contract before our office related to the Taxi of Tomorrow. We remain deeply troubled that the Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) has failed to fully live up to contract terms to engage the disability community and seniors with mobility issues in the design of the vehicle four times per year, and we call upon the TLC to rectify that situation before any further contracts are submitted to this office.

The Taxi of Tomorrow contract between the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), on behalf of the Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC), with Nissan Taxi Marketing N.A. includes a number of stakeholder consultation provisions related to the design of the NV200. For example, Appendix I contains a requirement that the TLC will schedule meetings four times per year that include taxicab passengers or potential taxicab passengers with an impairment or disability that would affect their ability to use a New York City taxi. It is my understanding that these meetings have not been taking place. Indeed, the disability community has not seen an accessible version of the NV200 since 2013, nor have the disability and senior communities been engaged by the TLC and Nissan in any substantive discussion about the use of a rear entry ramp and other critical design issues.

We have been informed that ambulatory individuals with mobility and balance issues, including many seniors, have encountered significant obstacles while attempting to enter and exit Nissan's NV200 that are currently in service. Some of the concerns include: the use of two steps, rather than a single step, at the entry; the height of the entry step; the placement of handgrips; the weight of the door and difficulty of use; and the location of the seat. It is our understanding that, in at least one instance, an older passenger was seriously injured and stated that the vehicle design was a contributing factor.

Furthermore, as my office has already noted, the rear-entry design in the retrofitted wheelchair-accessible NV200 taxi poses significant concerns for passengers who use wheelchairs or scooters. Requiring the passenger to enter from the back of the vehicle exposes both the driver and the

passenger to potential risks from oncoming traffic during boarding. Moreover, the height of the vehicle floor creates an extremely steep angle for the wheelchair ramp, making it difficult for users in manual wheelchairs to ascend without assistance. Finally, wheelchair users exiting the vehicle must back down the same steep ramp into oncoming traffic without being able to see where they are going.

According to representatives from the disability and senior communities, they have had little, if any, opportunity to provide meaningful input on critical design issues. After a PowerPoint presentation for select members of the disability community in May 2012, a small group of individuals with disabilities was invited to travel to Randall's Island to try the vehicle in June 2013. Participants at the event noted that the community's major design concerns first raised in 2012—the rear entry ramp and the inability to transport more than one passenger—received little attention from the TLC, Nissan, and representatives from Braun, the subcontractor selected to make the vehicles accessible. Instead, the discussion focused on less significant items such as the placement of a cup holder, phone charger, and credit card machine.

At least 50 percent of the yellow taxi fleet, or over 7,000 accessible vehicles, must be on the road by 2020. In light of TLC's announcement that the NV200 will launch on April 20, 2015, there is an urgent need to ensure that a safe, accessible taxi vehicle is available for use by people with disabilities and seniors. Under Section 6.4 of the Taxi of Tomorrow contract, Mandate to Continually Provide a Competitive Accessible Vehicle, if the City identifies a superior competing accessible vehicle suitable for New York City taxi use, it has the right to notify Nissan no sooner than October 31, 2017 and to approve the vehicle no sooner than October 31, 2018. After the initial notification, the TLC is required to seek authorization to conduct a pilot to test up to ten superior accessible vehicles.

The Taxi of Tomorrow has been presented as an important component in the City's strategy for improving transportation in all neighborhoods and for all New Yorkers. Rather than waiting until 2017, I urge you to negotiate with Nissan the ability to immediately road test other accessible taxi designs that reflect the input of the disability and senior communities. If Nissan is unable to propose alterations or improvements that match or exceed the tested accessible vehicles and to satisfy other conditions established in the contract, the TLC should pursue all of its available options to select the best possible accessible vehicle for use at the earliest possible date.

Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,

Scott M. Stringer
New York City Comptroller

cc: First Deputy Mayor Anthony Shorris



VISIONS/Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Testimony for Aging Committee Hearing
"How Access-A-Ride Serves the City's Senior Population"
Thursday April 23, 2015
Testimony provided by Ann DeShazo, LMSW
Director of VISIONS at Selis Manor
adeshazo@visionsvcb.org 646-486-4444 ext. 11

On behalf of VISIONS/Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important service for the City's Seniors.

VISIONS is an innovator of service delivery and we strive to meet the needs of New York City's youth, adults and seniors living with vision loss. VISIONS provides FREE services for low income, multi-disabled and ethnically diverse individuals and families. We focus on assisting our seniors with vision loss with developing and maintaining healthier lifestyles, providing an atmosphere that encourages social connections, ensuring they all receive information in their format of choice, and can access counseling and support. VISIONS provides nutritious hot meals, opportunities for physical activity, education seminars, adapted technology training, photography and sculpture classes, cultural events and intergenerational services. VISIONS also sponsors Blindline® a database and call center that provides information and referrals to resources and connects blind NYC residents with the NY City Council website.

VISIONS is an 88-year old nonprofit organization and provided free services to over 6,000 individuals, giving us direct and extensive experience of how the Access-a-Ride service impacts our clients. More than half of VISIONS clients are over 60 and a majority has low incomes. Through funding from the NYC Department for the Aging and New York City Council Members, VISIONS senior center has over 600 registered participants and a caregiver support program enrollment of over 750.

There is an ongoing and growing need for transportation services for seniors with vision loss. It's important to note that we have hundreds of participants that use Access-a-Ride AAR, and we have VISIONS employees and interns with vision loss that use the AAR service as well. Access-a-Ride is an important service for

people who need to get to work, attend medical appointments and be active participants in their treatment programs. Our main objections to the current AAR program is the unreliability, clients, interns and staff members being stuck trying to get home and often the excessive time spent in the vans traveling to their destinations. Below are just a few quotes from employees and seniors regarding their problems with the AAR services:

- 1.) "You can't rely on them to pick you up on time. There is no way to use GPS to locate the drivers anymore. I experience dispatchers telling me the driver will arrive in 5 or 10 minutes and it's over an hour later."
- 2.) "I think drivers need some formal training on how to work with people who are disabled, especially people with vision loss."
- 3.) "Drivers need to pay more attention to the addresses when picking people up. I live in a complex with multiple buildings and numbers and the drivers are consistently pulling up to the wrong building or entrance complaining that I am not at the right location."
- 4.) "I am an elderly woman and I can't deal with shared rides that are extremely long. I have had many experiences in which drivers pick up people after me and drop them off first making me late to my appointments. It might be helpful if the dispatcher plans the routes better and everyone can get to their destinations as close to their times as possible. One example: I was picked up at 7am from Queens going to VISIONS at Selis Manor at 23rd street in Chelsea and I did not arrive until 11:30am. The class I attend begins at 10:30 and ends at 11:45."
- 5.) One of our intern students shared a very recent story where he was scheduled to be picked up at 4:30 pm from Greenwich (internship) but received a call the same day letting him know that he needed to take an earlier pickup of 3:30 otherwise AAR could not guarantee when he would be picked up or when he would get home.
- 6.) "If I were over an hour late to work every day I would be fired."

Permanent Expansion of the Taxi SmartCard/E-Hail Pilots

While currently a pilot program in just two city neighborhoods, we strongly recommend that the Taxi SmartCard program or something similar should be made permanent and expanded citywide immediately. Allowing eligible Access-A-Ride consumers to use yellow or green taxis and/or for-hire-vehicles for their travel allows for the maximum flexibility to serve an individual's transportation

needs and has proven to offer significant time and cost savings. This program offers a more fully integrated experience enabling seniors with vision loss to hail or e-hail a taxi or car thus avoiding long waits, avoid the need to schedule in advance, and avoid missed pickups by Access-A-Ride vans.

I would like to thank all the city council committee members for allowing me an opportunity to comment on such an important service. I would be happy to answer any questions.



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April 21, 2015 Oversight Hearing on Paratransit and Senior Transportation

I'm Jean Ryan of Disabled In Action and Taxis For ALL Campaign. DIA is a civil rights organization. This hearing is focusing on transportation for people with disabilities and seniors which is not exclusively an overlapping group. When people with disabilities need to get somewhere, we need options because if we are relegated to just one form of transportation, we often have to stay home or we are stranded. So accessible subways, truly accessible buses (including express bus maintenance and driver training and supervision), taxis, shuttle vans, ambulette services, and ambulances are part of the whole picture, even if we might not be talking about all of them today.

Access-A-Ride is mandated to be a provider of emergency transportation for people with disabilities when a state of emergency is declared in NYC. Every day, smaller emergencies happen to individuals with disabilities who use scooters and wheelchairs: our equipment breaks while we are out and we cannot move. Our axles break, wheels and casters fall off, batteries and motors and computerized units fail. It is a scary time and I've had it happen to me at least 6 times over the years. I think just about everyone has. Then our options are very limited.

No one puts a 300 pound wheelchair into a car. How do we get back home? Sometimes the police are helpful but that is not a certainty. Sometimes a person's scooter can be disassembled and put into a taxi or a relative's car. A few people have connections to senior transportation from a senior center or residence. Good Samaritans come to the rescue somehow. My wheelchair motor broke in the bank during a snowstorm 2 months ago. The bank would not let me leave it there overnight. After trying other things, I managed to reach the one accessible taxi driver I had a cellphone number for, convinced him to drive an hour and a half to pick me up, and I had to pay him \$40 dollars to go about 7 blocks.

Instead of all this added stress and uncertainty and getting literally stranded, we propose that Access-A-Ride, which is the only accessible door-to-door service in the city that runs 24 hours a day, be mandated to pick up, on same day notice, wheelchair and scooter users who are stranded because their equipment has just broken down. Access-A-Ride also should be mandated to transport broken wheelchairs with their owners to a repair facility if needed. I have usually been able to transport my inoperative wheelchair but I have been told by staff at Access-A-Ride and the carriers that they do not have to do it. What? That is heartless.

Other Access-A-Ride problems are the Wild West nature and unreliability of the broker car services servicing ambulatory riders and the unusable eligibility and appeals procedures which are forcing people to stay home like in the olden days. What good is it to tell someone that they have to take buses and wait for a bus without any place to sit down when they cannot do that? If this is how we treat our seniors and people with disabilities, we should be ashamed of ourselves. People say they cannot ride the bus and then when they appeal AAR's decision, they get back forms that say they are not using a cane when they actually do and have it with them, all kinds of things like this.

When people get threatened with suspension, the incidents mentioned often contain disputed no-shows, carrier no shows, and legitimate disability related incidents such as illness where we are not to be held responsible for not showing up or canceling late. However, AAR keeps a record of successfully appealed suspensions and holds it over our heads so we appear irresponsible when we

Disabled In Action is a civil rights, non-profit, tax exempt organization

are not doing anything wrong. These successfully appealed records should be stricken from the record so that AAR personnel can no longer use them against us.

Buses, subways, and car services are the backbone of how people get around in the outer boroughs, and yet only the buses are truly accessible. For most people with disabilities, there isn't enough subway accessibility to make it feasible to use it. Without 100% subway and taxi and black car and regular car service accessibility, we will be taking Access-A-Ride for forever. It is not economically sustainable in the long run. We need access!

Jean Ryan
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April 23, 2015

**Testimony of Aditi K. Shah, Esq.
On Behalf of New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
Before the New York City Council's Committees on Mental Health, Developmental
Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services; Aging; and
Transportation**

**Oversight – Transportation Services for Seniors and
People with Disabilities in New York City**

I thank Chairperson Cohen and the Committees on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services; Aging; and Transportation for convening an oversight hearing to examine the City's transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony about the serious problems in Access-A-Ride's system that unjustly prevent qualified individuals with disabilities from using the service.

New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI) is a civil rights law firm with a longstanding disability rights practice that works to ensure equality of opportunity, self-determination, and independence for people with disabilities. We provide advice, direct services, and representation to hundreds of individuals every year. In particular, we assist dozens of clients each year who have had problems getting or maintaining Access-A-Ride services. We also recently filed a federal class action lawsuit against the New York City Transit Authority based on its failures to provide language access services to Access-A-Ride applicants and customers who have limited English proficiency. Access-A-Ride is vital to people with disabilities who rely on it to maintain their independence and function in their daily lives, for example, to attend medical appointments, maintain employment, buy groceries, or visit relatives. Without AAR, individuals are often stuck without any means of traveling.

Two key problems block qualified individuals from accessing Access-A-Ride: (1) flawed and arbitrary eligibility determinations, and (2) an inadequate and illegal eligibility appeals process. These issues are of particular concern as Access-A-Ride's eligibility denial rate has more than doubled in recent years, jumping from 6.5 percent in 2005-2009 to 13.6 percent in 2010-2013.

(1) Flawed Eligibility Determinations

Access-A-Ride makes its eligibility determinations in an arbitrary manner, relying on a pattern of pretexts and an assessment process which ignores the most relevant proof. In recent years, even individuals who were eligible for Access-A-Ride for many years because of chronic

disabilities have undergone routine recertification only to be denied unexpectedly and without justification. While some individuals have successfully challenged Access-A-Ride's denials through Article 78 proceedings, such a piecemeal solution does not reach the heart of the problem. The Access-A-Ride system itself must improve.

Rose Marchese is one example of an individual who was wrongly denied Access-A-Ride services because of its flawed eligibility process. Ms. Marchese has multiple chronic disabilities stemming from approximately 20 documented medical and psychiatric conditions. She received Access-A-Ride services for eight years until 2012, when Access-A-Ride abruptly denied her eligibility. As in prior years, she submitted detailed medical documentation and attended a functional assessment, where—for a total of only ten minutes—Access-A-Ride's psychologist interviewed her. She attempted the physical testing at the assessment, but her disabilities prevented her from completing it. When Access-A-Ride denied her eligibility, Ms. Marchese filed an appeal, in which she provided Access-A-Ride with even more detailed proof from her treating physicians. Yet, at the appeal hearing, the appeal officers paid no attention to Ms. Marchese's documentation, and instead pressed her on irrelevant and inappropriate issues. Access-A-Ride denied Ms. Marchese's appeal, indicating that her doctors' letters were too general and that she "failed" to complete the assessment. Through NYLPI, Ms. Marchese challenged this appeal decision as arbitrary and capricious through an Article 78 proceeding in court—and she won.

Ms. Marchese's case is just one of many in which Access-A-Ride systematically and illegally denied eligibility to qualified individuals through a rote series of excuses. In particular, NYLPI identified through a series of Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) requests the same reasons used repeatedly across multiple clients' files—that the applicants' medical documentation is too general (when in fact it was detailed and specific), and that the applicants "failed to complete the assessment" (when in fact the applicants' disabilities prevent them from completing all of the physical tasks in the assessment) or "exaggerated" their conditions (when in fact the applicants had to rest or lean on the wall as a result of their disabilities).

This pattern of excuses demonstrates a core unfairness underlying Access-A-Ride's eligibility process: Access-A-Ride puts many applicants in a catch-22 at the functional assessment. If they are able to complete the assessment, Access-A-Ride will determine that they have no limitations, and if they are unable to complete it, Access-A-Ride will penalize them by claiming they "failed" to complete it or that they "exaggerated" their conditions. Moreover, no matter how detailed their doctors' letters are, Access-A-Ride often rejects them as too general.

Access-A-Ride's failure to consider proof from applicants' treating physicians is especially troubling and problematic in situations where individuals have 'invisible' disabilities. For example, a psychologist conducting a ten-minute interview of Ms. Marchese cannot offer a better assessment than the psychiatrist who has treated Ms. Marchese for years. As evidenced by FOIL records, Access-A-Ride's psychologists evaluate only the applicants' alertness, mood, and ability to hold a conversation during the interview. Access-A-Ride's assessment does absolutely nothing to elicit how applicants' psychiatric or psychological conditions manifest while on the subway or bus—which is not only the most relevant question, but also something which the applicants' treating professionals can speak to with great detail and credibility. Yet, Access-A-

Ride's records are routinely devoid of any discussion about applicants' medical documentation beyond merely mentioning that the applicant submitted some.

Nor are the functional assessments representative of the real-life challenges that individual face when trying to use the subway or the bus. For example, they are indoors and test isolated tasks without crowded conditions; they fail to account for the combination of barriers that prevent individuals with disabilities from using public transportation. Additionally, for people with invisible physical disabilities such as neurological or orthopedic impairments or chronic pain, the functional assessments fail to capture the range of problems individuals have when trying to use the subway or bus system as a whole. Unfortunately, Access-A-Ride places undue weight on the functional assessments, while ignoring the other credible—and much more relevant—proof that applicants offer.

NYLPI has assisted several clients in pursuing their cases successfully through Article 78 proceedings in court. But surely, individuals should not have to resort to that level of legal advocacy. Individuals should have a fair process with fair standards, and should not be unduly delayed by having to spend months challenging baseless denials without access to transportation in the meanwhile. Access-A-Ride can, and should, do far better in serving our City's seniors and people with disabilities.

(2) Inadequate Eligibility Appeals Process

Compounding the flawed and arbitrary nature of Access-A-Ride's application process is its administrative appeal process, which neither affords individuals the process they are due nor offers a neutral or thorough review. The State Comptroller's 2014 report on Access-A-Ride found that of the 2,000 people who filed administrative appeals each year from 2010 through 2013, Access-A-Ride denied 80 percent of the appeals. Through both assisting clients and filing FOIL requests, NYLPI has uncovered a troubling reality underlying this high statistic.

Access-A-Ride's appeals process is effectively a forum in which the agency reviews its own decisions—it literally decides whether to reverse itself. As I have directly witnessed, in-person hearings are more akin to cross examinations of the appellant than neutral assessments of the facts and records. Hearing officers often focus on questions that simply attempt to reinforce the findings in the challenged eligibility determination or are totally irrelevant to the applicants' eligibility. For example, hearing officers will press appellants on the kinds of treatment they have or have not taken to improve their conditions, rather than focusing on how the appellants' existing conditions prevent their use of public transportation. Written appeals are treated no better. Records NYLPI has received through FOIL requests reveal that, whether appealed in person or in writing, Access-A-Ride disproportionately focuses on minor issues that overshadow the compelling evidence appellants have submitted. To make matters worse, records reveal obvious errors and problematic inconsistencies in the Access-A-Ride eligibility assessment notes. For example, the assessors' interview notes will indicate that an applicant can walk only a certain distance, but AAR's eligibility department will then inexplicably conclude otherwise. NYLPI has brought several of these issues to light through a series of successful Article 78 proceedings, but the systemic nature of the problem remains unaddressed.

Unfortunately, appellants typically lack any real information about the underlying reasons for their eligibility denials. They must file appeals based only on Access-A-Ride's pro forma letters and guess at what it would take to demonstrate their qualification. Access-A-Ride's eligibility letters are generally identical to one another, relying on checked boxes without any individualized details whatsoever. Access-A-Ride fails to offer individuals any direct access to their records, or any notice about how to go about obtaining their file. Currently, individuals must file a FOIL request to get a copy of their records—an option that few individuals are aware of, and which often entails far too lengthy a process to be useful for a time-sensitive administrative appeal. Applicants are left fighting their denials without any way to identify or challenge the underlying flaws.

Recommendations

Although federal regulations promulgated under the Americans with Disabilities Act provide some guidance on how Access-A-Ride must operate its system, the barriers highlighted above demonstrate the need to do more to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to public transportation in New York City. NYLPI recommends that the Council consider four key reforms to address the problems in Access-A-Ride's eligibility and appeals system.

(1) Treating Physician Rule

Access-A-Ride should be required to give primary consideration to the opinions and recommendations of an applicant's treating physician(s). Such a rule has long been in effect under the U.S. Social Security Administration's regulations governing eligibility for social security benefits, explicitly because "these sources are likely to be the medical professionals most able to provide a detailed, longitudinal picture of [one's] medical impairment(s) and may bring a unique perspective to the medical evidence that cannot be obtained from the objective medical findings alone or from reports of individual examinations." See § 404.1527(c)(2).

(2) Automatic Right to Receive Access-Ride Records Before Appeal Hearing

Access-A-Ride should be required to automatically and immediately provide any individual who seeks to file an eligibility appeal a copy of their Access-A-Ride records. Due process requires that individuals have all of the relevant information on which to base their appeals.

(3) Individualized Eligibility and Appeal Determination Letters

Access-A-Ride should be required to individually tailor its eligibility and appeal determination letters. It must replace its current practice of generating nearly identical letters for all applicants by checking boxes with a system that meaningfully informs individuals of Access-A-Ride's basis for denial. Due process requires that individuals be provided this information.

(4) Neutral Decision Maker and Consistent Standards for Eligibility Appeals

Access-A-Ride should create an independent office through which truly impartial decision makers review eligibility appeals. These decision makers should follow a prescribed method to review all relevant information (such as appellants' medical documentation) and to check the eligibility assessment notes for errors or other issues.

* * *

Once again, we thank the Committees on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services; Aging; and Transportation for convening this critical oversight hearing. We appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony on behalf of our clients who need Access-A-Ride services, and who deserve a fair process to obtain such vital services that foster independence and equal access to all areas of our great city.

We hope the issues we have identified above will help inform the Committees' advocacy in the coming months. Please contact Aditi Shah at (212) 244-4664, ext. 308, or ashah@nylpi.org for further information. We welcome the opportunity to discuss the barriers we have identified and the recommendations we have included in this testimony.

New York City Council

Joint Committee Hearing

Committee on Aging, Hon. Margaret S. Chin, Chair

Committee on Transportation, Hon. Ydanis A. Rodriguez, Chair

Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and
Disability Services, Hon. Andrew Cohen, Chair

*Oversight - Transportation Services for Seniors and People
with Disabilities in New York City*

April 23, 2015

LiveOn NY is dedicated to making New York a better place to age. Founded in 1979, with a membership base of more than 100 organizations ranging from individual community-based centers to large multi-service organizations, LiveOn NY is recognized as a leader in aging. LiveOn NY's membership serves over 300,000 older New Yorkers annually and is comprised of organizations providing an array of community based services including transportation, multi-service senior centers, congregate and home-delivered meals, elder abuse, affordable senior housing with services, case management, NORCs and other services intended to support older New Yorkers. LiveOn NY connects resources, advocates for positive change, and builds, supports and fosters innovation. Our goal is to help all New Yorkers age with confidence, grace and vitality.

New York City is in the middle of an "Aging Tsunami." By 2030, New York City's 60+ population will exponentially increase to a projected 1.84 million, a 47% increase from 2000. This age sector will represent 20% of the total population compared with 15.6% in 2000. Further, the population of older adults living with financial insecurity is growing. Because income for older adults remains fixed, or worse, declines, many adults live on a fiscal cliff in a city that already has an extreme need for community based services such as safe and reliable transportation. Investment in transportation services, specifically for older adults, will help save funding in other areas, such as Case Management for which there is a 2000-person waiting list citywide. This transportation also prevents isolation, hospitalization and other costly city-funded services.

In fact, it is very often the transportation services funded through the Department for the Aging (DFTA) Transportation Services Program, and also particularly the transportation programs through the DFTA-funded senior centers, that provides a safety net for older adults, many who are frail and may not qualify for other various transportation programs such as Access-A-Ride. These DFTA funded services allow them to maintain independence and prevent isolation. These transportation programs, which are most often connected to organizations that serve the many needs of older adults in their communities, also know the specific needs of the older adults in

their communities, so are well positioned to provide transportation services designed specifically for the needs and senior population in their area.

Given New York City's rapidly growing 60+ population who will also live longer than previous generations, and what will continue to be a growing need for transportation services, the time is long overdue for a comprehensive city-wide assessment and focused plan concerning the transportation needs for older adults 60 and over.

LiveOn NY thanks Chairwoman Chin, Chairman Rodriguez, Chairman Cohen and committee members for your leadership in recognizing the importance of this issue and for the opportunity to discuss this need for a comprehensive city strategy and funding for transportation for older adults.

LiveOn NY's Recommendations

1. There is currently no comprehensive city-wide needs assessment or plan for the transportation needs and services for older adults 60+. City government should conduct a city-wide needs assessment for adults age 60+, and provide policy, funding and reporting recommendations for now and in the future to support these current and projected needs. This assessment should take into account the need for funding a fully enriched DFTA transportation system that would expand senior center funded programs and senior transportation programs and afford flexibility and adequate funding across the network. These transportation services are crucial in preventing isolation and hospitalization and other costly services. Transportation services for older adults should take into consideration numerous factors including:
 - a. The current and projected senior population and varying need for services in different communities;
 - b. The geographic landscape of different neighborhoods, such that it makes providing services for older adults different community by community. For example, narrow streets vs. wide streets, many hills vs flat neighborhood, etc.;
 - c. Additional needs of older adults. For example, frail elderly older adults that use transportation services often require an escort or assistance to help them enter or exit the vehicle, as well into the home, or office appointment or store. Funding for a person to assist older adults in this manner should be part of a budget for these services. Also, a client who requires the use of the lift in the vehicle has an effect on the number of clients that a transportation provider can fulfill.;
 - d. There needs to be flexibility for programs to design services based on the needs of the community they service, since populations, vehicles, needs and geographic locations vary across the city; and

- e. Other factors that reflect the needs of the older adult community as well as the needs of transportation providers to safely and reliably serve older adults.
2. Increased and adequate funding must be provided to serve the current and unmet need for transportation services across the city. DFTA recently released a Concept Paper regarding funding for Transportation-only programs. While the vision is on target, a review of how to best implement a fully enriched DFTA transportation system would include expansion of senior center funded programs affording flexibility and adequate funding across the network in addition to transportation only services, so that all programs can receive funding to serve this growing and vital need.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue. LiveOn NY looks forward to working with City Council and City Agencies to build upon a robust, community-based transportation network of services that best serve older adults. For further information, contact Bobbie Sackman, Director of Public Policy 212-398-6565x226 or bsackman@liveon-ny.org

Testimony
of
Linbania Jacobson
City Council Hearing
Transportation Services for Seniors
and
People with Disabilities in New York City

Committee on Aging
Committee on Transportation
Committee on Mental Health,
Developmental Disability, Alcoholism,
Substance Abuse and Disability Services

Council Chambers
City Hall
Manhattan
April 23, 2015

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share with you my recent experiences with Access-A-Ride. My name is Linbania Jacobson, and for 55 years I have been married to Emanuel Jacobson. We have been using the Access-A-Ride service from April 4, 2012 to the present. Let me say up front this is a wonderful service that we are very fortunate to have. However, improvements are sorely needed and my purpose here today is to illustrate some major glitches in the service.

Since October 2002, my now 85-year old husband has been suffering with Alzheimer's disease. And has also developed Parkinson disease, is incontinent and wheelchair bound due to a blockage in his legs. Our life on Manhattan's Upper West Side, and his living at home would not be possible without the AAR transportation service. Neither would his frequent visits to multiple physicians, keeping monthly dental appointments, attending weekly rehearsals with the Unforgettables. Which is a choral group composed of people with dementia and their caregivers, nor participating in special museum programs designed for this population. These are important activities that greatly contribute to keeping his brain active.

I'm trying with all the strength and energy in my 78-year-old body to keep him out of a nursing home. Physically and mentally his 24-hour

care is a strenuous job that leaves me exhausted at the end of the day; emotionally it's a labor of love. I rely on available New York services to keep us together at home, living-out our remaining years as best we can. So to us these AAR issues are the difference between being apart, and my caring for him at home with the limited help of a four-hours-a-day home health aide.

Let me tell how a typically day goes. If we have a medical appointment at 1 pm, I call AAR two-days in advance at 7 am to schedule a pick-up for 11:30 am, to travel from west 89 Street to west 168 Street. The alarm goes off at 6:30 am: it takes one hour to wake him up. Another two hours to get him out of his electric hospital bed, bathed and dressed. One-and-half-hours to eat breakfast, and another 30 minutes to get him into his coat so we can sit and wait in the building lobby for pick-up by AAR. Although our instructions were to be waiting outside, even when the weather could be bitter cold, snowing, sleet, raining, or of extreme heat and humidity. If we are lucky, the van might arrive within the 30-minute scheduled pick-up time frame. If our van is coming from Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, or even from downtown, the wait is going to be longer, well past the 30-minute window. But we don't know that. Because after waiting the required 30 minutes when I call the dispatcher I'm told: ***"the car is on its way to you."*** When I ask about the van's location, the answer is often: ***"I can't tell you that, because the driver doesn't have a GPS."*** And so we sit and wait an undetermined length of time.

After being picked up the driver may have another passenger, who has also been waiting a long time, or one who may not be immediately available, as was the case recently. At the direction of the dispatcher, we waited 30-minutes in the van for a passenger who did not show. When we arrive late for his appointment, the physician also sees us later in the day. And I must re-schedule the return trip home because it was based on a pick-up time frame that's no longer applicable. When I call the dispatcher for a new pick up time, I'm told to call when we are ready to leave. So we must now wait at least another hour-to-an-hour and a half for our ride home, longer if the driver has another pick-up or drop off that may be in another borough. You will hear more about this later on.

It could take up to 6 or 7 hours before we return to our home after an appointment. And worst of all, my husband has been sitting in his waste, not eaten food or drunk any fluids because the car can arrive at any minute. And if we have gone to the bathroom we could miss our ride, and neither eating nor drinking are allowed in the van.

In the limited time I have here today I would like to describe a few events that have happened to us between last December and March of this year. If it was once, well I understand, things happen. But when it happens repeatedly, then it's a major systems problem.

Early last December my husband was banned from using taxi authorizations. When I called Eligibility to inquire why, I was told: "***You have abused the system with excessive rides, you are to use shared rides like everyone else.***" And then I heard: **BANG!** as the person hung up the telephone.

I immediately appealed to the office of City Council member Helen Rosenthal and met with a member of her staff who called AAR and was told the same thing. When asked how excessive rides are determined and defined and by whom, no answer was forthcoming. The fact is, in the AAR handbook there is no criteria defining excessive rides, nor a statement of how this decision is made, nor by whom. Furthermore, no one called or wrote us a letter forewarning us of the impending suspension. The staffer was also told that my husband would receive a letter explaining all. As of yesterday, April 22, 2015, four months later, the letter has yet to arrive. Meanwhile the first time we've heard from AAR, was early April, apologizing for "... **the inconvenience that this has caused...**" regarding a "**...missed connection ...**" that occurred back in March. The driver claimed he was at the pick up point, although I was standing in front of it as I spoke with the dispatcher, and the van was not there.

But my story continues. The staffer also emailed a deputy mayor, and in late December, we received a follow-up telephone call from the district council member's office informing us that taxi authorizations were to be restored in January. In early February after using one authorization, they were again suspended. My calls to Customer Services resulted in a conversation informing me that we were abusing the system and would

be suspended for a month and a half. When asked how we had abused the system, the response was that more than 75% of trips taken were with taxis. No time period was mentioned. According to my records, and I keep excellent documentation of all trips taken in the month of January, 61% were with taxis, not 75%.

On one very memorable occasion in early January, after being picked up an hour late on East 54 Street between 3rd and Lexington Avenues, and dropping-off the first passenger on East 97 street, we were taken on a tour of The East Bronx, to East Tremont Avenue and 179 street to drop-off the second passenger. We returned to our home in Manhattan's West Side at 7 pm. Did that Manhattan-Bronx-Manhattan route make any sense to you? I'm not saying that we should have been dropped off first; we shouldn't have been in that vehicle at all, a second van should have been used. Yet, as recently as last week, three vans were scheduled to pick up three couples at the exact same location and time, and all three were travelling to the Upper West Side within 20 blocks of each other.

On multiple occasions the van either goes to the 619 Lexington Avenue address and not to the handicap entrance that is listed as the pick-up point, or drives right pass us on East 54 Street without slowing down. The driver then calls the dispatcher to say we were a "**no show.**" In the meantime there are multiple witnesses, including members of the clergy, who have seen otherwise. This happens every three out of four times of our weekly visits to this location. And we have absolutely no other recourse to get home because we don't have a taxi authorization.

As previously noted, vans come from Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and Staten Island to pick us up in Manhattan. If traffic, weather conditions and construction were taken into account pick-up would not be a problem, but they are not, and that becomes the excuse for extreme lateness.

However, I must also say that many drivers are dedicated professional people who are truly concerned with passenger safety and wellbeing. But they do as their dispatcher directs them. To illustrate this point, after our van was already late to take us home, the time of drop-off he reported to his dispatcher was earlier than the time I noted on my cell

phone. When I pointed out this discrepancy, his reply was: ***"That's what I was told to do."***

Furthermore, some drivers do not listen to passenger suggestions for using the best time saving route to a given destination. They insist on relying on their GPS, if they have one. However, the device does not adjust for traffic, construction, weather or other delaying conditions. For example, a driver insisted on crossing from Manhattan's west side to the east side on 57th street, not on 65th street as suggested. We were stuck in traffic for an additional 20 minutes. Sometimes the rider knows best and should be listened to. Now, there might be rules about using certain routes that I'm unaware of, and don't know about since it's not stated in the handbook.

On a more pleasant note, recently while travelling downtown the driver noted that he was to go and pick up a rider on East 51 Street before dropping us off on East 54th street. Fortunately, he saw the lack of wisdom in that routing and told the dispatcher since he was already proceeding downtown he would first drop us off on 54 Street and then proceed to 51street. Hurray for the driver who thinks!

In closing I want to reiterate that AAR is a great service. My goal here today is to point out issues requiring improvement and hope they can be implemented for the benefit of all riders.

Suggested Improvements

1. Assign drivers fixed routes so they can become familiar with streets, traffic patterns and customers who frequent the same addresses. This would contribute greatly to completing trips on time.
2. Allow greater time between pick-ups. Currently they are spaced too closely together.
3. Group riders being picked up at the same location who are travelling to the same neighborhood. Let them know in advance of this time saving convenience. Grouping of

passengers might be possible at museums and medical appointments.

4. Provide an App riders can download to smart phones, so they can track the location of their vehicles. This will greatly reduce frequent phone calls to dispatchers inquiring about location of the car.
5. Provide an AAR payment card similar to the Metro card used on subways and buses. This would be both a time saver and provide an accurate record of passenger pick-up and drop-off time.
6. State very clearly AAR's policy on use of taxi authorizations. This policy should include definitions and criteria of excessive use during a specific time period. Who decides how suspensions are made, how to appeal this decision, how are lengths of suspensions arrived at, and how and when warnings will be issued.
7. Grant greater flexibility in scheduling end of medical and dental appointment pick-up times. One never knows when a visit to a healthcare provider will be completed. The wait of over an hour for a re-scheduled pick up time is horrific to a frail, elderly, incontinent, hungry, tired person.
8. Provide drivers with clear descriptions of handicap pick up sites when they are not located at the street address listed on the manifest.
9. Consider granting automatic taxi authorizations for short trips within the same borough. It could greatly contribute to lessening wait time.
10. Update the trip reservation software to include taxi authorizations for wheelchairs. Presently, the block in the system must be over ridden by a supervisor.

Again, I want to thank you for the time you have given me to listen to my concerns. I look forward to seeing improvements in the AAR service.

ACCESS-A-RIDE Hearing
April 23, 2015

I want to thank the committees for sponsoring this hearing and offering me the opportunity to express my concerns regarding Access-A-Ride.

My name is Aileex Cox. On Sundays, I am one of the 164 seniors who attend "Sundays at JASA", from September to May, at John Jay College in Manhattan. Many of us use Access-A-Ride to attend this college-level continuing education program. Some of us use walkers, motorized wheelchairs and canes. In my own case, using public transportation has become very difficult and risky because I have spinal stenosis and osteoarthritis. I am 84 years old and am anxious to maintain quality of life as I grow older.

I include here a recent letter sent to the MTA regarding our frustration using Access-A-Ride and signed by attendees at Sundays at JASA.

Let me underscore some of the issues:

Waiting

While we are told to be prepared to wait thirty minutes, we frequently wait for more than an hour. Sometimes Access-A-Ride doesn't come at all and we are left stranded and helpless. Access-A-Ride does not call and notify us if there is a delay or a problem. On one occasion, I was called at home to be told that my trip was cancelled while I am standing outside on the street waiting for a return trip. Many of us use cell phones to obtain help. But is there an awareness that we are older and disabled and need help? I wonder.

Dispatcher Communication to Drivers

Dispatcher communication to drivers is poor to non-existent. Drivers are not informed of major delays, special events, blocked streets, traffic tie-ups or bridge and tunnel closings.

Poor Route Planning -- Driver Training

Many drivers are not familiar with the best routes and are unfamiliar with alternative routes. Driving in New York City is a real challenge. Drivers need training to travel efficiently to prevent late arrivals and excessively long rides.

Ride Sharing and Route Planning

Recently, I made my weekly reservation to attend Sundays at JASA and was told to be ready at 8 AM on Middle Neck Road in Long Island. I was picked up and then driven to Co-op City in the Bronx. Then, we did a second pick-up on the Upper Westside of Manhattan. After two hours of riding, arrived at John Jay College at 10 AM -- physically

drained. When the dispatcher determines routes, can the condition of a disabled senior be taken under consideration? Ride-sharing requires wise, common sense judgments. Dispatchers need training!

Proper Vehicle I.D.

Access-A-Ride contracts with private car services which have no signs on them to identify them as Access-A-Ride cars. This causes problems for us -- the passengers.

While we certainly depend on and appreciate the existence of Access-A-Ride, we need and deserve just and considerate treatment in our aging years. Therefore, we look forward to improved communication and coordination between the passengers and Access-A-Ride and to improvement in services.

Thank you, Councilmembers Chin, Rodriguez and Cohen.

Sincerely,
Aileen Cox



Dear Mr. Walker:

We are a community of 164 seniors who attend "Sundays at JASA" from September to May at John Jay College in Manhattan. Classes begin at 9:00 am and end by 3:30 pm each Sunday. Many of us use Access-A-Ride to attend this college-level, continuing education program for seniors. Some of us use walkers, wheelchairs, canes, or motorized chairs. We are all approved by Access-A-Ride due to various disabilities.

Many of us are experiencing great difficulty getting to the JASA program and particularly in going home. Complaints to Access-A-Ride result in an email apology but no improvement in services. As seniors who are seeking to improve the quality of life in our declining years, we feel we deserve just and considerate treatment from MTA Paratransit, and we are asking for your help to correct this situation.

Below are a few issues we have encountered in the past year with Access-A-Ride:

1. **Waiting Time**

We frequently wait from more than one hour to several hours. Sometimes, Access-A-Ride doesn't come at all. Calls to Access-A-Ride can result in leaving us helpless and stranded.

2. **Dispatcher Communication to Drivers**

Dispatch communication to the drivers is extremely poor. Dispatch is not informing drivers of major delays, special events, blocked streets, traffic tie-ups, bridge and tunnel closings, and alternate routes to take to their destinations.

3. **Poor Route Planning – Driver Training**

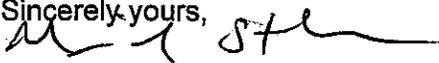
While we understand that it is sometimes necessary to drive out of the way for others to be picked up, we also find that drivers are not familiar with the best routes. This causes us to arrive late. Many drivers are unfamiliar with alternate routes. Drivers need training to learn the best routes to travel around New York City.

4. **Proper Vehicle Identification**

Access-A-Ride contracts with private car services; frequently those cars are black and have no signs on them. We are unable to identify them as Access-A-Ride cars.

We respectfully request a meeting with you to discuss how to improve communication and logistic route planning services.

Sincerely yours,


Michael Stoller
Chief, Government and External Relations


Sara Tornay
Program Director, Sundays at JASA

See attached

212 273 5200
247 w. 37 st. ny, ny 10018
www.jasa.org



We, the undersigned members of Sundays at JASA, are in support of the letter about Access-A-Ride:

Dorothy Krosick

Noel Wyman

Evelyn Greenkey

Bank

Sheila Helen

Roni Caplan

Hollace Fander

Bess Kormanik

Lesly Reiss

George Robinson

Joan Klein

John Gray

Min Brack

Therese Neel

Peter Hill

Elaine Goodman

Robt. Rouby

Chylla Rosenberg

Penny Cohen

Sylvia O'Hickey

Clare Judy Krongold

Dorothy Hallman

Pauline Weiss

Barbara Gordon

Paul Hunt (CARD URIST)

Clare Betwein

Wesley

Anette Weiss

Barmel Kuperman

Phyllis Linker

Jan O'Hay

Mel Starr

Frances Garrard

EWID COEN

Ella S Dupon

Helen Rosenbaum

212 273 5200
247 w. 37 st. ny, ny 10018
www.jasa.org



We, the undersigned members of Sundays at JASA, are in support of the letter about Access-A-Ride:

<u>Gene Oster</u>	<u>Hydmy</u>
<u>I Beaton</u>	<u>Shela Rosenbray</u>
<u>Thunpape</u>	<u>Roslyn Fisher</u>
<u>Lillian Loh</u>	<u>Muel Schuch</u>
<u>James Stein</u>	<u>Carole Jager</u>
<u>Diane Greenoff</u>	<u>Jane</u>
<u>Aileen Cox</u>	<u>Leslie D. Og-</u>
<u>Jane Marshall</u>	<u>Walt Peft</u>
<u>Alba</u>	<u>Victoria Sammello</u>
<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>Thano Katz</u>
<u>Carole Grad</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Norma Mosheim</u>	<u>Saul Bregman</u>
<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>Rebecca Santaseo</u>
<u>Ruth Bresler</u>	<u>Sherry McCann</u>
<u>Sunny Miller</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>P.M. Siebert</u>	<u>Pauline Weiss</u>
<u>Martha Plato</u>	<u>Xere Sturboyer</u>
<u>Catherine Bouchard</u>	

212 273 5200
247 w. 37 st. ny, ny 10018
www.jasa.org



We, the undersigned members of Sundays at JASA, are in support of the letter about Access-A-Ride:

Ann Green
Robert E Miller
Margie Monaca

A series of horizontal lines for additional signatures, consisting of 15 lines.

Good morning. My name is Anthony Setteducate and I have been using the Access-A-Ride program since 2009 when a surgical procedure left me with a damaged femoral nerve.

Let me start by stating that I believe Access-A-Ride is a great program that has made it possible for me and others with disabilities to be able to lead full lives in this city. That is, when it works properly. This is not always the case.

Access-A-Ride is neither a privilege nor a benefit. It is a necessity that the New York City Transit system is obligated to provide in accordance with Federal law. Many in the transit system – administrators, reservationists, drivers and other staff – do not appear to understand this. They seem to feel that the service they provide is out of the goodness of their hearts. We are expected to have full knowledge of our destination even though we may never have been there before, stand outside in all sorts of weather waiting up to 30 minutes for a vehicle that may or may not show up on time. Drivers that arrive early express annoyance when we are not ready before the appointed time. Some refuse to get out of the car or bus to help a passenger. You seem to forget that we are the ones needing assistance, not you.

When a ride fails to show up within the allotted 30 minutes and I call in to report this I am often left on hold for an extended period while someone tries to find out where the driver is. Remember, I am standing in the street holding a cell phone while leaning on my cane. Often the response is, "Did you call the car service?" No, I didn't. Isn't that your job? This can take up to an additional 20 minutes, assuring me that I will be late for my appointment. Should I be offered a taxi voucher in lieu of the promised ride I am forced to lay out extra money that I didn't budget for. Reimbursement from Access-A-Ride can take up to two months. For someone living on a monthly Social Security check that means I have to do without food or other necessities.

That brings me to the cost of an Access-A-Ride trip. In every city seniors and people with disabilities are accorded a reduced fare on the transit system. Why is it that Access-A-Ride passengers are being discriminated against and forced to pay the full fare? Many of us have limited income. I, for one, have to consider the cost every time I arrange for an Access-A-Ride trip.

Testimony of Lesly Reiss

My name is Lesly Reiss and I've been using Access A Ride for 6 years. I would like to thank Chairpersons Chin, Rodriguez and Cohen and your respective Committees for hosting today's hearing.

The discomforts and disabilities of advanced age have been ameliorated to an extent by the services of Access A Ride. My life has changed, but Access A Ride has helped me to navigate these changes for the most part. I can now travel to doctors' appointments and take advanced education classes knowing that Access A Ride will get me there and get me home. For this I am eternally grateful. However, there are some difficulties that I have encountered that need some attention.

Almost all of these problems have been with the broker service, not the MTA. First of all the scheduling of trips often is quite puzzling. Last week I had a doctor's appointment in Brooklyn that should have taken 15 minutes to get to by car. We went from Prospect Heights where I live to Brooklyn Heights - an opposite direction from the doctor's office- and ended up 30 minutes late for my appointment. I was in the car for 65 minutes. Another time I was picked up on the Upper West Side, taken to East Harlem, and then to my home in Brooklyn - more than 1 1/2 hours in the car. Who does the scheduling? It often seems quite random and careless.

Several times when a pick-up has been late I call the broker and am told the wrong information; i.e., "he'll be there in 7 minutes". I call after 20 more minutes and am told "he's 5 blocks away". After a 30-minute wait I call and get a taxi authorization. Why do they not tell the truth?

Some broker drivers speak poor English and it is hard to communicate with them. On 2 occasions we were almost in the Holland Tunnel, going to New Jersey, when we should have been heading uptown. Twice drivers came more than 1/2 hour early to my home for a pick-up and told me they would leave me if I didn't come out then. On 2 other occasions whenever the driver stopped for red lights he opened his door and spit- at every stop!!! I suggest that the broker drivers receive some training about how to behave, and also not be hired if they do not speak English well enough to be understood.

Please consider these criticisms. They are made in the spirit of trying to improve Access A Ride for all of us elderly and disabled patrons. Thank you again for hearing our concerns.



**United Spinal
Association**

www.unitedspinal.org

Transportation Options For People with Disabilities in NYC

April 23, 2015

Prepared for the NYC Council

by James Weisman, EVP and General Counsel

United Spinal Association is a membership organization of over 40,000 people throughout the United States who have spinal cord injuries and diseases or care about and for those who do. United Spinal has been in the forefront of the accessible transportation movement. United Spinal, then called Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association (EPVA), sued MTA in 1979 to make buses and subways accessible, sued New York City to get curb ramps and the Taxi and Limousine Commission to make taxis accessible. United Spinal is a founding member of a Taxis For All Campaign 19 years ago. United Spinal crafted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transportation provisions as well as its implementing regulations. United Spinal appreciates this opportunity to address the transportation problems of people with mobility impairments who live in and visit NYC.

Maximizing access to mass transit vehicles and facilities and taxis will permit Access A Ride to enhance its services while reducing its costs.

Current accessible transportation options for people with disabilities, especially those who use wheelchairs and scooters, include a 100% accessible bus system and less than 20% of subway stations. Access A Ride is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act to provide transportation to City residents unable to use the accessible mass transit system or who are attempting to reach still inaccessible locations.

In 1979, Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association (EPVA), now called United Spinal Association, sued MTA to make buses and subways accessible. In 1984, the case was settled for key subway station access (approximately 100 by 2020) out of 466 stations, bus access and paratransit (Access A Ride). The Settlement Agreement was the model for the ADA transportation requirements. MTA chose to limit rail access, forcing people with mobility impairments to use Access A Ride for longer and for inter-borough trips. The Access A Ride budget has increased dramatically as seniors and people with disabilities live longer and work longer than any preceding generation. The ADA requires MTA to meet Access A Ride demand. MTA has eliminated inter-borough bus routes as well, forcing wheelchair users to use Access A Ride for inter-borough travel. Access A Ride's budget is currently \$600 million annually. Its cost per ride exceeds \$60.

Clearly, MTA should be making more stations accessible. What even the most liberal politicians thought was enough access for people with disabilities in 1984 is not enough in 2015. Making more stations accessible would reduce paratransit demand and keep elderly and disabled people mobile.

Perhaps the most significant way to reduce Access A Ride demand and costs is to require all for-hire vehicles in NYC to be accessible. The disability community's historic settlement with Mayor Bloomberg to make 13,000-15,000 yellow cabs accessible by 2020, coupled with 20% of the new green borough taxis, will, for the first time, give New York City Transit (NYCT) the ability to shed some wheelchair using passenger load by using the green and yellow accessible cabs and providing swipe cards billed to Access A Ride. Trips could be provided spontaneously, as opposed to on an advance reservation basis, and at far less cost to taxpayers than \$60 per ride.

Moreover, Medicaid currently spends over \$200 million annually taking poor wheelchair users on medical trips. These healthcare dollars could actually be used to provide healthcare if expensive Medicaid ambulettes were phased out in favor of accessible, for-hire vehicles.

Currently Uber, a transportation network company (TNC) does not require any of its drivers to operate accessible vehicles. However, the Uber business model threatens accessible taxi service for wheelchair users.

Three years ago the state legislature passed a bill permitting the sale of 2,000 new medallions, all of which had to be affixed to accessible taxis. Twenty percent of the green boro taxis were also required to be accessible by that legislation. 400 medallions have been sold for accessible yellow cabs. Medallion values have dropped 25% and Uber vehicles have begun dominating the for hire vehicle industry. None of their vehicles are accessible and new medallions are not expected to be sold because of their substantial drop in value.

While the Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) is required by the Settlement Agreement to ensure 50% taxi accessibility by 2020, without the sale of 1600 more medallions, this will have to be accomplished through vehicle replacement.

The DeBlasio administration created a 30 cent fare increase to be committed to a fund to pay for the accessible features and their maintenance on new taxis, and the state legislation provided \$15,000 per vehicle to the accessible green borough taxis to be taken from the new medallion sale money.

Uber's disruption of the market using inaccessible driver-owned vehicles not only slows access to the yellow cab system for wheelchair users but threatens it altogether. Uber must be made to provide accessible service like all other carriers.

The Bloomberg administration committed the City and its medallion owners to purchasing Nissan's NV-200 a van style vehicle prior to settling law suit and committing to 50 % yellow cab access. Result is a taxi that does not meet the needs of wheelchair users despite its expensive retrofit. Others in the Taxi For All Campaign have submitted testimony about problems with this vehicle and United Spinal, a member of the Campaign, agrees with their comments and will not repeat them here.



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Good morning Chair Rodriguez, Chair Cohen and Chair Chin. On behalf of the Committee for Taxi Safety we want to thank the Council for hosting this oversight hearing on accessibility in New York City transport. The Committee is comprised of licensed New York City taxi agents managing approximately twenty percent (20%) of the yellow medallion vehicles in New York City and through those agents, more than five thousand drivers who drive tens of thousands of passengers a day.

We want to first thank Council Member Corey Johnson for introducing legislation last week that would provide 100% accessibility for all licensed TLC vehicles. We also believe that all major modes of transportation overseen by the City of New York should be accessible. True accessibility requires that the entire transportation industry regulated by the City be accessible. Having only a few segments of the transportation industry be held to this standard not only fails to achieve the goal of true accessibility, but is also arbitrary.

Making this requirement universal with a quicker turnover time would ensure that all New Yorkers receive the same service and through all vehicles. This is a basic civil right: a person who uses a wheelchair should have the opportunity for the same service as anyone else and should be able to take advantage of all the innovations in the automotive world. By broadening the accessibility mandate to all forms of transportation in New York City, we can rank ourselves amongst cities like London, Washington DC and Montreal that have already implemented superior accessible requirements.

Thank you again for allowing us the opportunity to speak on this issue today. Please feel free to use us as a resource when developing policy around accessibility.

FOR THE RECORD

HELLO My name is Tom Connor and I am the Chairman of the senior advisory council at the Center on the Square Center. Many of our members use access a ride and I have been asked to let you know how they feel about it.. have been coming to hearings on this program for years and yet nothing changes, Recently Scott Stringer conducted a survey when he was Manhattan Borough president that confirmed the poor services provided but did not lead to a reform of the program

Some examples

A few constant complaints are that the pick up time could be 2 hours before the requested pick up time. There are many poor routing problems for example being picked up at 8 Th. street in Manhattan then driven to Brooklyn then back to Manhattan with 2 more pick ups then on to Queens, Some times it takes almost 2 hours to complete a trip that should take about 35 minutes ,

Going home the pick up sometimes does not show come on time but can come 1 or 2 hours late Council member Chin has witnessed this at our senior center Folks are permitted after a certain amount of time to take a taxi but they must lay out the money and are frequently not reimbursed for several weeks a financial hardship, In summary I am saying Access a Ride is a mess and everyone who uses it knows it Ask any user of this service/.

What is to be done, I have a few suggestions but first some background questions

It seems that access a ride has become a big business There are numerous vans provided by different companies, Are you aware who actually owns these companies and how much money is paid to these owners. Are they all paid the same rate per trip or are they paid by the millage and or the number of people being transported in 1 van? How are the contracts awarded and for how long ?

Is there any competition in the awarding of a contract? Who monitors the service to determine its compliance with the RFP?

Basically the user is faced with a provider that operates as a monopoly. The user is assigned to a van by a central office. He is a captive customer. If unhappy with one carrier he cannot ask for another. The provider is aware of this and has no incentive to improve the service or to act on complaints. There is no real need to listen to the complaints of the riders. That is why nothing changes. You can have years of hearing and complaints and there is no change. Why?

The service can be discriminatory for poor users. When the van does not show up after a specified time the client is told he can use a taxi or car service. But he must pay the cost and then wait sometime weeks for reimbursement. Many people do not have the money and simply have to wait 1 or 2 hours to be picked up. Many senior centers close at 5pm and when the van is late and the wait stretches for 2 hours the senior has to wait on the street despite the weather. More attention has to be paid to solving this problem.

Finally why does the user have to pay \$2.50 per ride when he would pay \$1.25 on the bus or subway, There shouldn't be this difference in price. I hope that this hearing will lead to some improvement in this service. It is so important to so many that it must be fixed. Thank you.

Tom Connor 39 Fifth Ave NYC NY
Tomconnornyc@gmail.com

April 23, 2015

Kristina Rhoades
Mobility Ventures LLC
105 N. Niles Avenue
South Bend, IN
46617

Attn:

New York City Council
Committee on Transportation
Committee on Aging
Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance
Abuse and Disability Services

**Testimony for April 23, 2015 Oversight Hearing on Transportation Services
for Seniors and People with Disabilities in New York City.**

Good morning, Chairs Rodriguez, Chin, and Cohen, and members of the New York City Council Transportation, Aging and Mental Health Committees. I would like to start by thanking you for hosting this oversight hearing and for helping to bring attention to the transportation issues effecting wheelchair users across the city, as well as the city's Access-A-Ride program, which serves a crucial need for many New Yorkers.

My name is Kristina Rhoades. I am a T-5 paraplegic with a complete spinal cord injury, and as you can see, I use a manual wheelchair to get around. I got hurt when I was 10 months old and am very comfortable with my body and the life I live. Aside from being a motivational speaker, consultant, mother and wife, I am a marketing professional for the first-ever, purpose-built wheelchair accessible vehicle, the Mobility Ventures MV-1.

Mobility Ventures created the MV-1 to meet the ADA's transportation requirements, and the MV-1 provides a safe and comfortable option for those who use wheelchairs. The Mobility Ventures company is owned by the long time military vehicle manufacturer AM General, and MV-1's are manufactured at a 100% union operated plant in Indiana, and are also approved under the US DOT's Buy-America requirements.

As the MV-1 features a side door wheelchair ramp, I'm able to wheel into the spacious interior, with the option to ride in my wheelchair in the passenger position, or to transfer into one of the existing seats. As someone who values their

independence, I'm proud to say that the MV-1 allows me to get around on my own – and on my own terms, without requiring me to sacrifice personal safety or dignity.

There are over 60,000 individuals who use wheelchairs, scooters, and other mobility aids that live in the five boroughs. As someone who travels regularly for business across America and relies on public transportation and taxis to get around the cities I visit, I must say that New York City has definitely come a long way with its recent 50% accessible by 2020 taxi ruling. And the MTA's Access-A-Ride fleet of about 2,000 vehicles has operated for many years to provide affordable transportation to city residents as well. But from a first person point of view, it's still very hard to hail wheelchair accessible taxis in the city, and they can be scary once found.

Most of NYC's wheelchair accessible taxis feature rear entry ramps, which means that they are originally minivans that have been converted by aftermarket companies to have ramps and other modifications to accommodate wheelchair users. When I enter these rear-entry vehicles, I am forced to enter the vehicle through the middle of the street, and then ride in the trunk of the vehicle with my wheelchair secured on a sloped angle, often with a spare tire right next to me. Once in the taxis, the heavy ramp also gets folded up behind me in the trunk, and anyone I might be travelling with – including my young daughter, who's only three – would have to sit separately from me in the middle or front seats. I'm not only separated from anyone I may be with, as well as my luggage, but I'm also forced to rely on the taxi operator to handle my credit card and pay my taxi fare. To top it off, the bumpers of these converted rear-entry minivans are usually removed in order to make room for the ramp, which also raises safety concerns in fast paced city traffic. Here I am, riding with no real structural support in the "crumple zone" of a minivan – the area that is actually designed to absorb all the impact of rear-end collision. And keep in mind that this is, by far, the most common type of collision, occurring every 8 seconds in the U.S.

Wheelchair accessible conversion minivans and rear-entry vehicles first came about in the 1990's. From a first hand perspective, two major advancements have happened since then. The first is the concept of a side-entry wheelchair accessible vehicle, which allows passengers to enter the vehicle from a curb, rather than the middle of the street. The second, and most important, is the advancement that vehicles like the MV-1 are finally being purpose built for wheelchair users, along with being side-entry.

The MV-1 is not only a game-changer for the industry, but it is a life-changer for someone like me and wheelchair users everywhere. In my personal experience as a mother and a consumer, I proudly drive an MV-1. I can wheel right inside and sit with my family, rather than alone in the trunk of an unsafe vehicle. It has truly given me and my family the freedom and independence that we deserve, as well as the security of unprecedented, unmatched safety and reliability.

I can proudly say that MV-1's make up about one-fifth of New York City's Access-a-Ride fleet, and from speaking with friends and colleagues across the country, it's clear that wheelchair users prefer side entry vehicles when they have a choice in transportation.

As the City continues to discuss the options and methods for providing transportation services for seniors, those with disabilities and wheelchair users, I urge you to consider the need for safe and responsible transportation featuring side-entry access.

Thank you again for your time and for helping to shed light on this often overlooked aspect of public transportation.

Kristina Rhoades
Mobility Ventures

NEW YORK IS A DISABLED UNFRIENDLY CITY

I am a 75-year old disabled woman, living alone in Manhattan, living in and contributing to the City for 45 years.

I am currently fighting to have continued transportation in NYC by taxi reimbursed by Access-a-Ride. Frequently it feels as if accomplishing this is just too hard to try.

The Taxi & Limousine Commission has already brought out what is to be a universal "taxi of tomorrow" on the streets, a model that most disabled people can enter only if she is pulled or pushed because the entrance to the car is too high. I have tried but trying to enter requires absurd hands-on 'assistance' which by itself is dangerous. I have extreme difficulty in moving my hips and I can't raise my legs high enough. It is extremely difficult for anyone with bad knees, a bad back, or short people to go through this extremely high 'taxi of tomorrow' entrance..

As a disabled person living alone and without any family in the State, I need to mail bills, to weigh something at the post office, and to obtain light bulbs, a clock, a lamp, anti-biotic cream for a burn or cash and it may well feel hopeless at the time. I may need something immediately and it may take days. Friendly visitors, sometimes available by City services, do not handle money. I may need envelopes, cartridges, a birthday card. Recently my telephone and computer did not work because a wire in the basement was short. I didn't have a telephone to make the necessary call. It took a day and a half to get it fixed and I had no means of communication. Life is a constant challenge for anyone disabled.

I'm not preying on City Services or demanding more than the next person as was suggested by Mr. Ken Stewart of Access-a-Ride.. I'm trying to keep going, to prevent the need for more expensive services for myself and others..

In 2011 I tried to use the regular Access -a-Ride, and missed a medical appointment which could not be rescheduled until the following week. Upon inquiry I was told to expect the Access-A-Ride ride to be ½ hr -1 ½ hrs late. I had waited an hour for the 2011 appt. and was told it would be at least another half hour. If I waited that amount of time for possibly late vans, my meetings or appts. would be over before I started out. I resorted to the Access-a-Ride taxi program which I had heard announced with great fanfare by then Mayor Bloomberg. After 3-5 months I was blocked from making additional appts. for taxis by Access- A-Ride with no explanation, even to the office of Christine Quinn, my then Councilwoman..

Three years later, in winter 2015 in conversations with Access-A- Ride about resuming the taxi part of their program I was told that I had to use the regular Access-a-Ride transport at least half of the time, but not exactly how much, or how much a month. I would be told when I had used it too much. They would let me know when I had used the taxi program too much.

I have instead used my own money and street taxis to get around Manhattan and to one M.D. appt at Montefiore in the Bronx. That's a lot of money---\$600-\$800.a ~~week~~^{month}. I would not have been able to get to City Hall to testify today if I had depended on the regular Access-A-Ride system of appointments and vehicles.

This past Tuesday, at the Manhattan Borough President's Office and the meeting of her Senior Advisory Board, the Access-a-Ride representative told the group, that according to the Americans for Disability Act it is the program's responsibility to provide transportation that is "**comparable**" to that of the able-bodied, **not equal** to it. The program decides what is comparable and is in Federal compliance. In other words, in New York City it is a clearly stated policy that the disabled are to receive '**the estimation of comparable' service to the able-bodied, and not equal to it with regard to accessibility**, set by people who know nothing about the life of chronic disability,

Let's be clear. Using taxis is much cheaper than the average Access-A-Ride ride (he said **\$50.-\$60.average Access-A-Ride ride compared to \$35. my usual top taxi limit in Manhattan**) and that regular Access-a-Ride use of taxis, constitutes a personal service to which I am not entitled.. Yes, it's true I continue to need banking, postal services, and to replace furnishing items that collapse and I go twice a week to physical therapy. I may even need to go to the drug store for an emergency (my delivering pharmacy is not open on week-ends.) If he (Ken Stewart, Director of Community Relations of Access-A-Ride) thinks taxi service for these things is being a diva,(notice the inference of 'welfare queen',) he knows nothing about the life of a chronically disabled person, and all the extra time and planning it takes to do anything in addition to the time and effort necessary just to take care of oneself.. There is no way the life of the chronically disabled person can come close to the ease of the life of an able-bodied person. Able-bodied people take walking for granted. I did, too. It is mostly older women who stop to help a disabled person.

According to Mr. Stewart, **Access-a-Ride has no responsibility to use the cheaper service or to save the CITY money.**

For me to use Access-a-Ride appointments and vehicles means not to go anyplace, or to wait in the cold, standing for a long time which I cannot always physically do, with uncertainty if I will get a vehicle, let alone reach my destination. There is no place to sit in my lobby or outside the apt. building.

I am part of a core group working on CEDAW (the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women) and the others wanted a meeting in Brooklyn next week except they knew I could and would not pay for a taxi to another Borough. I am still trying to find a free meeting place reasonably near my apt.

I insist on 'living' and I pay the taxis cash before I pay all my bills. I am now on the lists of collection agencies for places, especially medical co-pays and physical therapy deductibles, where I am still unpaid. As a disabled person I need to have my checking and credit card accts. in the same bank so I can call to have money transferred back and

forth and I cannot take advantage of lower interests available at other banks. Not enough remains in my checking account for all the bills each month.. I would not have any problems if allowed to use the Access-a-Ride system of taxis, using their approved confirmation and receipt system. I have tried to continue to live my life. I would like to see my family more than twice a year. But I can't traverse bus or train stations or airports. I need to go by car and I don't have room to put them up here. This is it. This is the luxurious life I lead

The program has determined that my way of life goes beyond the essentials which they fund and that it is preferable that I be a shut-in. It is preferable that I have an aide which is more expensive to the City and that I use a transportation system that costs the City and the MTA of the State more money and is worse, less reliable and less flexible service for me, the client..

Why did the City and State start the taxi-reimbursed system if they did not want the disabled to have the flexibility thus provided? Where are the results of the study they promised for the pilot taxi program.?

At least I now know why Commissioner Lillian Barrios Paoli, then of the Dept. of the Aging, (Prior to 2012) did not understand why Access-A-Ride did not expand the cheaper taxi system when asked at a public meeting I attended..

Submitted by:
ELLEN GORMAN
151 W. 16th St., #4B
New York, New York, 10011
April 23, 2015

Tel. 212-691-8583
ellgore@verizon.net

The Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Association
www.hknanyc.org

April 23, 2015

New York City Council
Committee on Aging
Committee on Transportation
Committee on Mental Health, et al

Honored Committee Members:

The MTA has come up with a popular APP for bus riders. This easy APP tells passengers where their bus is and when it will arrive at their stop. Such an APP for Access-A-Ride passengers would be a great public boon.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathleen McGee Treat, Chair
Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Association
kathleentreat123@gmail.com

Martin Treat, President
CHEKPEDS
(Clinton Hell's Kitchen Coalition for Pedestrian Safety)
www.CHEKPEDS.com
mtreat09@yahoo.com

April 23, 2015

Dear Members of the Committees:

Thank you all for this opportunity.

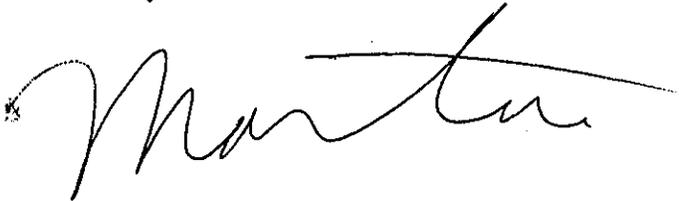
There are two issues I would like to bring to your attention:

This past winter broke records for snowfall. Many of us depend on New York's great 'kneeling' buses. The Department of Sanitation MUST clear the snow at the stops. Otherwise the snow prevents the bus ramps and elevators from working – which makes it impossible to board the bus.

We also depend on curb cuts. A great many are in need of repair. Others are too steep for wheelchairs to climb.

Correcting these two problems would be an enormous help to all of us New Yorkers in wheelchairs.

Thank you.



A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Martin Treat".

→ buses

Testimony of Nissan North America Before the New York City Council Joint Committees on
Aging, Transportation, and Mental Health, Developmental Disability Alcoholism, Drug Abuse
and Disability Services

April 23, 2015

Oversight:
Transportation Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities in New York City

Submitted by:
Michael E. McMahon
Kevin Fullington
On Behalf of Nissan North America
Herrick, Feinstein LLP
2 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10016
(212) 592-1400

Thank you for the opportunity to address this very important topic of transportation for seniors and people with disabilities in the City of New York.

As you know, Nissan won the contract to provide the City the Taxi of Tomorrow - a vehicle designed and produced in consultation with the City and its designated stakeholders. I would like to highlight for the Council today the many features that our NV200 and NV200 Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle, or "WAV", possess and how their continued roll-out will better serve the elderly and disabled. At the same time, as the DeBlasio Administration strives to make the entire taxi fleet 50% mobility accessible, the Nissan vehicle provides the best opportunity to meet that goal as well as one of the stated goals of this joint committee: Expanding the use of taxis to provide better service but also to keep the costs of the Access-A-Ride program from exploding further. The Taxi of Tomorrow - Nissan's NV200 and NV200 WAV are keys for success on both points.

Let me then highlight the features of our vehicles and touch on some comparisons to other vehicles trying to enter the market.

- Every Nissan vehicle has braille enhanced signage for the sight impaired and extra floor space for companion animals;
- Every Nissan vehicle has a hearing loop and additional lighting and seat piping with contrasting colors;
- The NV200 is the only vehicle that is manufactured on the assembly line "conversion ready" with factory installed steel partitions allowing safe use for accessible and non-

accessible users. It comes equipped with six factory-installed air bags including those in the partition itself. It also has the support of the Nissan dealerships and technical service.

- The rear entry feature provides the best approach to access given the context of the City of New York and at the same time, as the wheelchair rider is located in virtually the same location as the non-wheelchair riders, the accessible rider is treated with dignity and the same experience as other riders. The NV200WAV also meets all ADA requirements.
- Regarding emissions and fuel economy, the NV200 WAV operates at near 100% improvement over its competition. Its fuel costs over 150,000 miles are nearly half of its competitors.

I have attached detailed diagrams and fact sheets in order to give this Joint Committee a better picture of all these positive aspects of the NV200 and NV200WAV.

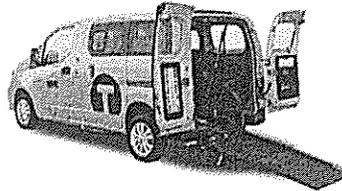
I believe it is quite clear that our vehicles will be an effective tool in the City's dual track efforts of providing better taxi service to the elderly and disabled and reining in the ballooning costs of Access-a-Ride.

Thank you!



NEW YORK
WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE TAXI

FACT SHEET



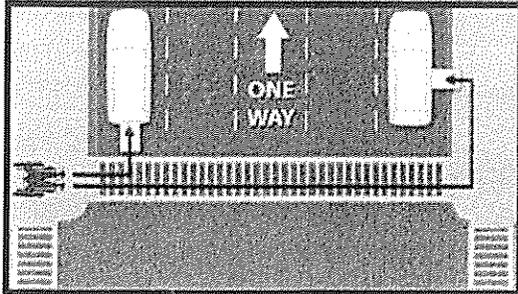
NV200 WAV

MV-1 SE WAV

		NV200 WAV	MV-1 SE WAV	
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	City Fuel Economy (mpg) ¹	24	13	
	City GHG Emissions (g/mi) ¹	376	702	
	EPA/CARB Climate Rating (10=Best) ¹	6	2	
	Fuel Consumption @ 150K Miles (gal) ²	6,350	11,550	
	GHG Emissions @ 150K Miles (metric tons) ³	56	105	
	Vehicle Footprint on City Streets (ft) ⁴	93	113	
	EPA Exhaust Emissions Standard ¹	LEV-II ULEV	Bin 4	
TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP	Fuel Cost @ 150K Miles (\$3.00/gal) ²	\$19,100	\$34,700	
	Powertrain Warranty (yrs/miles) ⁶	3/150,000	3/36,000	
	Fluids	Engine Oil (qt) ⁷	4.5	6.0
		Antifreeze (qt) ⁷	8.0	17.4
		AC Refrigerant (lbs) ⁷	0.99	1.75
WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY	Deployment ⁸	Rear	Side	
	Manual Ramp System	Width (in) ⁹	30	30
		Length (in) ⁹	60	61.7
		Angle (degrees) ⁹	10.2	13.7
		WC Passenger Position	Mid-cabin	Mid-cabin or Co-pilot
	Pickup on One-Way Street	Both sides	Right side	
SAFETY & SECURITY	NHTSA FMVSS Compliant ⁵	Yes	Yes	
	ADA Compliant ⁴	Yes	Yes	
	WC Restraints ⁹	Q'Straint, Integrated	Q'Straint	
	Total Airbags ¹⁰	6	1	
	Passenger Compartment Airbags ¹⁰	4	0	
VEHICLE PERFORMANCE	Ground Clearance (in) ⁸	7	6	
	Turning Radius (ft) ¹¹	36.7	42.8	
	Drive System ¹²	FWD	RWD	
	Transmission ¹¹	CVT	4-Speed	

1) WHY REAR RAMP TAXIS IN NEW YORK?

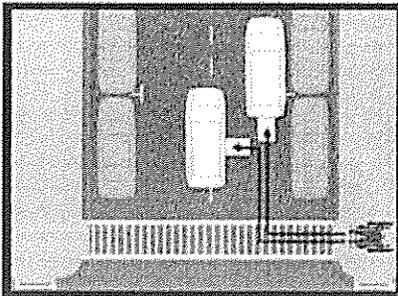
Currently, more than 580 WAVs are in service as yellow cabs in Manhattan, and more than 970 WAVs are operating in the outer borough green cab fleets; virtually all of them feature rear wheelchair access/egress. Some of the reasons the New York WAV market is so heavily oriented toward rear ramp functionality include:



There are a large number of one-way streets in New York. When the ramp is located in the rear of the WAV, wheelchair passengers are given the same freedoms as any other taxi user.

In a side-entry WAV, where the ramp is located on the right side of the vehicle, wheelchair users are forced to either cross the street or enter the vehicle in traffic.

The graphic to the left shows the practical implications of these two WAV configurations.



Because curb access is so limited on the streets of New York, "double parked" taxis are an unfortunate reality for passengers.

For wheelchair users, these conditions can present an even more pronounced safety risk.

As shown to the left, a rear ramp WAV presents a more compact footprint in the situations when the driver chooses to deploy the ramp in traffic.

ENDNOTE	SOURCE
1	http://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/Find.do?action=sbs&id=35854&id=35140
2	$(\text{EPA City Unrd Adj mpg}/1) * 150,000 = \text{gallons consumed}$
3	$(\text{EPA City CO2 Rnd Adj} * 150,000) / 1000000 = \text{metric tons}$
4	http://www.nissancommercialvehicles.com/nv200-taxi?tool=global.nv200-taxi.link http://mv-1.us/commercial/
5	$(\text{Fuel gallons consumed @ 150,000 miles}) * \$3.00/\text{gal}$
6	http://www.nissancommercialvehicles.com/nv200-taxi?tool=global.nv200-taxi.link http://mv-1.us/se-standard-class/
7	Nissan NV200 Taxi Service Manual, 9-2 MV-1 Service Manual, 227
8	http://www.braunability.com/commercial/files/product-info/brochure/500762-NV200-Taxi-Brochure.pdf http://mv-1.us/commercial/
9	http://www.braunability.com/commercial/files/product-info/brochure/500762-NV200-Taxi-Brochure.pdf MV-1 Service Manual, 84
10	Nissan NV200 Taxi Owner's Manual, 1-39 MV-1 Service Manual, 90
11	http://www.nissancommercialvehicles.com/media/taxi/2014-Nissan-NV200-Taxi-Brochure.pdf http://mv-1.us/commercial/
12	http://www.nissancommercialvehicles.com/nv200-taxi?tool=global.nv200-taxi.link http://mv-1.us/powertrain/

NV200 Taxi



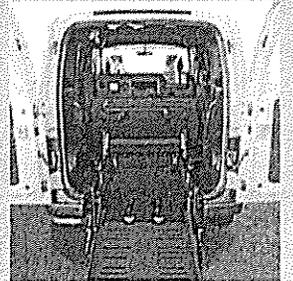
We get it; downtime is expensive. That's why BraunAbility specializes in designing accessible vehicles that are up to the challenge of tough, real-world use in your fleet.

BraunAbility has a proven track record of producing economical and dependable commercial vehicles designed to keep you up and running day after day, year after year. We strive to maintain an exterior OEM look for consistency with other NV200 taxis in your fleet.

Contact your BraunAbility dealer today to see how the wheelchair accessible NV200 Taxi can help you maintain ADA compliance... and your bottom line.

REAR-ENTRY DESIGN

The bi-fold ramp unfolds to accommodate one wheelchair user.

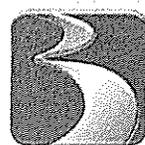


FOLD-FLAT RAMP

Allows plenty of luggage room in the rear of vehicle when ramp is not in use.



Commercial Vehicles



BraunAbility

Life is a Moving Experience™

NV200 Taxi

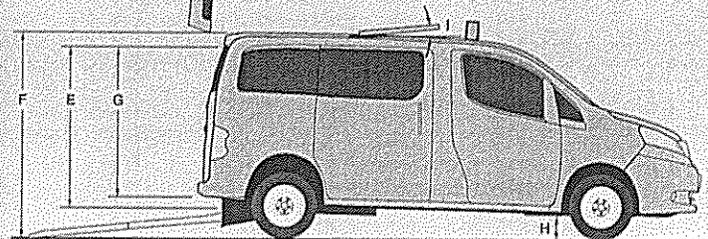
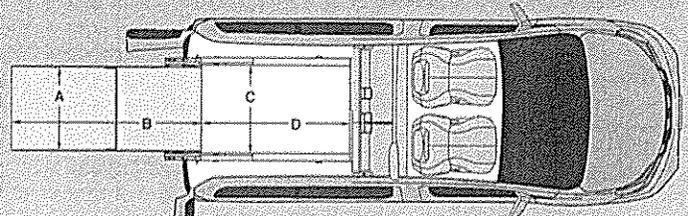
Standard Features

- 58-3/4" door opening height
- 31" wide floor
- 30" wide ramp
- Fold-flat ramp
- FMVSS compliant
- ADA ramp lighting
- Integrated restraint system
- Side-impact airbags



2015-2016

A	Usable ramp width	30
B	Ramp length	60
C	Lowered floor width	31
D	Lowered floor length	51
E	Entrance height	58-3/4
F	Overall height	75-1/2
G	Wheelchair location interior height	57
H	Ground clearance at skid plate	7
I	Ramp slope	10.2°



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All illustrations, descriptions and specifications in this brochure are based on the latest product information at the time of publication. BraunAbility reserves the right to make changes at any time without notice. © 2014 The Braun Corporation 500762

NV200

WAV



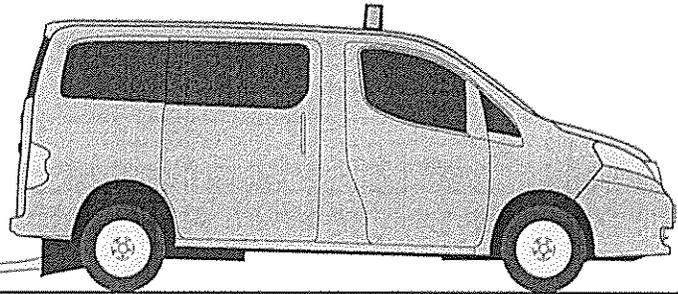
ENGINEERED TO MEET AND EXCEED ADA REQUIREMENTS



RAMP DOOR HEIGHT: 58 3/4"

ADA REFERENCE: 51192.25(c)

For vehicles of 22 ft in length or less, the overhead clearance between the top of the door opening and the raised platform, or the highest point of a ramp is a minimum of 56 inches.



DESIGN LOAD: 800 POUNDS

ADA REFERENCE: 51192.23(c)(1)

Ramps 30 inches or longer shall support a load of 600 pounds, placed at the centroid of the ramp distributed over an area of 26 inches, with a safety factor of at least 3 based on the ultimate strength of the material.



RAMP SLOPE: 1:5.6 (10.2°)

ADA REFERENCE: 51192.23(c)(5)

Ramps shall have the least slope practicable and shall not exceed 1:4 when deployed to ground level.



LOCATION & SIZE: 31" x 51"

ADA REFERENCE: 51192.25(d)(2)

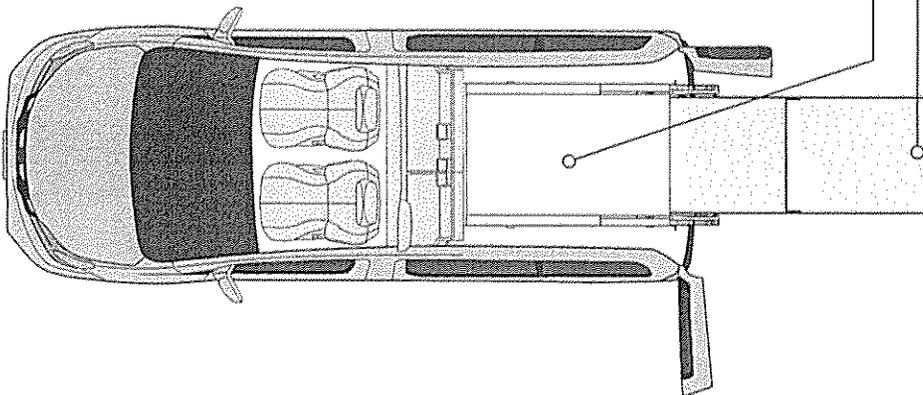
The securement system shall be placed as near to the accessible entrance as practicable and shall have a clear floor area of 30 inches by 48 inches.



RAMP SURFACE: 30" WIDE WITH 2" SIDE RAILS

ADA REFERENCE: 51192.23(c)(2)

The ramp surface shall be continuous and slip resistant; shall not have protrusions from the surface greater than a quarter-inch high; shall have a clear width of 30 inches; and shall accommodate both four-wheel and three-wheel mobility aids.



Testimony: Paratransit Services in New York City

New York City Transit—the State authority that operates the mass transit system in New York City—has an obligation to provide paratransit services to individuals with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act stipulates that these services must be comparable to the response time and level of service given to non-disabled passengers. I can tell you today that based on the complaints received by my office related to the Access-A-Ride program, New York City Transit has failed to live up to that obligation.

Providing reliable on-time paratransit services is undoubtedly a complicated enterprise; providing this service while keeping costs low is even more challenging. And yet this is exactly what we must do. The city's senior population is expected to grow by 30 percent in the next twenty years, and the number of New Yorkers with mobility constraints is also likely to grow. New York City must find a way to improve paratransit services at the very time when more people will be using them. The alternative is a city in which a large segment of the population is effectively cut off from venturing outside.

I know that many of my constituents are fed up with the existing Access-A-Ride program. My office has received 66 complaints about this service since I took office in January of 2014. My sense is that many others have similar issues but have become so used to them, so downtrodden, that they no longer take the trouble to report them.

Late pickups are the most common issue. One constituent, who had to wait an hour later than their scheduled pickup time on both ends of the same trip, suggested that the program be renamed “Stress-A-Ride.” I remember early last year a senior visited my office and had to wait more than five hours for Access-A-Ride to pick her up. I was about to drive her home myself when Access-A-Ride finally arrived.

Constituents tell me that dispatchers are often rude and provide false information about when they can expect to be picked up. Some are dissatisfied with the Broker Services and instead insist on using Access-A-Ride vans. It is clear that the contractors hired by New York City Transit for these services must be held to a higher standard. This is especially the case of the Broker Services, which are expected to handle an increasing number of paratransit trips. The two Broker Services contractors, Medical Transportation Management and Corporate Transportation Group must be held accountable. If their level of service is not improved I insist that Transit not extend their contracts.

I want to commend New York City Transit for taking steps to control the costs of the Access-A-Ride program, and for instituting some promising new services. Particularly I think that the Taxi Debit Card Program shows great potential to offset the high cost of operating paratransit buses—trips on these buses currently cost \$56 a ride. The Debit Card Program, a partnership with the TLC, allows customers to hail a taxi within Manhattan for the cost of a MetroCard swipe. They can hail a cab on the street or request a taxi through the TLC's Accessible Dispatch program. They can also use an app called Wheels on Wheels, which also shows great promise.

Now that Green taxis are serving the outer boroughs, it is time to offer this service to eligible individuals in Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx. I am pleased that, according to the TLC website, the Commission is working to create an accessible dispatch program. Meanwhile, I would like to learn the number of

Access-A-Ride customers using this service today and the cost of the program. The cost is said to be lower than Access-A-Ride vans, but it would be useful to see exactly what the cost savings on a per-trip basis are. Of course, the city must move to increase the percentage of the taxi fleet that is wheelchair accessible. Currently only two percent of all yellow taxis are accessible.

I would also like to suggest that customers are able to use a smartphone app that would allow them to see the location of their Access-A-Ride van, to know how many stops it must make before reaching them, and to report issues related to late-pickups or other problems quickly and easily.

Finally, I want to commend the MTA and New York City Transit for working to make more of the subway system accessible for those with disabilities. The MTA is expected to meet its goal of making 100 “key stations” accessible by 2020. The 2015-2019 Capital Plan includes \$561 million for new elevators at 13 stations and another \$436 million to replace 46 elevators and 35 escalators. I hope that accessibility remains a priority in the coming years.

Thank you.



Testimony of Michael O’Loughlin
on behalf of
CAB RIDERS UNITED
before the
New York City Council Committee on Transportation
Jointly with the Committee on Aging, and the Committee on Mental Health, Developmental
Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services
Oversight Hearing on
Transportation Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities in New York City

April 23, 2015

Good morning. My name is Michael O’Loughlin. I speak today on behalf of Cab Riders United, a voice for the 1.2 million daily passengers who pay for transportation in New York City’s taxicabs and other for-hire vehicles and for the countless other New Yorkers and New York businesses that rely on taxicab and for-hire vehicle service to keep the city moving every day.

Our mission is to improve the safety, quality and environmental impact of the city’s taxi and for-hire vehicle industry. We strongly support New York City continuing its progress toward the goal of 100% accessible for-hire vehicles, and doing so in a way that integrates and advances the *multiple values of improving safety, quality of service for all, and environmental impact.*

We appreciate the Council turning a spotlight on this important topic today. Although Cab Riders United is focused on the taxi and for-hire vehicle sector, we hope some of what we have to say will also help inform your thinking about Access-A-Ride and DFTA transportation services.

SAFETY

As this City Council and the de Blasio Administration strive to fulfill the Vision Zero goal of eliminating traffic-related injuries and deaths, policy decisions must prioritize protecting the safety of everyone inside the vehicle, both passengers and drivers, whether ambulatory or in a wheelchair, and also the vulnerable New Yorkers outside the vehicle with whom we share our congested streets.

NHTSA and FMVSS Standards vs After-Market Modifications for Use as a Taxi

National Highway Transportation Administration (NHTSA) and Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) – every vehicle licensed as a taxi or for-hire vehicle should meet or exceed these basic crash and safety standards, including as they are “hacked up” for use as a taxi. Frankly, most taxis in use today, including but not limited to many of

the WAV taxis on our streets, do not meet these standards. The partition in most taxis is added after-market, has not been crash-tested for safety, alters the structural integrity of the vehicle, can impair the functioning of airbags (if present), and can create serious facial impact risks for passengers.

Decades ago, policymakers hastily rushed to require installation of partitions to address a perceived crisis. Even at the time, a TLC commissioner warned that the hastily adopted rule would be “a gift to New York’s plastic surgeons. Hospital emergency rooms have been filled with passengers paying the price ever since. The ER staff call it “partition face.”

As we move toward the shared goal of increasing transportation access for all New Yorkers, we need to remember this lesson and act thoughtfully in a way that continues progress without abandoning other shared goals.

Additional After-Market Modifications for Wheelchair Accessibility

In addition to the “business as usual” hazards created when a vehicle is hacked up for use as a taxi, insertion of a rigid after-market partition in the middle of a vehicle being the most conspicuous, Cab Riders United is concerned that New York City currently lacks proper standards to ensure that additional modifications for wheelchair accessibility are done safely. We have heard of instances where low-cost/low-quality conversions potentially endanger all passengers through use of non-OEM (original equipment manufacturer) seats or belts, use of flammable materials for the modified floor, and even failure to include an escape latch for use by disabled passengers in the event of an emergency. We have also heard of instances where low-cost/low-quality conversions fail to properly adhere to ADA standards, for example regarding the lighting for the ramp. Cab Riders United believes these issues require further investigation. If the facts prove out, then regulation or legislation is clearly called for to set appropriate safety standards for converted WAV taxis.

Passenger Airbags (Absent in MV-1, Present in NV200 WAV)

While both the NV200 WAV taxi and the MV-1 taxi appear to meet the minimal NHTSA/FMVSS standards, based on all the evidence we have seen the MV-1 entirely lacks passenger airbags, a remarkable omission in the year 2015.

The MV-1, which is increasingly used for Access-a-Ride and is available for use as a taxi although to our knowledge no operator is currently doing so, comes equipped with a driver side airbag – only a driver side airbag. The MV-1 does not include an airbag for passengers in either the front or rear spaces.

The NV200 WAV includes six airbags total, including four in the passenger compartment and one for each of the front seats.

Rear-Entry vs Side-Entry

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission permits the use of both rear-entry and side-entry WAV taxis. Currently, almost all the WAV taxis in use in New York City are rear-entry.

We have heard sincere advocates for both alternatives make arguments based on convenience and safety. While there may be honest disagreements and strongly heartfelt emotions about this matter, we think it's important to keep the discussion fact-based.

Meera Joshi, the Chair of the TLC recently stated that in the ten years since WAV taxis were introduced in New York, she knows of no crashes that occurred while a passenger in a wheelchair was entering or exiting a vehicle. The sample size will grow as more WAV taxis enter service, but that data needs to be part of the record and to help guide the policymaking.

Safety of New Yorkers Outside the Vehicle

As strong supporters of Vision Zero, Cab Riders United believes the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists outside the vehicle must be considered as well as the safety of passengers and drivers.

Dooring - as our friends at Transportation Alternatives regularly point out, data shows that "dooring" is a leading cause of injury to bicyclists in New York. Year after year, dooring results in a steady toll of bicyclist deaths as well as thousands of bicyclist injuries. No wonder then, that the Executive Director of Transportation Alternatives highlighted these issues in 2013 testimony to the TLC regarding proposed new taxi design standards to improve safety:

"• Sliding Doors: For over fifteen years, T.A. has worked to raise awareness of "dooring," when someone riding a bike is hit by an opening car door. This is one of the most common causes of bicycle crashes; for instance, a 2010 Manhattan Borough President survey of 11 Manhattan bike lanes during rush hours documented 77 incidents over just two days . Since taxis make frequent stops with frequent passenger pick-ups and drop-offs, they are particularly problematic for bike riders. The new taxi design includes sliding doors to prevent collisions with bicyclists and other vehicles. While the city has undertaken anti-dooring education campaigns in the past, sliding doors are probably the best preventative measure to reduce the risk of dooring-related injuries and fatalities.

• Exit Lights: The new taxi design proposal also includes rear external lights to indicate when a passenger is exiting. These lights alert people on bikes and other approaching traffic when someone is disembarking from a cab. This will create a safer, more

predictable environment for bicyclists, taxi drivers and taxi passengers, and will also help reduce conflicts between cabs and people riding bikes.”

<https://www.transalt.org/news/testimony/7219>

Most of the WAV taxis on the streets of New York incorporate sliding doors. The NV200 WAV, specifically designed for use as a taxi in the congested streets of New York City, incorporates sliding doors and rear warning lights to help prevent collisions when passengers enter and exit the vehicle. Regrettably, the MV-1 does not currently incorporate either of these important safety features.

Pedestrian Impact Standards – Cab Riders United takes the position that in a congested, pedestrian-rich street environment like New York City, vehicles used as taxis and for-hire vehicles should meet the highest possible global standards for pedestrian safety.

The European New Car Assessment Program (Euro NCAP), and some other national and regional NCAPs such as Japan's, test and rate new cars for various potential pedestrian head and leg impacts in the event of a crash. Typically, these global design standards for pedestrian impact protection manifest in design features like lower sloping hoods and the use of softer materials and spaces to cushion the pedestrian's impact with the engine and other hard components inside the vehicle. Many vehicles that are made to compete internationally are designed with these pedestrian impact standards in mind.

The NV200 taxi has been publicly touted as meeting these standards. Based on external appearance some other minivans produced by global car companies and converted for use as WAV taxis may as well, but the MV-1 does not on first impression “look like” it incorporates some of the typical pedestrian impact features such as a low, sloping hood.

Cab Riders United has requested additional information from the manufacturers and we encourage the Council to investigate this question as well, particularly given that New York City taxis operate in an environment filled with vulnerable New Yorkers of all ages and abilities.

QUALITY OF SERVICE

As noted above, Cab Riders United has heard concerns from passengers that “low-cost/low-quality” WAV taxi conversions fall short of what we would consider minimal safety standards. Additionally, some of the “low-cost/low-quality” conversions fail to meet the reasonable comfort standards of passengers, for example because of the “rattling bucket of bolts” effect when a vehicle is poorly converted or a ramp does not stow securely. Most cab riders we speak with are willing to pay a 30-cent surcharge when they understand it is for the worthy goal of improving accessibility, but that attitude may change if they come to feel they are paying more for less.

Additionally, we would suggest that all wheelchair accessible taxis and for-hire vehicles should include simple instructions posted on the door or in another conspicuous and permanent position to assist the driver in following proper procedures for deploying and stowing the ramp, securing the passenger, etc. Even as wheelchair accessible taxis become more common, and drivers receive universal training, they will likely benefit from easy access to a “cheat sheet” to help make sure they are performing these operations correctly.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

In order for the Council and the de Blasio Administration to achieve New York City’s ambitious goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) 80% by 2050 and the important air quality goals enumerated yesterday with the release of OneNYC, New York needs to continue reducing the emissions from our fleets and other sources.

Cab Riders United looks forward to further progress toward a zero emission taxi fleet.

In the meantime, when vehicles are converted for use as WAV taxis, we need to ensure that they continue to meet all the most stringent emissions requirements and that the conversion or upfitting in no way compromises those controls.

And frankly, we need to make sure the vehicles we license for use as taxis and for-hire vehicles, whether WAV or not, are moving us toward reducing our emissions and not increasing them. I feel obliged to point out that among the vehicles discussed today, although the MV-1 has been heralded by advocates who prefer side-entry taxis, it risks taking us in the wrong direction in terms of emissions and fuel economy (just as it appears to do on several safety aspects). Put simply, whatever its other merits, the MV-1 is a big vehicle that burns a lot of fuel and creates a lot of emissions.

Once again, we would urge that the Council and other policymakers weigh the multiple values that we all care about – including safety in its multiple facets, quality of service for all, and improving environmental health for all – when considering how we can make transportation services better meet the needs of all New Yorkers, including seniors and people with varying disabilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I’d be happy to answer any questions.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Michael O'houghton (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: C26 Riders United

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Michael McMahon (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 2 Park Ave NY NY

I represent: Nissan

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 04/23/15

Name: Agnes Smahon (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 5455 Kiss Hwy #20

I represent: Skym 11203

Address: Self

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: TOM CONNOR

Address: 39 5 AVE

I represent: CIRCLE ON THE SQUARE

Address: 20 WASHINGTON SQ NASH

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: AP 23, 2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ellen Gorman

Address: 151 W. 16th St. #4B, NY, NY, 10011

I represent: myself

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4-23-15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jean RYAN

Address: 646 77th ST BRLYN, NY 11209

I represent: Disabled IN Action

Address: pansies007@gmail.com

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

disability
[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/23/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: James Weisman

Address: _____

I represent: United Spinal Association

Address: 120-24 Queens Blvd, Kew Gardens 11415

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: April 23 2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ann T. ...

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

Disabilities

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/23/2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kristina Rhoades

Address: _____

I represent: MV-1

Address: 105 N. Niles Ave, South Bend, IN

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

Transportation

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 4/23/2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tweeps Phillips Woods

Address: _____

I represent: Committee for Taxi Safety

Address: 21-03 44th Ave, LIC

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 04/23/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LINBANIA JACOBSON

Address: 267 W. 89 Street

I represent: EMANUEL JACOBSON/

Address: SAME as ABOVE

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 4/23/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Aditi K. Shah

Address: 151 West 30th Street, 11th Floor, NY, NY 10011

I represent: New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Thomas Charles

Address: 2 Broadway, NYC

I represent: MTA NYC Transit

Address: 2 Broadway

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/23/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bobbie Sackman

Address: Live On NY

I represent: 49 W 45 St,

Address: NY 10036

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/23/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Marieta Avshin

Address: 147-50 109 Ave, Flr 2, Jamaica, NY 11435

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Molly Krakowski (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: JASA

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/23/15

Name: ANTHONY J. SETTEUCATE (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 505 W. 37 ST. APT. 309 NY 10018

I represent: MYSELF - JASA

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Aileen Cox (PLEASE PRINT) * Has Accys
Ride

Address: _____
Pickup

I represent: JASA

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Lesly Reiss (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 107 St. Marks Ave., Bklyn.

I represent: JASA

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: MICHAEL DAVOLI (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 4/23/15

Name: Avigail Adler (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: JCC of Greater Coney Island

Address: 3001 West 37th Street
Brooklyn NY 11224

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4.23.15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Caryn Resnick
Address: Deputy Commissioner, External Affairs
I represent: IFTA
Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4.23.15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Karen Taylor
Address: Assistant Commissioner, Community
I represent: Services
Address: IFTA

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4-23-15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Matt Kudish
Address: 360 Lexington Avenue
I represent: Alzheimer's Association, NYC Chapter
Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/23/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anni DeStasio

Address: _____

I represent: VISIONS SERVICES for the Blind

Address: 500 GREENWICH ST. N.Y.N.Y.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 04/23/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Joe Rappaport

Address: _____

I represent: TAXIS For All

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MELVIN SILVERMAN

Address: 475 FDR DR 21707 N/KC/CZ

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4-23-15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kathleen Treat

Address: 400 West 43rd Street NYC

I represent: Disabled Vets

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4-23-15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Martin Treat

Address: Kathleen will speak for

I represent: Martin, her husband.

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 04/23/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Merla V. McGold

Address: 10736 Merrick Blvd #G

I represent: Senior citizens

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms