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General Counsel
Philadelphia Parking Authority
3101 Market Street, 2nd Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Dear Sir or Madam:

On behalf of the Mayor's Commission on People with Disabilities (MCPD) and the thousands of constituents with disabilities in Philadelphia I strongly urge immediate passage of legislation that will put numerous affordable, accessible taxis on our streets ready to serve our citizens. These vehicles can also easily serve our large baby boomer population who are now in their sixties and other persons with new infirmities due to aging and serving our country at war.

The American's with Disabilities Act was initially passed in 1990. The disability community in Philadelphia has been treated as second-class citizens long enough. By putting accessible taxis on the streets both citizens and visitors to Philadelphia with disabilities will finally achieve the first class and equal status they deserve and which is mandated by federal law.

The taxicab-riding public want vehicles that are totally accessible and easy to get into and out of. We want vehicles that are equipped with portable ramps and appropriate features so that individuals using wheelchairs and other mobility aids will be easily accommodated.

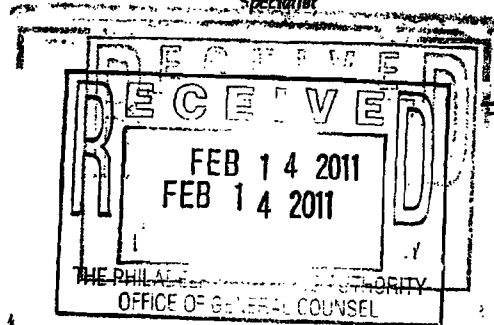
It is important that newer vehicles be used as taxicabs. Accessible vehicles must also be environmentally friendly and use alternative

MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
1401 John F. Kennedy Blvd.
Room 901, MSB
Philadelphia, PA 19102-1660
(215) 686-2798 (215) 564-1782 (TDD)
(215) 686-4555 (Fax)

MICHAEL A. NUTTER
Mayor

ROGER A. MARGULIES
Assistant Deputy Mayor/ Executive
Director

CHARLES W. HORTON, JR.
Deputy Director/Accessibility Compliance
Specialist



sources to operate such as electricity and natural gas. These energy sources can be found locally and in abundance.

Taxi drivers who are transporting citizens with disabilities must have sensitivity training on how to appropriately serve customers with all kinds of disabilities. In addition, taxi drivers must be trained and have experience using all the adaptive and safety equipment in the vehicle to insure that passengers are safe and receive friendly and good service.

It is necessary to start accessible taxi service with a minimum of 50 vehicles. As more citizens with disabilities become aware that accessible taxi service is available, the demand will increase experientially.

Furthermore, local commercial airport shuttles, vans, and limousines traveling between Philadelphia International Airport and destinations in Philadelphia should also be made totally accessible for the traveling public. In addition, shuttle buses, vans, and limousines operating at the airport between the parking lots and the airport terminals must also be accessible and brought into compliance.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. The Mayor's Commission on People with Disabilities represents over 300,000 citizens with disabilities who live in Philadelphia metropolitan area. We as the MCPD believe in inclusion in all aspects of life and by providing accessible taxis, this will create a higher level of independence for the community of people with disabilities, seniors and veterans to achieve and advance in all areas of our daily lives.

Sincerely,



Roger A. Margulies
Assistant Deputy Mayor / Executive Director