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From: Brie von Hausch <heyitsbrie@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2015 8:05 PM
To: IRRC; dweldon@philapark.org; jney@philapark.org
Subject: Public Comment: Philadelphia Parking Authority 126-11 "Modern Taxicab Standards" 2015 JUN 29 AM 9:08

Please consider the following public comment when making a decision on the new proposed rule making 126-11 on Modern Taxicab Standards.

We all live in an incredible age of technology and development, this I truly believe. I grew up in a generation of people who were encouraged to be whatever they wanted to be and go wherever it occurred to them to go. We were ensured that the possibilities are endless, and why shouldn't they be? We had the technology to put a man on the moon half a century ago, today we have cars that can drive themselves and an invisible network that can connect us with strangers half a world away in an instant. How could there possibly be barriers to something as simple as getting around within our own communities? Unfortunately, it is the presence of this barrier that blinds the vast majority of our community members from the injustices imposed on their less-visible neighbors. The astounding lack of wheelchair-accessible transit options for our neighbors, sisters, fathers, teachers and partners with impaired mobility does more than just keep our loved ones from arriving to the party; it removes their presence and thus their voices. I consider Philadelphia to be one of the most forward-thinking metropolitan centers in North America, but seven wheelchair-accessible taxis is simply not acceptable. You read that right: seven.

Go for a cup of coffee with one of your friends who uses an assistive device and you'll realize that your eyeglass prescription must need to be updated. A jungle of concrete crevasses, potholes, and construction work once routine and simple detours now hulk-ified as if bitten by some radioactive spider become, no joke, serious and possibly deadly assailants on what should be a simple walk to the local coffee shop. It may seem hyperbolic of me to say so, but you tell me what you feel like when you are on your way to meet your boyfriend for a dinner date and find him surrounded by paramedics, covered in blood gushing from his forehead because the cutout ramp on this particular block is not as level as the others and his mobility scooter toppled into the street. Do you feel the blood drain from your face when you find your sister stranded on a not-so-safe neighborhood corner at four in the morning because the wheelchair-accessible taxi she called never came and now the service is telling her that they don't have any accessible taxis on call? We have far surpassed the technological requirements to make these problems disappear, so why haven't we done it? In the 25 years since ADA, how has this simple correction not been made? Our society cannot afford to miss out on the input of a whole group of people simply because they can't get there. We need to make our cab fleets 100% accessible for anyone who needs to use them, period.

Support this bill because you honestly cannot afford not to. We as a society cannot afford to isolate our neighbors with mobility impairments, a whole population of individuals with ideas and intelligence impeded from sharing their creativity with the world. We cannot afford to ignore a group of citizens who deserve the right to be present and make a lasting impact on their communities. It even makes economic sense, a whole population of consumers. I believe taxis get paid to drive customers, yes? Does it really make sense to cut out an entire demographic of clientele? It doesn't take a nobel-winning economist to understand that more clients mean more money for the cabs, means more tax dollars. You can take that to the bank, assuming you can get there of course.

There is so little to lose by passing this bill and oh so much to gain. Help our sons and daughters get home safe and put Philly in the winning team in history books by making our taxi fleet 100% accessible. Only then can we truly say that we live in a City of Brotherly Love.

Thank you for your time and patience reading this lengthy yet impassioned take on the new taxi standards.

The best to you and yours,

Brittany von Hausch
Philadelphia resident and fellow human being