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Kathy Cooper

From: Sarah Gelbard <gelbardsb@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2015 11:39 PM
To: taxisforallphiladelphia@gmail.com; IRRC; dweldon@philapark.org; jney@philapark.org
Subject: Modern Taxicab Standards #126-11, Public Comments

As a member of the disabled community, it is more difficult for me to get around; I can't always travel as easily or as gracefully as my able-bodied peers. And my own limitations don't trouble me too terribly much-- we all have certain limitations. What's really troubling is that there is a great lack of accessibility, here, of acceptance. Buses, though accessible, have sometimes refused to allow enough time for me to be safely seated, or to safely exit. Trolleys are entirely inaccessible. And though there are more than 100,000 people living with disabilities in Philadelphia, there are only 7 accessible taxicabs to serve them all. I have known many friends to wait for long stretches in the cold, in the rain, in the dark, only able to move as far as they can wheel themselves.

Many envision disability as an unfortunate departure from a norm, as something for which individuals must shoulder burden in relative isolation. There is another way of looking at things, though. Let's talk about disability not as a medical problem but as a social one. There is nothing-- nothing-- inherently wrong with differently abled individuals. There is something wrong with society at large, with any society built to be accessible only for some.

However we move through the world, we should all be afforded the tools to do it equally. This is a social justice issue. And so I support the Philadelphia Parking Authority's Proposed Rulemaking Order 126-11, which would require all taxicabs to be wheelchair accessible. I thank you, too, for your consideration, for your action, so that our city (and our world) might be made more accessible, and accepting, too.

Thank you so much.

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