



February 5, 2021

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) writes to congratulate you on your confirmation as Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). We appreciate your acknowledgement of the importance of accessible transportation during your confirmation hearing, and your previous commitment to ushering in a new era of inclusion. We are also heartened by President Biden's goals of increasing access to public transportation.

NDRN is the non-profit membership association of Protection and Advocacy (P&A) agencies that are located in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the United States Territories. In addition, there is a P&A affiliated with the Native American Consortium which includes the Hopi, Navajo and San Juan Southern Paiute Nations in the Four Corners region of the Southwest. P&A agencies are authorized under various federal statutes to provide legal representation and related advocacy services, and to investigate abuse and neglect of individuals with disabilities in a variety of settings. The P&A Network comprises the nation's largest provider of legally-based advocacy services for persons with disabilities, including advocacy on accessible transportation to ensure people with disabilities who want to live in the community can do so.

Transportation remains a significant barrier to the independence of millions of Americans with disabilities. The lack of accessible transportation leaves people with disabilities unable to access essential services in their communities. NDRN is excited to work with an administration that is committed to addressing such limitations and find ways to conquer such obstacles.

One specific area NDRN looks forward to working alongside DOT is the improvement of Amtrak services. Many forms of transportation, such as air travel, continue to pose accessibility challenges. As a result, travel via train remains a popular form of transit for people with physical disabilities. However, numerous train stations remain inaccessible to wheelchair users, and onboard access issues continue. A recent U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) settlement agreement requires Amtrak to provide monetary compensation to passengers who are kept from traveling to certain designated train stations. NDRN

had previously been involved with an investigation of the accessibility of several Amtrak stations. Consequently, this issue remains important to NDRN, and we look forward to working with DOT to make progress on this issue.

Furthermore, NDRN looks forward to collaborating on issues surrounding several other forms of travel such as airlines and public bus systems. The twenty-first century continues to bring about new and exciting forms of transportation, but we must continually work to make sure that all travel options are fully accessible to all persons, including those with disabilities.

We would once again like to congratulate you for your confirmation. We are excited to work with you on these critical transportation issues for people with disabilities moving forward. Please reach out to NDRN with any questions. You can reach Ms. Stanley at Claire.stanley@ndrn.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Curtis L. Decker", is enclosed in a light gray rectangular box.

Curtis L. Decker
Executive Director