



July 11, 2025

The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith
Chair
Subcommittee Transportation, Housing,
Urban Development and Related Agencies
S-156, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kristen Gillibrand
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing,
Urban Development and Related Agencies
S-156, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Hyde-Smith and Ranking Member Gillibrand:

On behalf of the Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities (CCD) Technology and Telecommunications Task Force, the undersigned organizations respectfully request your support for the inclusion of \$10.5 million in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Senate Transportation, Housing, Urban Development and Related Agencies bill to fund the United States Access Board. This funding request represents a \$500,000 increase from FY2025 and is critical to strengthening enforcement of the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968.

The U.S. Access Board, established in 1973 under Section 502 of the Rehabilitation Act, is the only federal agency dedicated exclusively to advancing accessibility for people with disabilities. The Board's mission is carried out through three primary functions:

- 1) Developing accessibility guidelines and standards for the built environment, transportation systems, information and communication technology, and medical diagnostic equipment.
- 2) Providing technical assistance and training on accessibility guidelines and standards to stakeholders.
- 3) Enforcing the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, which mandates that federally funded buildings and facilities be accessible to people with disabilities.

The CCD is a coalition of more than 100 national disability organizations advocating for public policies that promote self-determination, independence, inclusion, and empowerment for children and adults with disabilities. Within CCD, the Technology and Telecommunications Task Force focuses specifically on advancing policies related to telecommunications, technology, and assistive technology to achieve full inclusion for people with disabilities.

The Access Board's ability to fulfill its statutory duty to enforce the Architectural Barriers Act is hindered by current funding levels. At present, the Board lacks sufficient resources to allocate only one full-time equivalent (FTE) staff member to its enforcement program. Additionally, the Access Board does not have funding to support staff travel to conduct on-site inspections necessary to

ensure compliance with accessibility standards in federal buildings, national parks, and other federally funded locations. The requested \$500,000 funding increase would enable the Board to hire additional staff and provide the resources needed for travel and oversight, ensuring it can effectively meet its statutory obligations and uphold accessibility requirements.

Thank you again for your efforts on behalf of supporting full accessibility in federally funded locations, which is so important to the lives of Americans with disabilities. We look forward to working with you as Congress works toward completing the FY 2026 appropriations process. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact one of the CCD Technology and Telecommunications Task Force Co-Chairs: Audrey Busch, audrey.busch@ataporg.org; Sarah Malaier, smalaier@afb.org; or Eric Buehlmann, eric.buehlmann@ndrn.org.

Sincerely,

Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
American Foundation for the Blind
The Advocacy Institute
Muscular Dystrophy Association
National Down Syndrome Congress
American Printing House for the Blind
Assistive Technology Industry Association
Autism Society of America
Disability Belongs
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network
TDIforAccess (TDI)
Parent to Parent of Georgia
Deaf Equality
American Association of People with Disabilities
TASH
American Therapeutic Recreation Association
Paralyzed Veterans of America