



Policy Memorandum

Subject: Improving Transit for Women, Families, and People Who Use Mobility Devices

Connecting people to the places people work, live and play within our community is a basic responsibility of cities and transit agencies. Public transit provides a critical service to people to facilitate these connections in a reliable, affordable, safe, and sustainable way. Americans took more than 10 million trips by transit in 2018. According to the American Public Transportation Association, traveling by public transportation is also 10 times safer per mile than traveling by personal automobile. Unfortunately, many city and transit agencies' policies prevent equal access of this service to everyone in our community.

Specifically, many communities' policies provide significantly limited access to those in wheelchairs or other wheeled mobility devices and parents with strollers.

Cities and transit agencies can take immediate steps to eliminate this inequity and improve the quality of life in their community by taking the following steps:

- Eliminate provisions of passenger policies or Codes of Conduct that prohibit parents traveling with children from carrying or wheeling occupied strollers onto transit vehicles;
- Establish a protocol for how transit staff can better assist parents with children gain access to the transit system, for example, by helping them safely carry a stroller down stairs or find access to an elevator;
- Establish a policy for capital improvements that prioritizes maintenance and immediate repair of devices that provide access to people in wheelchairs or with strollers so that no individual is ever denied access due to their physical ability or parental status; and
- Improve communications so that the entire community understands the services and opportunities provided to parents and children by transit systems.

These policy directions can eliminate a major barrier to transit access for parents without major infrastructure investment or service changes. In fact, the potential ridership increases can further arguments and support for major funding initiatives and investment in the future.