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Welcome to the Train Week: A Guide to Monitoring Checklist for Train Stations. My name is Chris and I will be your operator for today's call. At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode. Later, we will conduct a question and answer session. I would like to turn the call over to Patrick. May begin.

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Thank you. I want to start by thanking you all for participating today in this webinar. And in this exciting initiative that we're undertaking over the next two weeks. We're going to start today with some words from the executive director of the national disability rights network.

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Thank you, Patrick. Let me add good afternoon -- my thanks to everyone participating in this webinar. And conference call. To try to address an issue I think that has been an outstanding problem for the disability community for now, several decades. NDRN and its partners in the CCD transportation task force and other groups around the country I think have known for quite some time that we have been greatly disappointed in the efforts of Amtrak, the nation's passenger railway system, to come into compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. We're on the brink of a 23-year anniversary of the ADA on July 26. And while there will be many celebrations and receptions and parties celebrating the many successes of the ADA, we think this campaign we are engaged in is an example of some of the areas of the ADA that have not yet met its full potential and compliance. I want to say at the outset that we are not attempting in any way to hurt Amtrak or attack Amtrak. We understand that Amtrak as the nation's passenger rail is essential to the lives of many millions of Americans including people with disabilities. So we are not in any way attempting to hurt their funding or their efforts to continue to provide this service. But we are quite concerned that despite many, many years and many, many attempts to get them to comply, this and to try to balance the needs of the disability community with the cost and difficulty for certain types of transportation systems to come in compliance. There are a variety of rules for intercity buses, commuter rail, subways, and of course for the large Amtrak system. We believe that negotiation and compromise back in 1990 was a very balanced approach and should have been taken in good faith by those various entities to try to make their systems with these systems of federal funding and in cooperation with the disability community to really bring these systems into compliance so people with disabilities could really enjoy the benefits that come from an accessible transportation system. In fact, at that point because of very strong efforts by Amtrak, who made a very good case about how difficult it would be to come into compliance in a short amount of time given the very complex nature of their system, it was agreed they could have 20 years in order to try to come into compliance. From 1990 to 2010, the expectation, reasonably so, was that Amtrak would be working to attempt to bring their system in its entirety into compliance. There was certainly work in the disability community over that time to monitor those efforts and to work with Amtrak to do that. I also want to say that this is not a campaign that we are doing -- that we just came up on our

own -- this is something that has come I think, how to the frustration of the disability community in not having gotten the kind of good faith response from Amtrak that we had hoped. It started in 2009 when Amtrak contacted the disability community to say that they had basically failed to come into compliance with the 2010 approaching -- they knew very well that on July 26, 2010 they would be fully out of compliance and possibly liable for a range of enforcement activities because of that. They asked for support from the disability community to get an extension. Frankly, the response of the disability community was, no way. You've had 20 years. We've done very little. To give you more extensions without any guarantee that there would be a good faith attempt at compliance was not really something that we would accept. We began a series of meetings. You generally every six months or so -- with officials that Amtrak -- to talk about what they could be doing to bring their system into compliance. I'm sorry to say that in those meetings, there was a constant changing of figures and faces. People who we met with one-time would not be present the second time or the third. Various promises made at one meeting to try to come into compliance, we were then told six months later, that didn't work. We'll try something else. Six months later, we find out that that particular plan didn't work. So it became pretty clear to the disability community that there just wasn't that good faith effort. Secondly, what we found out, despite the fact they hired people who were well-intentioned, to meet with us and tell us about their commitment to accessibility, what we found is when they got involved in litigation, as has happened recently in Pennsylvania, through the efforts of the PMA system and Steve Gold, challenging the accessibility of the station, the Amtrak lawyers fight very hard and aggressively to withstand any efforts to try to make them come into compliance with the ADA. So we have what we see often with large national corporations -- sort of a good faith effort given by one part of your organization but then aggressive resistance to any change by their attorneys when it comes down to specific situations. All of that by way of background led us to this campaign where we think it's time now to try to document in as comprehensive a way, the issues and problems with the various aspects of the Amtrak system that do not make it a place for people with disabilities to enjoy the benefits of transportation. We think that not only are there very clear violations of the ADA and very clear issues of inaccessibility, we know that just the general reputation of the system is such that many people with disabilities don't even bother trying to use it for fear of starting out on a trip only to find out that when they get part way or to their final destination, they are trapped in and in accessible car or station and are not able to access the whole process from parking, using the ticketing system, accessing discounts, and also than being able to board the train in a respectful way. So it's time now for the disability community to really document the issues that are out there throughout the country, and bring them to attention of the Department of Justice, which has the oversight is possibility and enforcement responsibility to make sure that as these like -- entities like Amtrak are in compliance with the ADA. So we developed this process, and you will hear now assume -- I assume from the staff at NDRN, and our hope is that the PNA program in conjunction with a variety of partners, independent living centers, self advocacy groups, other people interested in ADA accessibility, will spend the next couple of weeks visiting train stations in their area, trying to see if they are accessible, documenting that inaccessibility when they find it, certainly also documenting when there is a good experience. We want to be able to show that this is something that can be done and has been done and then therefore should be done in every aspect of the system. So this is not just a gotcha effort. It's also a way of demonstrating with Amtrak and Department of Justice but to policymakers in general that this 20-year effort should have happened, could have happened and is a reasonable approach to making sure that the disability

community has access to this very critical system throughout the entire country. I'm very happy that we have at least 20 P&A's that agreed to participate. And we are going to try to make this as simple as possible and try to make this less labor-intensive as it could be, and then we have worked closely with our friends at the Department of Justice, looking at the situation, and we hope that the data and the evidence that we can gather through this campaign over the next two weeks will then enable the Department of Justice to become extremely aggressive in working with Amtrak to make sure that they begin the process to make their system accessible. It will take a long time, because we've lost 20 years, frankly. And it is somewhat sad that if some of these issues that we are identifying have been addressed -- had been addressed 20 years ago, we would be further down the road. That doesn't mean we should give up and not start now to try to really bring this system to the table to get them in a good-faith way to begin this process of making their entire aspect of their system accessible. So with that, I want to turn it over to Patrick, will take you through our plan and to Ken, as we go through the process, look at the templates we've developed and talked a little bit about the program content and then we'll hear from David card, commuting -- communications director about may -- the need to make sure that as we do this campaign that we make sure that the media is aware of this effort and can be an asset and advocacy tool as well to make sure that the general public understands what we're attempting and why this is so important. I've been told that our friends at Amtrak may in fact be on this call. If they are, we welcome them. We hope that they will learn from this process as other people do as well. If they are not, we will certainly make sure they are aware of what we have documented over the next several weeks. Either way, our goal is to make the nation's of passenger rail system friendly, open and accessible to people with disabilities. Patrick? I'll turn this over to you.

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Thank you, Kurt. So we are going to start going through a checklist that we're asking people to use when you do the monitoring of the train stations. This checklist was adapted from a checklist that the DOJ developed for voting accessibility. And obviously many of the same standard applied to train stations. We have adapted it to account for some of the unique aspect of train stations as well. And Ken has been working with two of our interns here, to develop this -- we're going to go through it and one thing I want to stress is that this checklist is meant as a guideline. The most important thing is that we obtained from the people participating in this monitoring as much information about barriers to access that we can. So when you're out monitoring the train stations, you see things that are problems, not covered by this checklist, or that you feel are barriers to accessibility that maybe don't jibe completely with the standards listed in the checklist, we want that recorded regardless. We also invite -- going to invite people to take pictures and videos whenever you feel safe doing so with the advent of smart phones. There's many things that can be done to record these barriers that we haven't been able to use in the past. And we're going to talk at the end of the discussion of the checklist about how to get that information to NDRN so that we can compile it and what you can do with the information in your own home states. So without further ado, I think we can start going down the checklist.

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Okay. My name is Ken Shiotani. And we're going to be flipping back-and-forth between the checklist itself and the slide that you see that we're going to have a few illustrative photos. So some of you from the PNA's have probably done accessibility surveys for polling places and other places. So if you have done this, the checklist might be a little oversimplified for you. If you've never done a survey, hopefully this survey document will give you the core tools of what

you need to survey a train station, look for some of the things that may be fine but some of the things that are going to be a problem. So going through first the first page of this checklist, we just start out identifying the station, what kind of building is it? Some train stations are co-located with other facilities. For our purposes, we're trying to focus on the access to the trains. So again, most of these buildings have parking. So we generally start out with a parking lot. And we switch to the first slide in PowerPoint? The first picture? This is just a typical shot from the parking lot at the Kelso Longview Washington train station. So some of the things that you need to be looking for in a parking lot, flipping back-and-forth, in the survey, the questions about -- you don't have to switch to that -- the questions about, are there accessible parking spaces at all? Are there curb cuts next to the parking slots? Parking spaces? Are they located close to the station? You don't need to have -- to know all of the requirements, but checklist and -- it should give you a guide to what you're looking for. Is there an accessible route from the parking lot to the station itself? If the station is up on a grade, are there stairs? Is there a ramp? This photograph shows some of the kinds of issues you might want to be looking for. So let's switch back to the survey --

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I should mention, Ken, you should have received if you registered for the webinar, you should have received a word version of this checklist in the e-mail earlier this afternoon. You also should have received a link to an online web version of the checklist as well. If you'd like to follow along in your own offices, while we're going through this, that way you can keep an eye on the survey as we go down.

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For anyone who is joining that didn't register, we can make those links available. If you come on the call without registering, please let Patrick know and we'll get it out to you as soon as possible.

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Let's go to the next page on the survey. This gives a bunch of details on what are the specific ADA requirements for parking spaces? Next page. This has some of the requirements in terms of measurements, accessible, how many spaces? If they are accessible spaces for vans. Again, if you've never done these surveys, we don't need you to get every detail right. But this survey should help you try and pick out all of the issues as much as you can. That's what we want. Folks to be able to go through. Again, next page on the survey. Again, this sort of -- because we use the Department of Justice survey, the illustration shows campaign signs, but the curb cut is a standard sort of thing. If you're going from the accessible parking space to the sidewalk, going to do station, is there a curb cuts? If there's no parking lot, urban station -- there should be curb cuts. These are the kinds of requirements that should be -- exist in any accessible train station. Next page. Again, this talks about passenger drop-off areas. If the configuration of the station has an area for passenger drop-off spaces, again, look to see about measurements, the guide -- the survey should help you figure out whether things are accessible or not. Try and fill it out to the best of your ability. We're looking for -- and we think there are going to be fairly significant -- lots of stations have been rehabbed and they're probably fine but many, many stations probably have not had a lot of work done on them. So that's what we're looking for. Some of the stations that still have major accessibility issues for people -- primarily people who use wheelchairs but also people with mobility impairments. They should be able to park at the closest space, they should be able to use a ramp if they need to use a ramp as opposed to stairs. So those are the issues were looking for. Go to the PowerPoint. And the next picture on that. Again, this shows a

ramp and stairs. The same station in Longview, Washington. There are handrails. Looks for the - look for those sorts of things. Are there landings on the ramp? If you can't catch every element, don't worry about that. We're looking for growth in accessibility issues. You know what you're looking for, you probably know it's better than I do. So back to the survey, again, the survey has -- flip the page, please. Thank you. And flip the page again. This has -- this again, taken from the DOJ survey, has some of the issues around sidewalks, there has to be a 36-inch wide route. That's one of the core accessibility requirements. Is this accessible route free of steps or abrupt changes over half an inch? If an accessible -- is there a curb cut at the ramp? How wide is the ramp? Again, the guide should help you if you haven't done surveys before, look at some of the standards. Next page, checking the ramp, some of this is a little bit technical in terms of the angle of the ramp but this gives you again the core accessibility requirements with -- and the angle of slope. And the requirements for level landings at certain points. Next page. Goes into more detail about ramps. Next page. This page illustrates some of the things that can be protrusions for people who have visual impairments or again, have mobility impairments. There should be protective things so that people don't walk into stairs, don't walk into protruding objects from the side of the clear path to the station. So again, things to look for. And instruct. Let's go back to the PowerPoint. Next picture. Go back to the survey. Before we get into the station, station entrance, go to the next page on the Word document, this gives you some of the requirements for doorways. Is the entrance connected to an accessible route? How wide is the doorway? What kind of door handle is there? Can you use it with a closed fist? These are the specific accessibility requirements of the ADA. And hopefully the station has all of these, but we're not sure. So that's why we're asking people to go out and look.

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Can I add to that? It would be great to come there with a ruler, or are measuring device, I think it would be better if we could enlist folks who use wheelchairs -- sensory disabilities, to be part of the team to the extent that they are PNA staff or volunteers from our colleagues and partners in the area. So that even if you don't have the exact measurements, we will be happy if you can say, one of our team members who uses a wheelchair just couldn't get into the bathroom or get around or if they got into the bathroom, they could utilize it. That would be good enough for our purposes.

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That's an excellent point. That's an excellent point.

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And take pictures. That's why we're showing some pictures and examples. These don't show glaring errors but there are some technical violations in many of the pictures that we show. Not huge ones but definitely things that are not as good as they should be. Just to differ -- disagree a tiny bit with Kurt, at least for the doorways, if you do have a tape measure, certain accessibility things are best -- fire but there is that they are sort of -- allowed to get you through. But a certain -- if they doorway is not wide enough, you just can't even get in, so that when I think is worth the measurement. Whether a ramp might be off by a tiny bit, it's a technical violation and we would want it to be right, but if there's a ramp there and it is just off by a degree, people can still get it. A doorway, if it is too narrow, you can't even get in. So that one measurement I think is worth making a measurement if at all possible. But again, pictures can be very helpful. -- pictures with the ruler in place can be very helpful. The next couple of pictures on the Word document are some of the turning radius issues and -- next page -- show some of the requirements so that people in wheelchairs -- can open doors and get through doorways. Again, the checklist helps

you know what the standards are but using Kurt's suggestion if at all possible, if you have a staff member who uses a chair, that can be even more effective. So next page. On that -- again, next page, we just are going through this survey just to give folks a sense of what to look for. Most stations or many stations are probably pretty large square block waiting rooms, so always -- hallways may not be an issue. If you don't have that in the station you're looking at, don't worry about it. Just skip that. Next page on the word -- that's the second page on hallways. And next page, ramps --

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Before we leave the bathroom issue, again, to reinforce this issue, when you think that the facilities in the stations are critical aspects -- we have been told that there is a large number of bathrooms around the country that aren't accessible. And frankly, we just learned of a situation -- also look at the temporary issues, you had a situation --

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We'll have a few pictures of that to illustrate -- I just saw last week. Ramps -- again, these are some of the technical requirements of ramps and handrails and angles and things that protrude. If there's a ramp -- some stations -- you can skip that if there isn't one. But if there is, this gives you all of the standards. So next page. Ticket count, next page again, Ticket counters. So Ticket counters is a specific issue in train stations. The ADA requirements require that there be a low section of a counter. In a train station, in a bank, lots of other facilities so that a wheelchair user doesn't have to be looking up and over a counter. I have a couple of pictures of that. Can we skip to the PowerPoint? And here's a station that did have a low counter. This was Vancouver, Washington, I think. Let's go to the next picture. Here is union station in Portland, Oregon. I don't see any low sections for a person with a wheelchair. There may be one somewhere that I didn't see but I will see one in this picture. Next picture, again, this is a station in -- where was I -- this is Kelso Longview in Washington. Again, this station does have a hallway. Again, every station is going to be a little different. In some places where you go look at Amtrak, stations, they will just be a platform and a parking lot. Some stations are very small stations that don't have a building. Again, if that's where you're going, you may not -- the survey may not take very long because there's not a building to look at. Again, this gives an illustration of a Ticket counter and the chart -- the survey document has the Ticket counter requirements. Next page. Sorry -- the next page on the word -- and again, some more of the requirements. Restrooms -- back to that page -- the previous -- right -- no -- one forward -- restrooms, the actual technical requirements for restrooms are very detailed and complicated. If you are -- if you've done surveys, you know what to do. If you don't have -- if you haven't done them before, I think of the core things to look for our if you have a person with a wheelchair, have them try to use it. That would be the best thing. If you don't have a person with a wheelchair, just look for the core things. Is there an accessible stall? Is there a wide enough door? Are there grab bars in it? Does the sink have handles that a person with grip difficulties would be able to turn the water on and off? Pictures are probably the best thing. We didn't want to burden people with very complicated restroom requirements. So we're just asking people, look to see if there's an accessible stall, take some pictures, if you have a ruler, measure the door. If you have a person with a wheelchair, have them try it out and give a narrative of whether it was usable or not. As Kirk said, we think there are plenty of stations that have not had the accessibility -- are lacking in full accessibility. Let's go to the picture, the PowerPoint. I should have -- this is a passageway to a restroom in a large station. Next picture. This is a stall that does have grab bars, but there are a few minor technical issues. Again, I'm not a technical expert in this, but someone who looked at this picture said, the

flush handle is on the wrong side. There is some other issues. Next picture? This obviously was glaring to even me. The door did at some point probably have an accessible lock handle, but it was vandalized and what did they putting? They put in a little bolt lock that a person with him parity, Dexter -- with a dexterity problem with the subject people coming in on them. So again, this is the kind of thing that's probably very common to see, maybe they designed the restroom correctly, but they have an ongoing requirement to maintain it in an accessible fashion. So that's restrooms. Go back to the Word document. And the next page. Some of the larger rail stations are on two levels and will have elevators. Or should have elevators. Make sure they are working, there are a couple of specific elevator requirements in the survey. Checklist -- next page -- so check to see if again, in probably older urban multi-story train stations, the elevators may not have been upgraded and may not be fully accessible. So look for those things. Rail characters are required -- braille characters are required, control buttons need control buttons need to be certain height so that people in a wheelchair can reach the different buttons, maybe not that big an issue in a train station that may only have a couple of floors but again, we're looking to that. And then, wheelchair lifts. This is I guess a controversial or difficult issue, but one of the things that in many stations, the only way to get into a rail car is through the use of a wheelchair lift. And for folks that haven't seen them, let's skip to -- switch over -- I'm sorry -- I'm going to go but -- go back to restrooms for a moment -- quick story -- I was at the Vancouver, Washington, train station. Looked into the restrooms. There's a sign they're saying, restroom closed. Some sort of problem with the municipal utility, fixing the water pipes. So nobody could use that restroom. What did Amtrak provides? Next picture. They provided porta potty's or portable restrooms. But they have to on one side of the building, two identical ones on the other side. Did they get an accessible porta potty? No. How long is that station? I forgot to ask -- I'm sorry I didn't ask -- my guess is that it's been a while for -- it's probably going to be that's why -- going to be that way for a long while. I hope Amtrak, if they're listening, put inaccessible porta potty tomorrow. Back to the PowerPoint, or weight -- this has a list -- in this photo -- I have another picture of the lift -- this is a picture of the station platform. Again, some of the technical requirements for platforms are a little bit technical and special, so what we're asking people to do is basically look at the platform. Can you get to it? Is eating good condition? It -- is it in good condition? It should have the edge warnings, the little bumps. That's an ADA requirement. If that's missing, making note of that. Take pictures. In the right side of the picture, that we're showing here, is one of the manual portable platform lifts. That is what Amtrak uses to get people in wheelchairs from a low level platform like that onto a passenger railcar. Go to the next slide. I think I have another picture -- sorry -- this is a picture of a platform that has -- does not have the edge warnings. And is also in the foreground, not in good condition. So this would be something worth noting. If you come across a platform like this, there is a spray-painted mark indicated maybe Amtrak is going to get around to repairing that, but this is one of the two platforms in Vancouver. One of the platforms is -- looks pretty decent but this platform needs some work and does not have the edge protector at all. Next picture? Here is a platform lift. It is in its raised position, but all Amtrak stations that don't allow you to board directly from the platform onto the train car should have a platform lift. I think this is probably the one thing that Amtrak may have done everywhere, but there may be a few places where they haven't. So that's one thing that we want folks to be looking for. If you have a platform that is low and the train cars are much higher, it has to have a platform lift. Sometimes they are out, sometimes they are in a shed like shown in the picture. But if you can't find any sign of a platform lift, that's a big red flag that a person with a wheelchair would not have any way to get into a railcar if they don't have the platform lift. Next picture -- I think I

have one more picture. Again, another picture of a station with platform lift. And I have one more picture after this, which shows public information system.

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Let me go back to the lifts for a second. I think not only is the major question, do they have a lift? Even if they have a lift, to the extent that people have the ability to be a little more aggressive and have a conversation with someone as to who operates the lift -- is there someone designated -- is the lift locked away in the shed? And not available? How do they communicate with oncoming arriving and departing trains, to whether the lift will be available? And operated? We had examples of just because you have a lift doesn't mean it works and/or it is going to be utilized appropriately. And they have the manpower, person power available to make sure that that piece of equipment actually does what it's supposed to do.

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Excellent point. We've heard stories, probably a little old at this point, but stories where people rode the train, got to their destinations, and conductors or station staff had a heck of a time finding the key to the lock to unlock the platform lift to get the person off the train. We hope that these are old and no longer applicable stories, but we've definitely heard them in the past. And hopefully Amtrak is doing good stuff now, but we don't know that. If you happen to run across a passenger who uses a wheelchair who has been on a train, if they're willing to talk to you, ask them questions. What was their experience like? Again, if you are -- if you are from a PNA and you have a wheelchair user and they've used the train, obviously some of this -- recent stories, we have -- we want to hear about those as well. Let's go to the last picture I have in my section. This is public address system issues. For the stations with audio public address system is there a visual information sign that gives the same information as the audio? I thought the stations didn't have these things, but I went to two stations last week in Washington and both of them had the loudspeaker and had that horizontal electronic sign. I was waiting and I watched trains come in. I watched to see what would happen. I listened for the announcement. I heard the announcement, but nothing came on to the visual signs. So before the train came, they made audio announcements saying, trains are five minutes late. We expect -- running late -- so that information should be available to people who have hearing impairments. If you can't hear the audio, if there's a visual sign, that same information should be broadcast or made available on that sign. And I saw no signs of that in either of the stations I visited last week.

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Lots of good news, bad news. The train was only 10 minutes late. Which is unusual. But the bad news is that anyone with a hearing impairment wouldn't have known that.

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Right. They would only notice the train when it came in. They were not ready for it. They don't get the same warning that somebody that can hear has. So that's my last slide. I think we finished the survey.

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Thanks, Ken. A couple things I want to note. One is I know that there are some people who have volunteered to monitor who have either visual impairments or hearing impairments and there's -- especially for folks with visual impairment doing monitoring, it may be more difficult to do the physical accessibility aspect of the monitoring survey. We encourage people to working teams. Particularly people with sensory disabilities, provide a good, useful perspective and may catch things that other people might not. So we definitely encourage -- as we said before, the checklist is a guideline but certainly not necessarily the only issues that we want you to cover. And nor do



we expect that if you are monitoring, you cover every single issue necessarily in the checklist. The more the better of course, but if you can't cover all of them, we want to get as much information as we can. We encourage people to err on the side of reporting these things. If you're not sure, if something is a violation of the ADA, if you take pictures of it, if you record it down, write down what you see, then we can sort that out once we get the information. Especially if you have pictures or video, stuff like that. Regarding -- touching on the passenger lists, it may not be possible for you when you go to visit the station to see a train arrived and people board or disembark from the train. But if you can, take that opportunity to watch what happens, especially if there are people with visual disabilities, that you can see, then watch them as they get on a train, see if there are problems. If you feel comfortable approaching them and talking to them and telling them that you're doing this project, asking if they have had challenges at this station or other stations that they've visited, that would be helpful to know. And then record all of that. I think a lot of these things that Ken covered are somewhat common sense. So when you see something that is glaringly obvious to you as an accessibility barrier, definitely record it. And use your common sense when you go out there so that you can think about, if you are a person with a disability, a lot of it might be apparent to you. If you are not, just put yourself in the shoes took -- so to speak of somebody with a disability. And imagine what it would be like navigating the station if you had a disability. One thing -- so --

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I would like to follow-up to both Ken and Patrick's -- before we turn it over to David, to talk about some of the media strategies, a couple points to remember. This is a very complicated issue. One of the complicating issues is the fact that there is a variety of ownership of various stations and tracks and stations. And often, Amtrak in its defense, will argue that they don't have control of a particular station. That the city or the municipal -- municipality has -- owns the train station and therefore has the responsibility. We are recommending that you not worry about that. If you go to a station, you don't need to worry about who owns it, who has responsibility, there are requirements in the law that if Amtrak owns more than 50%, they are still responsible. This is that kind of parsing of who has the ultimate responsibility is not a part of this process. This can get straightened out later on if in fact we find out that a station you reviewed is not a responsibility of Amtrak, that will shake out. The Department of Justice would be -- as well as PNA -- would have responsibility of making the city or municipality make the station accessible. So even the if it turns out not to be Amtrak specific, don't just pack up and go home. Continue to review and we will sort that out later. Secondly, even though we are hoping that we can engage the power of the Department of Justice and disability rights section to begin negotiating with Amtrak down the road, we are not saying that any PNA that is finding an egregious situation doesn't want to enter into their own efforts at remedy including lawsuits. As I mentioned earlier, the Pennsylvania PNA is involved in a lawsuit. We are not saying, don't do that. We're just trying to make this as easy as possible and to get the biggest amount of information and to use the resources of the Department of Justice. And we want to make sure that whoever is at fault, is brought to compliance. The other thing I think I'm going to talk about for a second before I let David Card tell you how to handle this, we expect there to be significant backlash. From this effort. We will hear from Amtrak, as we've heard consistently, that the freight lines will not allow them to do certain things. You will hear that if we are forcing them to make expensive changes in the smaller, rural stations, they'll be forced to cut back on service. And therefore our efforts will mean that low income rural people may lose access to train services. I think these are red herrings to say the least. Even if there is truth in that, that does not mean they should not be

held to a high standard of compliance at the ADA. So if that comes up in any of your dealings with the press, or any other kinds of conversation you have with the local levels, please call us. We think we have responses to that. We also think those things do not really make a significant difference. There are some complicated ownership issues as I've said. But they can be worked through and should be worked through, so don't let those things deter you from being aggressive advocates on this issue. At this point, I will turn it over to David Card, was going to talk a little bit about some of the PR issues we'd like to mention.

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Sure. So I'm going to share with you some ideas that we've been brainstorming here at NDRN with a couple of PNA's on ways to get the press to cover your site evaluations and your findings. This sort of fall into two different approaches, although there's some overlap. But the first is to lay the groundwork now, members of the press accompany you while you're doing the surveys. Because we think that there will be some really good visuals. I'd recommend you focus your efforts on local television reporters. Essentially, what you'll need to do is pitch them the idea that these Amtrak stations are not accessible and you'd like them to bring a camera crew along with you while you're doing the surveys for them to see for themselves. As Kirk said earlier, if you're going to do that, you'll need to have staff or volunteers who have a disability who can demonstrate or willing to demonstrate the barrier for the cameras. Also, if you do that, you will probably need to go visit the site in advance to make sure that there actually is something there for the cameras to see. I don't think that with media being stretched pretty thin, I don't think they will be willing to commit the resources unless they are sure they're going to get good footage to air. I can help you identify which television reporters to reach out to. NDRN has a media research database that will tell us which reporter at which station cover which beats. And also very handily, provide their contact information, which can be hard to find. If you have better relationships with print media or more comfortable working with print media, I think that's fine too. The story can be told just as well through photographs. If the station you are reviewing in the larger cities -- you may have better luck with the weekly paper. Rather than like one of the big dailies. Like here in DC, we have something called city paper, which covers local politics and neighborhood news. It's not the Washington Post. But they're more likely to cover quirky stories or protests or local actions or local out -- outrage, that kind of stuff. There's no reason why you can't pitch the story to both TV and print or any news sources in the communities where you're doing the surveys. Like blogs, or other online websites that cover local news. It's better to cast a wide net when you are pitching stories. And have to manage multiple responses, then to just pitch to one place and never hear from them. I can share with you all, the pitch I've been using with some of the national press. We've reached out here at NDRN to CNN, the Washington Post, the local major national networks, CBS, NBC, ABC, so another idea I had for you is to see if you could get local politicians or other notable person -- maybe somebody from transportation agency or something to accompany you while you do the survey. Their name alone might draw the attention of media. And it also has the added benefit of bringing this problem to the attention of decision-makers in your community. So the second option is to focus your efforts on getting coverage for your findings after you've completed the survey. If you don't think you're going to have enough time between now and that you conduct the survey to arrange for a reporter to accompany you, this approach may allow you to get the story covered after-the-fact. You could do this in a number of ways. Again, you could reach out to local TV, tell them what you found and offered to accompany them back to the station to show them. Again, you will need or more accurately, they will want a person with a disability who can demonstrate the

barriers for the camera. You could also put your findings in a press release. And announce you will be filing a complaint with the Department of Justice or whatever action you're going to take to follow-up on your findings. It will increase your chances I think of somebody taking notice if you can say something like, PNA files complaint with the Department of Justice. Or you could also write an op-ed outlining your findings and used the anniversary of the ADA as the calendar hook. If you choose to do that, I suggest you contact the papers this week, that you would like the op-ed to run in, and get it on the editorial calendar now. I'm going to work on a national op-ed for NDRN that I'd be happy to share with you for some ideas. So finally, I wanted to say one thing about social media. I think doing these surveys is a good opportunity for you to get creative. Use your social media that -- platforms like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, to promote the train week and promote what you're doing before hand. Direct action events like this, it can really energize your social media followers and get them engaged. It's also a good tool for finding volunteers. And then when you are on site doing the evaluation, consider doing some live updates. If you find something wrong, take a picture of it and post it to your fixed -- Facebook page. If you have someone with you who can demonstrate how something is inaccessible, record been doing it and post that video. Does not have to be perfectly edited. In fact I like the idea of posting raw video on your Facebook page. To show genuine responses and reactions. It also will give the people who are following the event the feeling that they are part of it. So also if you gather enough video, you could edit it later and create like a little YouTube video of the experience. You could add to it, some interviews -- like post event interviews to add some depth to the videos. So that's basically the idea that we came up with. I know that a couple of PNA's have already started doing some media outreach. Maybe when we open it up for questions, we can talk about what they're doing.

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Thank you, David. A couple other things I want to note before we open it up to questions, and first law, the question that I'm sure will come up which station you should monitor? And we encourage you, if you know that stations that have had problems in the past, if you have heard about stations where your clients are people that you know or yourself have had disability issues in the past, please feel free to use those stations, go to those stations. If you want suggestions for stations in your state to go monitor, we have some lists about stations that have had -- challenges with accessibility in the past. Please reach out to us and we can help you if you need help selecting particular stations to monitor. Another thing is we are setting up an e-mail address, which Matt noted in the chat box, it is [trainweek@ndrn.org](mailto:trainweek@ndrn.org). We want to -- we want you to send all the information you gather to that address. So if you can, scan your survey, if you write them out or if you do them online, they will go to us anyway -- you can also send them directly to that e-mail address. If you have pictures, videos, please e-mail those to that e-mail address. If you have any anecdotal information, any stories that you want to share, about accessibility barriers at Amtrak stations, you can share those. If there are problems that aren't covered by the survey, that you want to bring to our attention, just as an example, somebody brought up with us the last week that Amtrak runs an over the road bus system, basically a bus that enables people to get to the trains. From different areas. And those buses are not always accessible. So things like that that may not even be accessibility issues at the station but other accessibility issues related to Amtrak. Send those again, that e-mail address is [trainweek@ndrn.org](mailto:trainweek@ndrn.org) so I think -- unless --

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There are some comments.

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Okay.

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[Indiscernible -- low volume] suggestion -- apps that -- finding things -- level -- ramps and things -- iPhone or smart phone, be sure to check and see if you have the ability to download an app that may assist you with dimensions such as degrees, float, or even dimensions such as doorway, that you will need to calibrate in advance. That was from Elizabeth in North Carolina. There was a comment by Neil that basically --

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The PDF format, we will send that around as well when we send that when the meeting is over -- there will be a PDF version. Christopher recommends you always take pictures, toilet and bathroom areas. And then we had a couple other mentions of accessibility not only limited to wheelchair users, there are walkers and canes and other individuals [Indiscernible] as well.

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Good point.

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It was also some different experiences listed in the chat window that we will look forward to getting more detail via the train week at NDRN -- the e-mail address.

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All right. Then we will open it up -- we have about a half hour for questions. So please feel free - let people know how they can get in the queue for questions.

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Thank you. We will now begin the question and answer session you have a question, please press star then one on your touch tone phone. If you wish to be removed, please press the pound sign or hash key. There will be a delay before the first question is announced. If you are using a speakerphone, you may need to pick up the handset before pressing the numbers. Once again, if you have a question, please press star then one on your touch tone phone. Standing by for questions.

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We have a question online from the disability rights Center of Arkansas. Your line is open.

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Thank you for the presentation. Can you tell us, when is the deadline for the mission -- submission of all of the reviews?

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Good question, Tom. We picked this week prior to the ADA as sort of a focus but we understand that not everybody is capable of getting out there in that particular timeframe. And plus we also want to make sure that we can capture individual testimonials similar to what David Card was saying about trying to generate people's experiences through social media. We are -- we do have interns available to us for a couple more weeks to pull together and organize the material we hope we will get from all of you so we're setting an arbitrary date of August 15 to try to get as much of the reporting photographs, individual assessments as we can. So that we can be ready to go in mid-August with presentation to the Department of Justice and to Amtrak as well and to publicize this to media interests. Would like to shoot for August 15. Accessibility is never a static issue. It's ongoing. And anything that gets fixed this week could be unfixed next week. This will be an ongoing campaign for quite some time to come.

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Okay. Thanks.

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Sylvia Smith.

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This is probably a question for Kurt and David about the scope of what can be said to state media. Is it -- David mentioned the talking points should include that this will all be presented to the Department of Justice. What can be in the talking points and firmed up by you guys yet at the national office for your news? And then we can sort of piggyback off of --

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Well, we've been talking a little bit about that. I mean, I believe that PNA's are sort of free to do in your state, whatever it is you'd like to do with the findings. NDRN -- Kurt can jump in here but we are assembling all of the findings and will be communicating them to the Department of Justice here.

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I think that's actually a very good point. We can probably quickly in the next day or two put together the basic components of talking points. To me, it is obviously the fact that 23 years after the ADA, Amtrak for the most part is not an accessible system despite the 20 years that they were given to do that. Then probably talking points about the types of accessibility that we know about now and that will hopefully be able to confirm in a much broader way as we get this report. Third, talking points around remedies that Department of Justice does have the responsibility to deal with these problems. We want to provide them with this information. It will not stop -- there's also the ability at the local level for people to negotiate. With train stations -- if you have that kind of access. Plus using our own legal remedies to pursue something if you find something really egregious. We will try to bring out a set of talking points that deal with those three points.

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-- that deal with those points. It's awful helpful, the way you described how to talk -- the system successes -- if you take the media with you and you find a great station -- you've got to be prepared to explain to them what that demonstrates. That demonstrates it's possible and objections to the contrary for the last 23 years are not meritorious. That was very good and you might catch staff a little off guard, how to talk about a success they find. And yet the way you framed it was very helpful. We look forward --

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Thank you. Right. I think -- this could be the glass half empty, half full story. We certainly want the general public to know that the ADA was successful, it has changed the face of society over the last 20 years for people with disabilities in many aspects of American life. So if you do find a train station that is really good shape or someone has made the effort to comply, I think we need to point that out. And celebrate that. Number 1. And number 2, if an example of it can be done -- so if you then look at another station, especially a large state like Florida which has multiple stations, if you can find one that's really bad, and we find one that's really good, then I think we have an extremely good case, both for Amtrak, Department of Justice and the media, that this is able to be done. When people take this seriously and comply with the law. We don't want any entity of the courts, the media to think this is some outrageous request by the disability community for millions of dollars of repairs for no good reason. So finding a good station is not necessarily a bad thing. The other thing to remember is as I said earlier, people with disabilities may know that the station in Miami is terrific and beautiful and new, but where are they going to end up when they get to that little rural town in Georgia? They may find themselves sitting on

that train, passing through, because there is nothing at the other end. Again there's a way of saying, we want to make sure that people with disabilities feel comfortable getting on a train, similar to the airlines as well where you can start out but you may not get to your destination because of something that happens along the way.

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If you have a question, please press star then one on your touch tone phone.

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While we're waiting for the next question, I was thinking of another possible backlash point that is great occasionally -- the concerned that the moment -- there are forces in Congress that don't like Amtrak, period. Would just as soon do with -- do away with federal support of a national railway system and will use this issue to further their own agenda. Again, while that's possible, I don't think that can deter us from making sure that the system is accessible for people with disabilities. I think we can deal with the fact that Amtrak is a necessary part of American life, it just has to be sure that it is available for everyone.

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And just to give a little bit of context, this is -- this year happens to be the year that a passenger rail improvement and investment act, the bill that funds Amtrak, is up for reauthorization. And that's -- a lot of what we're doing now is we're going to put into some context with that and in terms of saying what needs to be fixed with Amtrak when we're meeting with the people on the Hill. That should be coming up later towards the end of the summer or the fall. So this will be very helpful in getting that message across to Congress, that more work needs to be done for Amtrak to be compliant with the ADA and to think about what Congress can do in the context of that reauthorization.

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Are there other questions? Other comments of people that have maybe done some of this work as an example of what they found and some guidance -- if there's anything that has begun -- has any ability to interest the press, if you were able to interest the press or if you weren't able to interest press -- so would like to hear those kind of comments. It doesn't have to be a question.

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Monitoring the questions and comments that are coming in -- so we can repeat them as well.

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I have a question. Can I be heard?

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Yes. Your line is open.

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Great. I haven't listened to the entire call so I don't know if this has come up or not. I can see how it would be easy to build this effort under DD and also pair, any thoughts on paths, making the observation that people need transportation to get back-and-forth to work and especially on the East Coast where Amtrak is kind of a local -- that it could be an effort under -- any other grants other than DD or pair?

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I would certainly argue that this is very much a cross disability effort. That Amtrak affect all people with disabilities. So I think people with traumatic brain injuries, for those people that are not PNA's on the call, the PNA system is funded through about eight different sources of funding. And I would argue that this is -- if this campaign is spread across all various PNA funding sources, it is completely legitimate because almost every one of our programs in fact is

impacted by the transportation. Employment is a major function but recreation and leisure is also an important aspect of community integration and I think that families and children as well as a hook to Assistive Technology and making sure that people get -- are able to access -- almost every other group eligible for a discount on Amtrak can access those discounts through the app. The Amtrak app, the disability community cannot. And so there's another piece of the Amtrak system that is not accessible and it is for everyone else. I know -- I was very much involved in the early days of the ADA, working with Amtrak about concerned about people with mental illness and how to manage people with mental illness. So I think this is a legitimate -- program as well. So this could be the time and effort that your staff put into this could be spread across all of the grants. And given the very tight budgetary climate there, due to sequester and other issues, I could understand why PNA would want to spread this effort across several funding sources.

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We have a couple more comments. North Carolina commented that they have surveyed several train station that our historical and that those are found to be pretty accessible at this point. There's no -- historical structures. There was a question on do you have any guidance on specific train station that you would like people to go to? Or just any train station?

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Well, that's a good question. It depends on the size of the state and also the size of your staff and many other pressures that PNA's are under to do a variety of other things. This may -- this campaign may be outside the stated priorities of the PNA at this particular time but we're hoping that we can certainly demonstrate the power of the PNA network given its comprehensive coverage. We have actually called a couple of states directly to say, we know of train stations in your jurisdiction that -- we heard from other people or we know from our own experience is inaccessible. Would you go look at it? So we can direct people to those particular stations in their state to the extent we are aware of it. I think -- we would hope that you could go to as many as possible. And you may have to develop teams or -- that's why we are trying to say it is a week or even longer so that if you can go to one a day for five days, that would give us a more comprehensive look at how the system works and also goes to my argument that even though you might have a great newly refurbished station in an urban area, what happens if the person is trying to get to visit their family in a rural area that isn't accessible? I know that's a tall order. Unaware asking a lot of people, very busy time of the year, but the more you can do, the better and the stronger our case will be.

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My name is Edmund. We also realize that in order to spread in the news -- to the people in the state could actually help you know where specifically train stations that are inaccessible -- where they face challenges. So we believe that you can just let the people with disabilities within your state get to know this information that we share with you today. And that could actually help you get to know this station where persons with disabilities face challenges.

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That's a good point. Again, individual testimonials will be fine alongside of the actual reports and photographs that the individual programs may --

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We had another question via the chat asking if there was information available on the number of passengers who leave and arrive via particular stations. Immediately following that question, North Carolina posted information on passenger numbers is available in the 2009 compliance report.

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And I think that the number of passengers -- I think that's something that Amtrak updates fairly regularly. The 2009 report is a good starting place to look at stations that are in bad shape, but in a few instances, Amtrak has improved a few of the stations on that list, but really I think many are still inaccessible. So it's the 2009 Amtrak report to Congress about their stations.

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And can bring, you could be a resource for people who wanted to ask about specific stations. That would be good. Yes. I do think that that is an argument you may run into. I think Amtrak will argue that this station is so underused that it isn't worth the investment of resources to fix that station. I think that's an issue that we face now and we will deal with as we begin to raise questions about particular stations. But of course remember, Amtrak will argue that they don't have a very good ridership. Of course, we believe that that's because they've done such a terrible job of making the system accessible. And I think all of us in this business no when businesses tell us, we don't get a lot of people with disabilities coming to their store, that's because it is inaccessible and they can't get in. So we are very much believers if you build it, they will come.

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One thing I just thought of that we should mention is the issue of the train cars. And we've heard anecdotal information about how the train cars themselves are not very accessible, how often times it's impossible to move between the cars. So if you get stuck on -- when you need to go to the restaurant car, you need to get off and get back on, at one of the stations, if you want to move from a quiet car to a not quiet car, that's impossible. Those are the sorts of anecdotes that can be very helpful that we ask -- it may be very difficult for you to monitor the cars when you're going out there. But if you do have anecdotes about the accessibility of the cars, that's something that we would welcome and encourage.

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That in would be -- probably need that from individuals who have actually tried -- we can add that to beef up your particular report, that would be very good. Or we could get them separately. Very useful information. Frustration in discussing with Amtrak, the issue of train cars. Someone said to me, it'll take 4040 years to refurbished all our cars. We reminded them that if they had started 20 years ago, the halfway there. And then there's also the question of whether they were under 504 obligation since 1973. One could argue they have really had about 37 years to come into compliance. We think it's time for Amtrak to actually step up to the plate.

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There's an additional comment that says [Indiscernible -- low volume] ridership -- as well as -- features of --

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The Great American stations website. Yeah. And that has updates -- posed the most recent year that action -- Amtrak has statistics of ridership.

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We can post all of this on the train week Yahoo! group so that there will be a trail of -- a record of that so we can post some of those links.

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The e-mail address we set up is an incoming e-mail address for us. But we can answer -- we can put it out to the people who have -- answers to the questions that have raised some of the specific URLs. And the people registered for this. If you have other questions additionally, if you e-mail



us at the trainweek@ndrn.org e-mail address, we'll be able to answer any additional questions you have. Or if you need us to repeat anything we said during this webinar. We can do that.

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Other comments or questions?

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We have another question from Chris Hart. Your line is open.

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I was just -- out in --[Indiscernible] when you take the photo -- figure out -- so even if -- possibly okay, still very valuable to get -- document -- and that way, that allows -- people that -- figure out -- [Indiscernible] that if you have people who are unable to do site visits, please feel free to enjoy [Indiscernible] your experiences -- as well as please -- a large family -- more than two people -- self identify -- please -- mobile app. And you cannot -- by a ticket --overall service or -- people with disabilities. And -- the system -- document how poorly -- 40 years --

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Thank you, Chris. Again, just to reiterate the fact that everyone has something to contribute here. It doesn't have to be the smoking gun that will make or break this campaign. We know for example that there are 28 stations that Amtrak will not even sell you a ticket because they know that it is in an -- and inaccessible station. So we're not really telling Amtrak anything they don't already know. We're not telling anybody anything you don't already know. What we want to do here is just document the enormity of the problem so that we can get all of the policymakers to focus on this issue as Chris said after 40 years, pretty much ignoring this very important community as -- it's time for significant change.

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For those of you who are with PNA's or any other organization out there, if you want to send out an e-mail to your contact list, to your networks, communicate with them, with people with disabilities, around your community, and let them know we're looking for this information so they know they can submit if they have stories of things they have experienced in the past, that would be helpful to gather. We want to get out the word as much as possible and gather as much information as we can.

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We want this to be as a coalition effort. We think this is a great opportunity for the Advocate program, self advocates, and all the other disability groups, all the friends and the other provider network as well, to come together and try to make this an important issue.

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I think at that point, we will end the session for today. I think all of you for attending and spending the time and being involved in this effort. And thank you to the NDRN staff who worked so hard to put this together. Please utilize all the people here and let us know -- keep us abreast of what you're doing. So we can monitor what's happening and let's make this effort really make a difference in lives of people with disabilities. Thank you.

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Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. This concludes today's conference. Thank you for participating. You may now disconnect.

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[event concluded]