

; 05/29/19 4:04 AM

;

;;;BCC 190529

[ GAVEL STRIKE ]

>> GOOD AFTERNOON EVERYBODY.  
WELCOME.

MY NAME IS ED FLYNN AND I'M THE  
CHAIR ON THE COMMITTEE OF CITY,  
NAKED SERVICES AND VETERANS  
AFFAIRS.

I'M JOINED BY MY COLLEAGUES,  
MICHAEL FLAHERTY AND LYDIA  
EDWARDS.

THEY ARE BOTH CO-SPONSORS OF  
THIS MATTER.

I WOULD LIKE AT THIS TIME TO  
INTRODUCE OUR PANT -- PANELISTS,  
CHRISTA McKOHL AND MANARA  
SUAVE, LANGUAGE ACCESS  
COORDINATOR FOR MAYOR'S OFFICE.  
COORDINATOR FOR THE MAYOR'S  
OFFICE.

I WANT TO REMIND YOU THAT THIS  
IS A PUBLIC HEARING AND RECORDED  
AND BROADCAST LIVE ON COMCAST 8,  
VERIZON 82, WEBSITE ON  
BOSTON.GOV/CITY COUNCIL-TV.  
TILT PLEASE SILENCE YOUR CELL  
PHONES AND OTHER DEVICES.

WE WILL ALSO TAKE PUBLIC  
TESTIMONY AND WOULD APPRECIATE  
IT IF YOU COULD SIGN IN TO  
TESTIFY ON THE LEFT-HAND SIDE.  
AT THE START OF THE TESTIMONY  
PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME, ADDRESS  
AND AFFILIATION.

TODAY'S HEARING IS ON  
TECHNOLOGIST 0517.

THIS MATTER WAS REFERRED TO THE  
COMMITTEE ON CITY NEIGHBORHOOD  
SERVICES AND VETERAN AND  
MILITARY AFFAIRS ON MARCH  
THREANTS, 2009.

-- MARCH 13th, TWIEFN.  
, 2009.

THIS IS AN ORDER FOR HEARING TO  
DISCUSS SERVICES FOR PERSONS  
WITH DISABILITIES.

ACCORDING TO THE BOSTON LANGUAGE  
AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS  
PROGRAM, 12.8% OF BOSTON  
RESIDENTS IDENTIFY AS HAVING AT

LEAST ONE DISABILITY.  
THIS INCLUDES EXPERIENCING  
DIFFICULTIES IN SELF-CARE,  
HEARING, VISION, INDEPENDENT  
LIVING, AND WALKING AND CITY OF  
BOSTON HAS UNDERTAKEN MEASURES  
TO ENSURE THAT PERSONS WITH  
DISABILITIES WILL HAVE ACCESS TO  
VARIATION SERVICES WITH THE  
MAYORS DISABILITY COMMISSION  
FOCUSING ON INCREASING ACCESS TO  
OPPORTUNITIES IN PROMOTING  
EQUITY FOR THOSE WITH  
DISABILITIES.  
AND THE CITY COUNCIL ALSO PASSED  
AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING  
LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION  
SERVICES IN 2016.  
CREATING THE LANGUAGE AND  
COMMUNICATION ACCESS PROGRAM, TO  
MAKE SURE THAT ALL CITY  
DEPARTMENTS HAVE TRANSLATION AND  
INTERPRETATION SERVICE FOR  
NONSPEAKING, NONENGLISH SPEAKING  
RESIDENTS AND RESIDENTS WITH  
DISABILITIES.  
THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES  
ACT ADA IS A FEDERAL ACT, THAT  
ENSURES THAT ALL DISABLED PEOPLE  
ARE ENTITLED TO THE SAME SERVICE  
AS EVERY OTHER AMERICAN AND THE  
ANNUAL DISABILITIES COMMISSION  
REPORT ADDRESSES ADA  
ACCESSIBILITY, IMPROVEMENTS TO  
CITY HALL AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF  
WAY IN ADDITION TO LANGUAGE  
ACCESS AND SERVICES FOR THOSE  
THAT ARE HEARING OR VISUALLY  
IMPAIRED.  
THE CITY OF BOSTON HAS GREATLY  
IMPROVED ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES AND REQUIRES  
FACILITIES IN PUBLIC WAYS TO BE  
ADA COMPLIANT.  
BUT THERE ARE STILL GAPS OF  
SERVICES THAT EXIST.  
IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF OUR  
CITY, STATE, FEDERAL OFFICIALS  
TO ENSURE THAT ALL RESIDENTS  
HAVE ACCESS TO SERVICES NO  
MATTER THE CONDITION OF THEIR  
HEALTH, ABILITIES OR  
IMPAIRMENTS.  
AS THE CHAIR AND LEAD SPONSOR OF

THIS HEARING, I WANT TO WELCOME YOU.

AND SAY THANK YOU FOR YOUR TREMENDOUS WORK THAT YOU HAVE PROVIDED THE RESIDENTS OF BOSTON FOR SO MANY YEARS.

THIS IS AFTERNOON FORTUNATE ISSUE FOR ALL MUCH US.

EVERY FAMILY HAS PROBABLY AT LEAST ONE PERSON WITH SOME TYPE OF DISABILITY.

AND IT'S CRITICAL THAT WE ENSURE THAT EVERY PERSON HAS THE SAME ACCESS AS EVERYBODY ELSE.

IT'S ABOUT RESPECT AND DIGNITY FOR EVERY PERSON.

AND I'M SO PROUD OF THE GREAT COOPERATION WE RECEIVED FROM THE MAYOR'S OFFICE AND FROM OUR PANELISTS THAT HAVE DONE SUCH TREMENDOUS WORK ON THIS ISSUE FOR MANY YEARS.

AT THIS TIME IS AI MENTIONED THE CO-SPORCH SOURCE ARE CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS MICHAEL FLAHERTY AND LYDIA EDWARDS.

I WOULD ASK COUNCILOR FLAHERTY TO MAKE AN OPENING STATEMENT.

>> THANK YOU, MR. CHAIRMAN, THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED EFFORT ON THIS ISSUE OVER THE YEARS.

SUPPORT OF PARTICULARLY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AS WELL AS VETERANS UNMATCHED ON THE COUNCIL AND ALSO THANK COLLEAGUE CITY COUNCILOR EDWARDS FOR SPONSORING THE LEGISLATION WITH THE CHAIR AND MYSELF.

WE CELEBRATE THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THOSE THAT ARE DIFFERENTLY ABLED, REGARDLESS OF THEIR ABILITY.

AND ALL THE DEVELOPMENT HAPPENING IN THE CITY IS UP TO CODE WITH REGARD TO ADA ACCESSIBILITY REGULATIONS.

I'LL COMMITTED TO WORKING WITH THE COMMISSIONER AND OUR ACCESS COORDINATOR TO MAKE SURE THAT HAPPENS, AND MAKE SURE THERE IS A COORDINATED EFFORT BETWEEN WHAT YOU FOLKS DO WELL AND DOES

WELL, WHAT OUR BRE DOES, ALONG WITH WAYS THAT WE AS MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CAN BE HELD TO YOU, AND COUNSELOR FLYNN AND I HAD RECENTLY WITH SOMETHING THAT WAS NOT COMPLIANT, AND WAS BROUGHT TO LIGHT THROUGH THE PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION DOWN ON O CONE AV.

AS THE CITY CONTINUES TO GROW WE'RE EXPERIENCING UNPRECEDENTED DEVELOPMENT.

OUR PERMITS ARE FLOWING THROUGH 1010, PARKING, TRAFFIC, INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS, AS MUCH AS WE ARE AGGRESSIVELY PURSUING AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES.

LOOK FORWARD TO THE HEARING, LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING TO WORK WITH BOTH OF YOU AS WELL AS OUR MAYOR TO MAKE SURE WE ARE DOING THE BEST WE CAN FOR ALL OF OUR PEOPLE.

THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU, COUNSELOR FLYNN AND NEXT LYDIA EDWARDS.

>> TODAY'S HEARINGS IS ABOUT THAT CONVERSATION WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO HAVE.

WE HAVE COMMITTED TO PLANNING INTO 2030, MAKING SURE THOSE PLANS ARE NOT ONLY INCLUSIVE BUT LITERALLY LED BY FOLKS IN THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY.

AS THE CHAIRMAN NOTED AT SOME POINT MAJORITY OF THE AMERICANS WILL EXPERIENCE SOME FORM OF DISABILITY IN THEIR LIVES, TO NOT PLAN FROM THAT PERSPECTIVE IS ACTUALLY CUT US OFF AT THE KNEES, WHAT YOU HAVE ALREADY SEEN HAS MADE A HUGE DIFFERENCE IN OUR LIVES, IT IS THAT LEADERSHIP AND YOUR HOPES AND IDEAS THAT WE HOPE TO AMPLIFY.

AND I HOPE TO LEARN FROM YOU AND THOSE IN THE COMMUNITY TO MAKE SURE OUR EFFORTS ARE IMPACTFUL AND MEETING YOUR NEEDS AS WELL.

THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE AND THANK YOU ALREADY FOR THE GOOD WORK YOU'RE DOING.

>> WE'RE ALSO JOINED BY

COUNCILLOR McCARTHY.  
DO YOU HAVE AN OPENING  
STATEMENT?

>> THANK YOU, MR. CHAIR.

I LEARNED SO MUCH FROM OUR WORK  
TRYING TO CHANGE PEDESTRIAN  
RAMPS AND KOOKOO BIRDS AND  
EVERYTHING ELSE.

I LEARNED SO MUCH FROM PEOPLE  
WHO HAVE LEARNED THE MOST, A LOT  
OF STORIES HOW BRICK SIDEWALKS  
DON'T WORK FOR PEOPLE IN  
WHEELCHAIRS AND THINGS THAT YOU  
TAKE FOR GRANTED.

AND I'M VERY HAPPY AND PROUD OF  
MY COLLEAGUES FOR CALLING THIS  
HEARING, SO WE DON'T MISS A BEAT  
ON CONTINUING TO WORK AND STRIVE  
FOR BOSTON BEING FREE FOR  
EVERYBODY.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, MR. CHAIR.

>> THANK YOU, COUNCILLOR  
McCARTHY.

BEFORE I INTRODUCE THE  
COMMISSIONER, I'D ALSO LIKE THE  
RECOGNIZE THE LARGE AUDIENCE,  
MEMBERS WE HAVE HERE, ESPECIALLY  
MEMBERS OF THE MAYOR'S  
COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH  
DISABILITIES.

THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE AND  
MORE IMPORTANTLY, THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR TIRELESS WORK ON BEHALF OF  
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACROSS  
OUR CITY AND OUR STATE.

AND COMMISSIONER McCASH.

>> THANK YOU, COUNSELOR FLYNN,  
COUNCILOR FLAHERTY, COUNCILOR  
EDWARDS, COUNCILLOR McCARTHY.

IT IS A CRITICAL ISSUE IN BOSTON  
AND TO ECHO COUNCILOR FLAHERTY'S  
WORDS, WE'VE CELEBRATED 28 YEARS  
OF ACCESS.

AND NOW WE NEED TO MOVE ON TO  
REAL INCLUSION.

WE KNOW INCLUSION IS A LOT MORE  
THAN ACCESSIBILITY.

WE CAN BUILD RAMPS.

WE CAN DESIGNATE PARKING SPOTS.

BUT TO GIVE PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES ACCESS TO JOBS,  
ACCESS TO HOUSING, IT GOES A LOT  
MORE THAN FOUR WALLS OR CONCRETE  
BRICK AND MORTAR.

IT IS MORE ABOUT ENABLE BE  
PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY, IN THE  
GOVERNMENT, IN THE ECONOMY,  
THAT'S WHAT WE HOPE IN THE NEXT  
PHASE OF THE ADA, THE 29th  
ANNIVERSARY THIS YEAR.

TO TALK BRIEFLY ABOUT MY OFFICE,  
OUR VISION IS TO CREATE A  
DIVERSE CITY THAT NOT ONLY  
WELCOMES PEOPLE OF ALL ABILITIES  
BUT PROVIDES THEM WITH AN  
OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE A  
MEANINGFUL LIFE.

BOSTON HAS A LONG HISTORY OF  
ACCESSIBILITY, RESEARCH AND  
INNOVATION AND WE'RE IN A  
POSITION TO BECOME A MODEL CITY  
WHERE PEOPLE CAN LIVE, LEARN AND  
EVERY EXPECTATION OF ACCESS  
INCLUDE ENJOYMENT AND SUCCESS.

SO WHAT MY OFFICE DOES BASICALLY  
IN A NUTSHELL IS WE PROVIDE  
CRITICAL INSIGHT TO THE MAYOR,  
THE ADMINISTRATION, AND CITY  
COUNCIL, ON THE NEEDS OF PERSONS  
WITH DISABILITIES AND ISSUES OF  
IMPORTANCE TO THEM.

WE COORDINATE THE CITY'S  
COMPLIANCE EFFORTS WITH THE  
OTHER DEPARTMENTS AND I AM  
RESPONSIBLE FOR OVERSEEING  
COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS  
WITH DISABILITIES ACT.

WE PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE,  
ON REQUIRED ACCESSIBILITY, AND  
WE ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS AND  
COMMUNITY RESIDENTS IN FRAMING A  
MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE IN GETTING  
THE PRIORITIES KNOWN TO THE  
ADMINISTRATION.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK THE  
MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY WHO  
CAME OUT TODAY.

I'M ALWAYS PROUD TO WELCOME THEM  
INTO THE RENOVATED CITY COUNCIL  
CHAMBER WHICH I KNOW A LOT OF  
THE COUNCIL HAS WORKED ON WITH  
US.

I FEEL PERSONALLY THIS IS MY  
GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT.  
NOT MINE BUT UNDER THE TIME OF  
MY COMMISSIONERSHIP THAT THIS IS  
THE BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT WE'VE  
HAD AS A CITY TO BE ABLE TO

WELCOME PEOPLE INTO THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT IN THE CAPITAL OF THE STATE WITH EVERY EXPECTATION ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATION AND VOICES TO BE HEARD.

SO I WOULD LIKE TO TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT SOME OF OUR SERVICES. WE ONLY HAVE A FEW DIRECT SERVICES.

WE OVERSEE THE ACCESSIBLE PARKING PROGRAM.

AND WE DO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, I HAVE TWO ARCHITECTS ON MY STAFF WHO GO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ON BUILDING PLANS WHO GO THROUGH THE BPDA.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT SECTION AND PUBLIC WORKS.

THOSE ARE THE MAIN SERVICES WE PROVIDE BECAUSE WE HAVE A VERY SMALL STAFF OF FIVE SOON TO BE SEVEN.

I APPRECIATE ALL THE COUNCIL'S SUPPORT AND ALSO COUNCILLOR ZAKIM, THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING TODAY, I APPRECIATE.

APPRECIATE EVERYONE'S SUPPORT, REACHING OUT TO US, IF THERE ARE ANY ITEMS YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ON OR ITEMS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT FOR YOUR CONSTITUENTS.

OTHER THAN THE SERVICES WE PROVIDE OUR MAIN GOAL IS TO INCREASE SYSTEMIC ACCESSIBILITY AND WHAT I MEAN BY THAT IS, WE DON'T HAVE A STAFF PERSON IN EVERY DEPARTMENT.

BUT WE COMMUNICATE WITH STAFF IN EVERY DEPARTMENT.

FRECTS DZ, A CHAMPION IN SUGAR COMMUNICATION ACCESS IN ALL DEPARTMENTS.

SOMETHING I CANNOT DO BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE THAT SPECIFIC FOCUS OR EXPERTISE.

I DO HAVE A STAFF MEMBER WHO IS FLUENT IN AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE AROUND OTHER STAFF MEMBERS WHO SPEAK OTHER LANGUAGES.

HAVING THESE KEY ACCESS TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS HELPS INCREASE ACCESS THROUGHOUT CITY.

WHETHER IT'S THE SCHOOLS, THE

LIBRARY, HOUSING, D AND D, WE  
NEED TO ENSURE THAT EVERY  
DEPARTMENT IS WORK ON  
ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION.  
WE ESTABLISHED GOOD  
RELATIONSHIPS WITH THOSE  
DEPARTMENTS WE WOULD LIKE TO  
INCREASE ACCESSIBILITY FOR  
ACCESSIBILITY PROJECTS, WE  
APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT IN ALL  
THOSE THINGS.

AND WITH THAT I FEEL LIKE I  
WOULD LIKE TO -- ALSO I'D LIKE  
TO MENTION INFORMATION AND  
REFERRAL SO ANY CONSTITUENTS WHO  
CALL OUR OFFICE WE HAVE  
EXPERTISE ON A NUMBER OF  
DIFFERENT DISABILITY AREAS OR WE  
KNOW WHERE TO REFER PEOPLE TO  
GET THAT INFORMATION.

SO WITH THAT I WILL TURN IT OVER  
TO -- BACK TO COUNSELOR FLYNN.

>> THANK YOU, COMMISSIONER.  
AND THANK YOU FOR THE GREAT  
INTRODUCTION.

AND I KNOW YOUR OFFICE IS  
WORKING HARD AND DOING EXCELLENT  
WORK.

SO WE GREATLY APPRECIATE ALL  
YOUR EFFORTS.

AT THIS TIME, MENA SUAVE WOULD  
YOU LIKE TO GIVE AN OPENING  
STATEMENT?

>> THANK YOU FOR HAVING ME.  
I ALSO SIMILARLY WANT TO ECHO  
COMMISSIONER McCASH.

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR  
ALL OF US.

I WILL GO AHEAD AND TALK A BUILT  
ABOUT MY OFFICE.

I'M THE DIRECTOR OF LANGUAGE  
AROUND COMMUNICATION ACCESS IN  
THE CITY OF BOSTON.

MAKING SURE THAT PEOPLE WHO USE  
LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH,  
AND INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE AT  
LEAST ONE DISABILITY ARE ABLE TO  
ACCESS AT LEAST ALL OUR CITY  
SERVICES.

ANY INFORMATION THAT'S GOING OUT  
TO THE PUBLIC AND SO THE WAY WE  
DO 92 IS REALLY BY PARTNERING  
ACROSS ALL OUR DIFFERENT  
DEPARTMENTS INTERNALLY.



WE SEE THAT DOING THIS, THE WAY COMMISSIONER McCASH WAS DOING HAD THE, SLOKS THE CITY HAS EXISTED A LOT OF SERVICES HAVE EXISTED AND OUR TEAM IS REALLY LOOKING AT WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT WAYS THAT SERVICES EXIST AND WHAT ARE THE WAYS THAT WE CAN INCREASE THE ACCESSIBILITY TO EVERYBODY. SO IN PARTICULAR, WE DO THIS BY EMPHASIZING THREE TYPES OF ACCOMMODATIONS.

THE FIRST ONE IS INTERPRETATION, THIS ALSO DEFINITELY INCLUDES AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE AS WELL AS CART, COMMUNICATIONS ACCESS REAL TIME TRANSLATION, WHICH IS BASICALLY ON DEMAND CAPTIONING. WE ALSO ANOTHER TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION IS TRANSLATION, THINKING ABOUT ALTERNATIVE FORMATS.

WHETHER THAT MAY BE BRAILLE, LARGE TEXT, AUDIO, VIDEO, CAPTIONS WITH VIDEO, AS WELL, AS WELL AS ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY. IN ADDITION TO ACCOMMODATIONS OUR TEAM IS REALLY THINKING ABOUT PLANNING, THE PLANNING EFFORTS.

WE TALKED ABOUT THE WAY TO DO THIS IS REALLY MAKING SURE THAT OUR STAFF IS PREPARED FOR THIS, IT'S NOT SPRUNG UPON THEM AND THE EXPECTATION IS THERE.

OUR TEAM FEELS REA VALUABLE TO WORK DIRECTLY WITH STAFF MEMBERS.

OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS WE HAVE GOTTEN 200 STAFF TRAINED, WHICH IS REALLY AMAZING.

EMPOWERED IN DOING THIS WORK, WHICH ENDS UP BEING BEST PRACTICES FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED. SOME OTHER THINGS WE WANT TO HIGHLIGHT.

OUR TEAM WE'RE INTERESTED IN WORK WITH EXTERNAL COMMUNITY GROUPS.

WE KNOW WITHOUT FEEDBACK WE ARE NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO BEST OUR OWN PRACTICE INTERNALLY.

WE HAVE A VOLUNTEER NUMBER OF

STAFF MEMBERS THAT ARE FLUENT IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES, INCLUDING AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE, WHICH WE ARE EXCITED ABOUT.

SOME OF THE THINGS WE DO IN TERMS OF DISMIFORTIVE TECHNOLOGY LENDING THAT OUT, DATA COLLECTION, ONE OF OUR RESOURCE WE CREATED, THANK YOU, AND WE HAVE A WHOLE HOST OF RESOURCES ON OUR WEBSITE.

WE'RE REALLY EXCITED ABOUT THIS WORK.

WE WANT TO THANK YOU FOR THE SUPPORT YOU HAVE GIVEN US, WE HAVE SEEN ABOUT 150% INCREASE IN FUNDING AND THAT INCLUDES ANOTHER FULL TIME PERMANENT EMPLOYEE AS WELL.

WE ARE EXCITED TO PUSH THIS WORK FORWARD.

WE KNOW IT TAKES SOME TIME TO PUSH THIS AWLD FORWARD AT THE TABLE AS WELL.

>> THANK YOU FOR YOUR EXCELLENT WORK.

HELPING SO MANY PEOPLE IN OUR CITY AS WELL.

I THINK THE TWO REASONS THIS IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR ME ARE PERSONAL.

I HAVE ERBLEDLY PARENTS THAT HAVE CUSTODY OF A SMALL GRANDSON THAT DOESN'T SPEAK OR THAT DOESN'T WALK EITHER.

SO THEY'RE OFTEN PUSHING HIM THROUGH BOSTON GOING TO THE MARKET OSH TO THE LIBRARY.

I'LL HEAR FROM MY PARENTS USUALLY AT NIGHTTIME ABOUT THEIR DAY BUT I'LL LISTEN TO THEIR STRUGGLES OF HOW THEY INTERACTED IN NAVIGATING THE SIDEWALKS OR STREETS OF DOWNTOWN, OR VARIOUS NEIGHBORHOODS.

WITH A SPECIAL NEEDS CHILD BUT ALSO AS ELDERLY PEOPLE THAT ARE ALSO DISABLED AS WELL.

SO THOSE QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES, FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY, ARE CRITICAL TO ME AND THINK ARE CRITICAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL AND TO THE PLAYER AS WELL.

KRISTIN, I WAS WONDERING, COULD YOU TALK A LITTLE ABOUT THE COMMUNICATION YOU HAVE WITH CITY DEPARTMENT HEADS AS IT RELATES TO MAYBE ONGOING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, AND HOW YOUR VOICE IS IMPACTED BY MAKING SURE THAT PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ARE -- THEIR ISSUES ARE FACTORED IN DURING DEVELOPMENT STAGES OF CONSTRUCTION.

AND BEFORE I DO THAT I ALSO WANT TO RECOGNIZE COUNCILLOR ZAKIM FOR BEING HERE AS WELL.

THANK YOU COUNCILOR.

>> CERTAINLY, THANK YOU, COUNSELOR FLYNN.

ONE THING I DIDN'T MENTION IN MY OPENING STATE DEPARTMENT IS WE DID A SERIES OF EVENTS EVERY YEAR.

WE HOST FOUR MAIN EVENTS.

WE DO AN ADA CELEBRATION DAY ON CITY HALL PLAZA EVERY YEAR WHERE WE INVITE ALL THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO COME AND PARTICIPATE.

WE HAVE TWO TO 300 CONSTITUENTS THAT COME AND IT'S A CHANCE FOR US TO WALK AROUND AND TALK TO ORGANIZATIONS AND RESIDENTS AND TALK ABOUT THEIR ISSUES OF IMPORTANT.

WE DO A DISABILITY MENTORING PROGRAM, FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND TWO OTHER THINGS WE DO THAT HELP US CARE FOR THE HE RESIDENTS AROUND CONSTITUENTS IS WE HOST A COMMUNITY FORUM EVERY YEAR WHICH IS BASICALLY A LISTENING SESSION WHICH IS COMING UP ON JUNE 29th.

AND THIS IS TBAIX -- JUNE 28th, SORRY.

THIS IS BASICALLY A DAY FOR MYSELF, MY TIME, AND MY ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS TO COME SIT AT A TABLE LIKE THIS AND HAVE RESIDENTS, CONSTITUENTS, PEOPLE FROM OUTSIDE OF BOSTON COME TELL US WHAT'S WORKING IN THE CITY AND WHAT'S NOT WORK. FROM THAT FORUM WE DEVELOP OUR

ACCESSIBILITY AGENDA FOR YEAR.  
IF SOMETHING IS WORKING GREAT,  
LETS US KNOW.

OFTEN TIMES THERE ARE PILOT  
PROGRAMS, AND EXAMPLE OF A  
PLANNING PILOT THAT WE WERE  
INVOLVED IN, MY ARCHITECTS AND  
MYSELF, WAS THE ADU PROGRAM,  
ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS, THESE  
ARE SMALL APARTMENTS THAT PEOPLE  
CAN BUILD WITHIN THE FOOTPRINT  
OF THEIR HOME TO MAKE IT A  
SEPARATE UNIT.

THEY ARE GOOD FOR MAYBE ELDERLY  
PARENTS OR PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES.

IF THEY'RE NOT ACCESSIBLE IT MAY  
BE GOOD FOR A CARE TAKER TO LIVE  
WITH A PERSON.

SO WE HEAR FROM RESIDENTS THAT  
THESE THINGS ARE IMPORTANT AND  
THEN WE GET INVOLVED WITH THE  
PLANNING.

THE OUTER EVENT THAT WE DO IS  
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT DAY WHERE WE  
BRING RESIDENTS INTO THE FIECHT  
FLOOR.

THEY GET TO MEET WITH THE  
COUNCILORS OR THE STAFF.

THEY GET TO LEARN HOW TO VOTE,  
HOW TO TESTIFY AT THE HEARING.

I'M SO GLAD THAT PEOPLE COME TO  
TESTIFY, BECAUSE MANY PEOPLE ARE  
INTIMIDATED BY GETTING INTO  
STHAWRL.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO IT  
INFORMALLY, TO CALM OUR OFFICE  
AND TO TALK DIRECTLY TO  
COUNCILORS.

HEADS OF OUR DISPAMPLEGHTS,  
INSPECTION AM SERVICES, PUBLIC  
WORKS, PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, WE  
WERE INVOLVED WITH GO BOSTON  
2030.

WE HAD MANY, MANY MEETINGS ON  
THAT TO MAKE SURE THAT  
ACCESSIBILITY WAS INCLUDED.  
MAYOR'S HOUSING 2030 PLAN, FROM  
THAT WE ESTABLISHED THE  
DISABILITY HOUSING TASK FORCE  
WHERE WE CREATED THREE GOALS TO  
INCREASE ACCESSIBLE HOUSING  
BECAUSE WE KNOW HOUSING IS A  
CRISIS ACROSS ALL DEMOGRAPHICS

IN THE CITY RIGHT NOW.  
PARTICULARLY PERSONS WITH  
DISABILITIES BECAUSE IT'S NOT  
ONLY AVAILABILITY AND  
AFFORDABILITY, IT IS ALSO  
ACCESSIBILITY.

AND WE NEED TO KNOW THAT THE  
ACCESSIBLE UNITS ARE MATCHED TO  
PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM AND NOT  
GIVEN TO PEOPLE WHO DON'T NEED  
THESE FEATURES.

PARKS DEPARTMENT AND PLANNING,  
THE DEPARTMENTS ARE VERY WILLING  
TO WORK WITH US.

THEY GET IT.

FOR THE MOST PART THEY KNOW HOW  
IMPORTANT IT IS.

CERTAINLY A STRONG HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES CABINET VETERANS  
WE ALL WORK VERY CLOSELY  
TOGETHER AND I THINK IT'S A  
REALLY GOOD RELATIONSHIP THAT WE  
HAVE.

>> THANK YOU, KRISTIN.

MENARE, I APPRECIATE AND RESPECT  
THE GOAL YOU OUTLINED, LANGUAGE  
AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS.

WHEN I GOT ELECTED A YEAR AND A  
HALF AGO OR TWO YEARS AGO, ONE  
THING I WANT HE TO MAKE A  
PRIORITY BEFORE I EVEN STARTED  
IS TO RECRUIT PEOPLE FROM MY  
STAFF AT THAT SPOKE HANGS OARCH  
ENGLISH.

I WAS ABLE TO RECRUIT A WOMAN  
THAT SPOKE CHINESE, ANOTHER  
WOMAN THAT SPOKE CHINESE AND  
MANDARIN AND ANOTHER WOMAN THAT  
SPOKE SPANISH.

I REPRESENT A DIVERSE DISTRICT,  
DISTRICT 2, CHINATOWN AND SOUTH  
BOSTON, I NODE THAT IF I DIDN'T  
HAVE PEOPLE ON MY STAFF, THAT  
DIDN'T SPEAK CERTAIN LANGUAGES,  
THAT MY CONSTITUENTS THAT DIDN'T  
SPEAK ENGLISH WOULD NOT HAVE  
ACCESS TO ME.

AND SO IT WENT OVER VERY WELL,  
WITH THE CONSTITUENTS, BUT WHAT  
DO YOU -- WHAT ARE YOU HEARING  
IN TERMS OF RESIDENTS ACROSS  
BOSTON, THAT DON'T SPEAK  
ENGLISH, HOW IS THEIR  
INTERACTION GOING WITH CITY

DEPARTMENTS?

>> THAT'S A GREAT QUESTION,  
THANK YOU.

I WANT TO PREFACE MY ANSWER BY  
TALKING ABOUT HOW THAT THERE ARE  
INTERNAL STAFF MESHES WHO ARE  
MULTILINGUAL.

THAT IS A TREMENDOUS RESOURCE.  
AS MUCH AS WE ARE TALKING ABOUT  
ACCESSIBILITY, WE KNOW THERE IS  
A FUNDING COMPONENT TO IT.  
THERE IS A MATTER OF, THERE ARE  
CERTAIN THINGS, WHETHER IT HAS  
LEGAL, ANYTHING WITH LEGAL  
OVERSIGHT WE GO TO

PROFESSIONALS, WHAT DOES IT HAVE  
TO DO WITH BECOMING A WELCOMING  
CITY, WALKING INTO CITY HALL OR  
ANY OTHER MITCH BUILDINGS.

WE REALLY VALUE THE VOLUNTEERS  
THAT ARE PART OF THIS WORK.

SIMILARLY, THE STAFF WE HAVE ON  
BOARD, THERE IS A PART OF THIS,  
WE KNOW INTERPRETATION AND  
TRANSLATION ARE SPECIFIC SKILLS  
THAT ARE PAID SNORE SO WE KNOW  
THAT THERE ARE SERVICES THAT  
REQUIRE SOME SORT OF TRAINING  
AND SCOPE.

WE WANT TO BE ABLE STORY SHA WE  
ARE ABLE TO SUPPORT -- ABLE TO  
SHARE THAT WE ARE ABLE TO  
SUPPORT A HUGE PART OF OUR WORK,  
RELATIVELY EECIAL IN OUR PROCESS  
BUT WE VALUE FEEDBACK.

WE HAVE SEVERAL CHALLENGES, HOW  
WE RELY ON FEEDBACK.

BUT ONE OF THE ISSUES, LISTENING  
TO DEPARTMENTAL FEEDBACK AS  
WELL, THE PEOPLE WHO ARE ON THE  
GROUND WHO ARE MOST

FRONT-FACING, WHETHER THAT'S THE  
RECEPTIONIST OR THE PUBLIC  
WORKER WHO IS OUT IN THE FIELD,

OR EVEN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD  
SERVICES COORDINATOR SO WE

REALLY VALUATE THE FEEDBACK WE  
ARE RECEIVING FROM CONSTITUENTS  
THEMSELVES BUT ALSO STAFF

MEMBERS TO TALK ABOUT WHEN WE  
ARE THINKING ABOUT THESE

PROCESSES, WHAT IS GOING WELL,  
WHAT IS NOT GOING WELL, HOW CAN  
WE AMEND THAT BASED ON EACH

PERSON'S ROLE IN THAT.

>> EXCELLENT.

AND BEFORE I ASK COUNCILOR FLAHERTY TO LAY IN WITH SOME QUESTIONS, I WANT TO RECOGNIZE A GOOD FRIENDS OF MINE THAT'S HERE AND A LONG TIME RESIDENT OF SOUTH BOSTON, FRANK TAFNA, THANK YOU FOR BEING WITH US, FRANK. COUNCILOR FLAHERTY.

>> THANK YOU, MR. CHAIRMAN AND THROUGH CHAIR, THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECOGNIZE DAVID VIERA, THE FORM HE ELECTION COMMISSIONER FOR CITY OF BOSTON, DAVID BACK IN THE DAY DID A LOT OF WORK AROUND THE ELECTIONS MAKING SURE THERE WAS ACCESSIBILITY TO EVERYBODY.

LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM DAVID TODAY AS WELL.

COMMISSIONER, I GUESS FOR OUR DEAD FIGURES AND THE DEAD FIKS OF THE -- EDIFICATION OF THE PUBLIC, WITH RESPECT TO THE BPDA PERMITTING PROCESS, PUBLIC WORKS WHEN THEY ARE DOING THE SIDEWALK REPAIR AND HEANLD CAPPED ALIGNMENT FREER, CROSS STREET STRIPING, AND SIGNALIZING, BEFORE A LARGE SCALE DEVELOPMENT GETS COMPLETED, 232 OCONE AV, YOU SCRATCH YOUR HEAD AND SAY, HOW DID THAT HAPPEN? I'M ASSUMING THEY DIDN'T CONNECT WITH YOU.

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE HERE AND THOSE VIEWING AT HOME, WHETHER IT'S THROUGH DEVELOPMENT PROCESS PUBLICATION OR BPD, INTEROFFICE COORDINATION THAT IS UNDERTAKEN?

THAT WOULD BE GREAT.

>> THE COMMISSIONER WHO SERVED BEFORE I WAS APPOINTED, ALMOST TEN YEARS AGO, WAS AN ARCHITECT. I DON'T HAVE AN ARCHITECT BACKGROUND, I COME FROM PUBLIC HEALTH AND ADVOCACY BACKGROUND. WHEN I WAS HIRED BY A PREVIOUS MAYOR I ASKED FOR A POSITION OF ARCHITECT ON STAFF. SO I WAS ALSO ABLE TO GAIN ANOTHER POSITION.

I HAVE GO ARCHITECTS ON MY -- I HAVE TWO ARCHITECTS ON MY STAFF, THE BPDA HAS A NUMBER OF STEPS THAT DEVELOPERS GO THROUGH TO HAVE A BUILDING BUILT.

IT BEGINS WITH JUST AN IDEA AND THEY COME TO A SCOPING SESSION WHERE ALL CITY DEPARTMENTS COME TOGETHER AND THEY DO ADDRESS THINGS LIKE WATER OR TRAFFIC, THINGS LIKE THAT.

THERE IS NO MENTION OF ACCESSIBILITY, OTHER THAN A FOOTNOTE AT THE END THAT SAYS WE'LL BE ADA COMPLIEFNT.

SO WHEN I CAME ON BOARD I SAID HOW CAN WE HAVE ALL THESE DETAILS ABOUT PLANTS AND LIGHT FIXTURES WHEN THERE'S NOTHING ABOUT ACCESS?

I WAS ABLE TO WORK WITH BRIAN GOD MANY AND GET A CHECKLIST INSTITUTED IT'S CALLED THE ARTICLE 80 PROCESS FOR THE BPDA. IT LISTS OUT ALL THE STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCESS IN A BUILDING.

THINGS LIKE PATH OF TRAVEL, HOUSING UNITS, WHERE THEY'RE LOCATED, WHERE IS AN ELEVATOR, WHAT IS THE CLOSEST BPDA STOP. SEVEN PAGE CHECKLIST, VERY EXPLICIT.

PATRICIA MENDEZ REUIVES ALL THOSE -- REVIEWS ALL THOSE PLANS.

PUBLIC WORKS TO REVIEW ALL THE WORK GOING ON IN THE SIDEWALKS, PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY, THE SPECIFIC PROGRAM HAD GONE THROUGH PROCESS, THEY MADE PROMISES THEY DIDN'T KEEP.

IT WASN'T SO MUCH THAT THEY DIDN'T REACH OUT TO US, I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE ISSUE WAS, WHETHER IT WAS AN OVERSIGHT OR STAFF LEFT THE PROJECT.

BUT WHATEVER HAPPENED WAS, THEY DID NOT STICK TO THE PLAN THAT THEY MADE.

BOTH OF MY STAFF WORK WITH BTD. PATRICIA SITS ON THE VISION ZERO PROGRAM, AND I KNOW I ALSO LIKE TO THANK DAVID VIERRA, HE IS THE



ONE WHO PUSHED US TO GET THE RAMP INSTALL ON THE LIBRARY, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES HAVE ACCESS TO THE FRONT DOOR WHICH IS VERY CRITICAL.

SOMETIMES THINGS DO FALL THROUGH CRACKS, YOU KNOW, SMENGSA SERVICES IS ALSO INVOLVED.

WE WORK CLOSELY WITH THEM MAINLY BECAUSE THEY'RE IN A DIFFERENT BUILDING, AND THEY INSPECT, THEY ARE STILL BUSY, THEY INSPECT FOR FIRE AND SAFETY, HEALTH AND LIFE AND ACCESS ISN'T ALWAYS THE FIRST THING THAT THEY GET TO LOOK FOR.

SO WE DO PROMPT THEM TO, YOU EVER KNOW WHEN WE GET ACCESSIBILITY CONCERNS WE ASK THEM TO LOOK AT THEM.

SO I WOULD SAY WE HAVE VERY STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH BOTH DEPARTMENTS.

>> THANK YOU, COMMISSIONER. I KNOW I WOULD BE REMISS IF I DIDN'T -- WITH RESPECT TO THE ABUSE OF THE DISABILITY PLACARDS, THAT FALLS UNDER THE DIRECT USE CATEGORY.

REFORMING THE HANDICAPPED PARKING, WE ARE PROVIDING USE FOR PERSONS WHO TRULY NEED THOSE SPOTS, RATHER THAN PRODUCING OUT OF TOWN COMMUTERS OR OTHER SITUATIONS, IS THERE ANY MOVEMENT FROM WHERE WE LEFT OFF?

I KNOW A NUMBER OF STATES HAVE SORT OF ADOPTED A TWO TIER SYSTEM THAT HAVE, PLACARD HOLDERS THAT CANNOT PAY THE METER OR HAVE DIFFICULTY REACHING THE METER OR HAVE TACTILE ISSUES, IN MICHIGAN 60% OF THE PREVIOUS PLACARD HOLDERS, THEY QUALIFY FOR THE METER EXEMPTION WHICH ASK TREMENDOUS IN TERMS OF DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN THOSE THAT TRULY NEED THE PLACARD AND THE SPACE AND THOSE THAT DON'T.

BUT ANY UPSTAIRS YOU WOULD GIVE US?

-- UPDATES YOU CAN GIVE US?

I WOULD BE REMISS NOT TO ASK YOU

THAT.

>> TO UPDATE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

WE DO OVERSEE THE PARKING PROGRAM IN THE CITY.

TWO PIECES OF THE PROGRAM.

PUBLIC ACCESSIBLE SPACES WHICH ARE IN THE COMMERCIAL AREAS, THOSE ARE ACCESSIBLE SIGNS THAT YOU'LL SEE DOWNTOWN THE FINANCIAL DISTRICT, KENMORE, COPLEY.

WE COORDINATE WITH THEM ON THE BEST PLACES, THAT IS USUALLY A BLOCK OF ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES YOU'LL SEE.

MEANT FOR PEOPLE TO DO BUSINESS IN THESE AREAS.

ALSO, IN THE DOWNTOWN AND COMMERCIAL AREAS, THERE ARE METERS.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES CAN PARK AT METERS WITH PAYING NO FEE AND ALSO HAVING NO TIME PRELIMINARY.

SO THEY ARE SUBJECT TO ABUSE BECAUSE PEOPLE COME IN FROM OUT OF TOWN.

THEY HAVE A PLACARD AND THEY GO TO WORK ALL DAY.

SO I AGREE WITH YOU THAT THAT IS DEFINITELY AN ISSUE.

AND JUST I MEAN YOU PROBABLY ALL KNOW THIS BUT IT IS A STATE LAW THAT ALLOWS THAT EXEMPTION.

I KNOW WE'VE TALKED ABOUT DOING SOMETHING ON A CITY LEVEL.

WE DO HAVE A WORK GROUP AT ONE POINT SO I'D BE HAPPY TO ADDRESS THAT WITH YOU AV THIS PROGRAM.

THE OTHER ISSUE IS THE ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES THAT WE SEE IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS. THESE ARE SPACES THAT RESIDENTS APPLY FOR.

THEY ARE NOT DESIGNATED SPECIFIC FOR THAT RESIDENT BUT USUALLY NEIGHBORS KNOW THAT IT'S TIED TO THE RESIDENT AND IT GIVES THEM A BETTER SHOT AT BEING ABLE TO PARK IN THEIR HOUSE.

ONE THING WE HAVE SEEN WE'VE HEARD COMPLAINTS ABOUT IS PEOPLE COMING FROM OUT OF TOWN PARKING

THERE AND THEN GETTING ON THE BUS.

OR PARKING IN EAST BOSTON, IN THE RESIDENTS SPOT AND GETTING ON A PLANE.

ONE THING IMPLEMENTED LAST YEAR STILL IN A PILOT DPAIZ IS

PULLING RESIDENT-ONLY LANGUAGE ONLY ON THE ACCESSIBLE SIGNS.

RIGHT NOW ANY ACCESSIBLE SPACE IN THE CITY ANYBODY CAN PARK THAT WITH ANY LICENSE PLATE FOR ANY STATE.

AND IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS THEY DON'T HAVE TO HAVE A RESIDENT STICKER.

BUT IN PLACE OF HIGH TRAFFIC OR POTENTIAL ABUSE, WE HAVE SOMEBODY CAN'T COME UP FROM CONNECTICUT FOR THE WEEKEND AND STAY AT THE COPLEY MARRIOTT AND GET ON A BUS.

THAT'S NOT THE INTENT OF THE SPACES.

SO WE'VE NEUTERED THAT.

WE'RE ALSO LOOKING AT, I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'VE NOTICED IN PARK LOTS SOMETIMES THERE ARE SIGNS THAT SAY ACCESSIBLE VAN ONLY, FOR SOMEONE WHO HAS A LIFT.

AND THOSE SPOTS ARE DEFINITELY NEEDED BECAUSE IF YOU HAVE A LIFT YOU CAN'T JUST PARK

ANYWHERE, THERE MAY BE A TREE, THERE MAY BE A SNOW BANK.

IF YOU PARK CLOSE TO YOUR HOUSE YOU HAVE BETTER ACCESSIBILITY.

WE'VE TALKED ABOUT INSTITUTING THAT FOR PEOPLE IN THE CITY WHO HAVE LIFTS.

SO I WOULD JUST URGE YOU TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN IF TWO PROGRAMS.

-- THE TWO PROGRAMS.

BECAUSE CERTAINLY THERE IS ROOM FOR DISCUSSION AROUND METERS AND BUSINESS DISTRICTS.

WE CAN ALWAYS WORK ON THAT. THE RESIDENT ISSUES, SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT.

AND MORE NUANCED.

AND ONE OF THE DIFFERENCES TH WE MAKE BETWEEN THEM IS PEOPLE OFTEN ASK US FOR A MAP OF WHERE

ACCESSIBLE SPACES ARE LOCATED,  
WE DO HAVE A MAP OF THE PLIRK  
SPACES WHICH IS AVAILABLE TO  
GIVE OUT BUT I KIND OF HELD BACK  
ON GIVING OUT A MAP OF THE  
NEIGHBORHOOD SPACES BECAUSE WE  
DON'T REALLY WANT TO ADVERTISE  
THEM FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC OR  
GIVE OUT VULNERABLE PEOPLE'S  
ADDRESSES.

>> THANK YOU VERY MUCH,  
COMMISSIONER HOW HARD YOU WORK,  
I'LL PASS ON HOW ACCESSIBLE YOU  
ARE AND HOW PROUD ARE.

I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH  
YOUR TEAM, I LOVE SOME OF THESE  
CHANGES THAT I THINK ARE  
NECESSARY.

I FIND IT BEYOND OFFENSIVE AND  
DISGRACEFUL THAT WITH ABLE  
BODIED PEOPLE ARE OBTAINING  
PLACARDS AND RECEIVING PARKING  
FOR A DAY WHILE THEY GO WORK ON  
A CONSTRUCTION SITE OR WHATEVER.  
I KNOW WE ARE MAKING STEPS IN  
THAT RIGHT DIRECTION AND PLEASE  
CONSIDER MYSELF AN ALLY THERE  
AND MAKE SURE WE CAN MAKE THE  
NECESSARY CHANGES TO BRING THAT  
ABOUT.

I KNOW YOU ARE COMMITTED AND DO  
YOU A GREAT JOB SO THANK YOU.

>> JUST ADD FROM THE TWO TIERED  
SYSTEM, WE HAVE HEARD FROM  
RESIDENTS MR. THAT.

>> THANK YOU, COUNCILOR  
FLAHERTY, COUNCILOR EDWARDS.

>> THANK YOU, MR. CHAIR.

WE HAVE A WITH LIST OF PARKING  
SPOTS TO AUDIT IN EAST BOSTON.

WE AREN'TED TO MAKE SURE THAT WE  
WEREN'T MAKING FOLKS WHO ARE  
ALREADY VULNERABLE, MORE  
VULNERABLE OR TOP COP TO SAY  
WHETHER SOMEONE IS DESERVING TO  
HAVE THIS.

THE PROPOSAL YOU ARE  
IMPLEMENTING PUTTING RESIDENT  
ONLY ON THOSE SIGNS SCALE WILL  
DO A GREAT DEAL.

THANK YOU ALREADY FOR YOUR  
LEADERSHIP.

I THINK I WANTED TO TALK A  
LITTLE BIT ABOUT OPEN SPACE IN

CONVERSATIONS.

ONE OF THE BEAUTIFUL THINGS ABOUT OUR COMMITMENT IN THIS CITY IS THAT WE ARE ONE OF THE FEW CITIES THAT ASSURES PEOPLE ARE ONLY TEN MINUTES AWAY FROM A PARK, AND OPEN SPACE IS OPEN FOR ALL.

I'VE HAD MOTHERS REACH OUT TO ME ABOUT ALLERGY ISSUES AND HOW THERE ARE CERTAIN PARTS IN WHICH OPEN SPACE CAN BE LIMITED FOR THEIR CHILDREN.

EDUCATE BEING ME ABOUT CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND LOOKING AT THE PLAYGROUNDS, THE EQUIPMENT, HOW MUCH SPACE IS PLANNED TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE ALSO ENJOYING OPEN SPACE, THAT THEY FEEL A SENSE OF VALUE AND THIS IS A PLACE OF VALUE FOR THEM AS WELL.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF KS YOU'VE BEEN HAVING.

>> THIS IS AN EXCELLENT QUESTION, THIS GETS TO THE HEART OF INCLUSION VERSUS ACCESSIBILITY.

PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO A PARK BUT ARE CHILDREN ABLE TO PLAY WITH THEIR SIBLINGS, WITH OTHER CHILDREN, ABLE TO BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY?

WE WANT FAMILIES TO THRIVE IN BOSTON SO CHILDREN BEING THE FOCUS OF THE FAMILY, YES, WE DO WORK ON THAT ISSUE, ALL THE TIME.

WE WORK WITH THE PARKS DEPARTMENT -- AT THE PARKS DEPARTMENT, WE HAVE AN ARCHITECT THAT WORKS SPECIFICALLY ON ACCESS IN THE PARKS, AND ONE THING THAT I THOUGHT WAS GREAT WAS THREE OR FOUR YEARS AGO, IN THE, I THINK IT'S THE INCLUSIVE BUDGETING THAT THE CITY WORKS ON WITH YOUTH, THEY GET TO -- I'M NOT SURE IF THAT'S THE NAME OF IT BUT THE YOUTH GET TO DESIGNATE \$1 MILLION FOR INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION, FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. THEY TOOK A WHOLE SECTION OF THE

FRANKLIN PARK, THEY PUT ACCESSIBLE PICNIC TABLES, MADE THE AREA FLAT WITH HARD SCAPE INSTEAD OF GRASS, IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL PROJECT AND IT WAS LIKE KUDOS TO THE KIDS BECAUSE THEY CAME UP WITH IT ON THEIR OWN.

WE'VE ALSO WORKED CLOSELY TO THE PLAYGROUND AT SPALDING.

I DON'T KNOW IF YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH IT, YOU CAN RIDE THE MERRY GO ROUND IN A WHEELCHAIR.

WE HAVE MARTINS PARK ON ON JUNE 30th WHICH IS A FULLY INCLUSIVE PLAY SPACE AND PARK, FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, WE'VE BEEN INVOLVED WITH THAT. THE PARKS DEPARTMENT IS ALSO LOOKING AT MAKING A VERTICAL CONNECTION FROM BOSTON COMMON UP TO BEACON STREET.

RIGHT NOW, IF YOU WANTS TO GO ON THE FREEDOM TRAIL THEY HAVE TO DIVERT A ROUTE, YOU CAN'T JUST WALK THROUGH THE COMMON BECAUSE IT ENDS IN STAIRS GOING UP TO THE STATE HOUSE.

WE'VE ASKED THEM TO LOOK AT CREATING A RAMP OR ELEVATOR SO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES DON'T HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF THE FREE DOCUMENT TRAIL ON TREMONT STREET AND ANOTHER WAY WHICH THEY HAVE TO TAKE NOW. THE PARKS DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN VERY ACCOMMODATING WORKING WITH THAT.

THEY HAVE A L MASTER PLAN COMING UP EVERY FIVE YEARS THEY DO IT. WE GIVE FEEDBACK TON HAAS ONE AND WE CERTAINLY WILL GIVE FEEDBACK ON THIS ONE.

THE HARBOR WALK, RUN BY THE CITY, PART OF THE CITY MANY ONE OF MY ARCHITECTS JUST LAST MONTH WAS SUCCESSFUL IN CREATING A CONNECTION ON THE WALK WHICH WAS PREERVELTS UNACCESSIBLE, BY THE BRIDGE CONNECTING TO THE COURTHOUSE.

THEY HAVE A FLIGHT OF STEPS AND THESE STEPS ARE BEING DEMOLISHED AND REBUILT WITH THE NEW BRIDGE,

BUT INSTEAD OF MAKE STEPS MY ARCHITECT PICKED UP ON THAT AND THEY ARE GOING TO CREATE A RAMP-WALKWAY.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ACTUALLY, ADA, IT DOESN'T COVER FEDERAL OFFICES, ONLY CITY AND STATE SO THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO DO IT BUT THROUGH THE ADVOCACY OF MY DEPARTMENT, MY LEAD ARCHITECT, THEY WERE VERY WILLING TO DO THIS AND I THOUGHT IT WAS A HUGE ACCOMPLISHMENT.

>> I THINK THIS IS GREAT AND I'M REALLY EXCITED ABOUT THE PARKS THAT THEY'RE COMING ONLINE. I HOPE THAT FOLKS WILL CONSIDER CPA GRANTS THAT WILL ENHANCE PARKS THAT ARE ALREADY EXISTING TO HOPEFULLY MAKE THEM MORE INCLUSIVE.

ON THE TOPIC EVER INCLUSIVITY, MY FORMER BOARD MEMBERS FROM THE BOSTON CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING AND ALSO MY FORMER ACTIVIST MEMBERS FROM ADAPT, SORRY OLIVIA, MARKING FOR RIGHTS AND ALSO FOR VOICE.

I THINK ONE OF THE THINGS I'VE LEARNED AND I KEEP WITH ME AS KNOW NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US, WHEN IT COMES TO PLANNING, WHEN IT COMES TO WHO'S AT THE TABLE.

BUT I'VE ALSO LEARNED THAT JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE OR SUFFER FROM SOME FORM OF OPPRESSION, MEANS YOU CAN'T ALSO OPPRESS.

WHEN YOU ARE TALKING GOOD THE EXPERIENCE AND A LIVED EXPERIENCE OF FOLKS WITH DISABILITIES HOW DO YOU, HOW DOES THE COMMISSION ASSURE AT A FOLKS THAT ARE DISABLED AND A MEMBER OF THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY AND A NONENGLISH SPEAKER, THOSE LEVELS THAT PEOPLE ARE PUSHED AROUND AND EXCLUDED, HOW CAN YOU MAKE SURE THAT WHEN YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT THE COMMUNITY, YOUR CONVERSATION IS AS DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE AS THE COMMUNITY ACTUALLY IS?

>> SO THE INTERSECTIONALITY OF

DISABILITIES AND THERE IS A  
CONFERENCE HELD EVERY YEAR ON  
THE CITY ON INTERSECTIONALITY  
DISABILITY OF THE CULTURES.  
MY STAFF USUALLY SUSTAINED THAT THAT  
CONFERENCE -- USUALLY ATTENDS  
THAT CONFERENCE.

NOT EVERYBODY HAS A LIVED  
EXPERIENCE OF A FORMER STAFF  
MEMBER OF MINE WITH VISUAL  
DISABILITIES.

EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN  
EXPERIENCE.  
THE TYPE OF FAMILY THEY GREW UP  
INTO, TO THE TYPE OF EDUCATION  
THEY RECEIVED OR WANT FOR THEIR  
CHILDREN.

SO ONE THING THAT WE UNDERTOOK  
TWO YEARS AGO IS WE HAD A FELLOW  
FROM HARVARD AND HE CREATED --  
FROM HARVARD AND HE CREATED AN  
ACCESSIBILITY DIRECT IMPACT ON  
THINGS LIKE SIDEWALKS, PAWRKS  
WHERE PEOPLE COULD USE THEIR  
PRIORITIES AND THINGS THAT WERE  
TANGENTIALLY RELATED, WE GOT  
OVER 700 SURVEYS, OUR GOAL WAS  
500.

WE HAVE AN OUTREACH SPECIALIST  
IN OUR OFFICE WHO WEBSITE OUT  
AND GOT THOSE 700 SURVEYS, THEY  
ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE OR IN  
PERSON.

WHEN WE TALLIED THE OUTCOMES, WE  
ASKED PEOPLE TO IDENTIFY  
COMMENTS.

ETHNICITIES AND THINGS LIKE  
THAT.

WE DID NOT SEE A BIG DIVERSE  
RESPONSE, SO WE DECIDED TO NOT  
ANALYZE THAT DATA DESTINY  
FURTHER UNTIL WE GOT THIS  
RESPONSE FROM DIFFERENT  
CULTURES.

SO WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF  
HIRING A NEW OUTREACH ENGAGEMENT  
SPECIALIST WHO HOPEFULLY WILL BE  
STARTING IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS.

SHE SPEAKS TWO LANGUAGES.

SHE'S FROM DORCHESTER, I  
BELIEVE.

SHE WENT TO THE BOSTON MILK  
SCHOOLS.

SHE'S BEEN ON LOAN.



WE THINK THAT SHE'LL BE ABLE TO BE WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE OTHER COMMUNITIES, GOING INTO COMMUNITY MEETINGS AND REALLY TRYING TO MEET THE PEOPLE WHO WE HAVEN'T MET YET TO ENSURE THAT WE HEAR EVERYBODY'S VOICE BECAUSE THAT'S CRITICAL. AND EVEN GETTING THE WORD OUT TO COMMUNITIES ABOUT LIKE OUR FORUM AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT DAY. ANOTHER THING I'D LOVE TO WORK ON I'VE DONE A LITTLE BIT IS TO TRY TO GET PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES NOT JUST ON OUR ADVISORY BOARD BUT ON ADVISORY BOARDS LIKE SPARK OR ADVISORY BOARDS FOR THE BPDA, OTHER BOARDS SO THEY CAN BRING THAT ACCESSIBILITY LENS TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS THEMSELVES WITH THEIR LIVED EXPERIENCE. >> AND JUST TO FOLLOW UP ON THE INCLUSIVITY.

THANK YOU, THAT WAS GREAT. I'M ALSO FROM EAST BOSTON AND WORK WITH A LOT OF IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES.

WHAT YOU'LL FIND ABSOLUTELY 100% HAVING ACCESS TO LANGUAGE, RIGHT, THERE IS ALSO A LEVEL OF CULTURAL COMPETENCY AS WELL. SO WHAT I HAVE FOUND IN SOME OF MY ADVOCACY AT LEGAL SERVICES AND I'M SURE YOU'RE FINDING TOO IS THAT DISABILITY, HAVING A CHILD WITH DISABILITIES, DOESN'T MEAN THE SAME THING IN EVERY CULTURE.

SO YOUR WILLINGNESS TO GO REACH OUT JUST BECAUSE SPANISH IS AVAILABLE FOR ME TO TALK IN DOESN'T MEAN THAT I HAVE OR WITH I COME FROM RESPECTS MY CHILD WITH DISABILITIES OR WAYS TO ADVOCATE FOR THAT.

I'M CURIOUS HOW YOU BRIDGE THAT BEYOND YES WE HAVE A CHINESE SPEAKER, YES WE HAVE A SPANISH SPEAKER BUT THE CULTURAL COMPETENCY THAT IS WRAPPED AROUND BRINGING CULTURES INTO THE OFFICE, MAYBE I'M OVERSPEAKING BUT I'M WONDERING

HOW YOU HANDLE THAT CHALLENGE.

>> THAT'S A GREAT QUESTION,  
THANK YOU FOR ASKING THAT.  
THE WAY YOU'VE DESCRIBED THIS,  
WHEN YOU ARE THINKING ABOUT  
LANGUAGE AND DISABILITY, A LOT  
OF THINGS THAT WE'VE FOUND, THE  
WAY PEOPLE ARE HANDLING IT, ONLY  
LOOKING AT LANGUAGE OR  
DISABILITY.

WHAT DOES THAT INTERSECTION LOOK  
LIKE?

WHO ARE PEOPLE AND WHERE ARE  
THEY?

ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS OUR TEAM  
INTRODUCED, ASKING THE QUESTION,  
WE WORKED WITH PEOPLE, AND TO  
PLUG THAT, IT'S STILL GOING TO  
AFNS THIS QUESTION AROUND WHAT  
DOES LANGUAGE AND DISABILITY HOW  
DO THOSE THINGS OVERLAP.

SO A LOT OF THE INFORMATION THAT  
WE KNOW RIGHT NOW IS JUST  
ANECDOTAL, A LOT OF IT IS BASED  
ON EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE IN THE  
COMMUNITIES, PEOPLE CONNECTED  
TO.

SO ONE OF THE WAYS TO ANSWER  
THAT QUESTION, ONE OF THE  
INITIAL WAYS WE TRIED TO ANSWER  
THAT QUESTION, IN FEBRUARY WE  
WERE ABLE TO WITH CREATE THIS  
CHILDCARE SURVEY, PRIMARILY THAT  
WEBSITE OUT IN ENGLISH AND  
SPANISH, BUT ONLINE IT WHEREAS  
AN ADDITIONAL THREE TO FIVE  
LANGUAGES AS WELL.

THAT WAS A PRELIMINARY WAY TO  
UNDERSTAND ACROSS ALL OUR  
NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE CITY OF  
BOSTON, IT'S NOT NEXT ACCESSIBLE  
TO EVERYBODY, BUT OVER THE NEXT  
SIX MONTHS OR SO TO GET A MORE  
IN DEPTH UNDERSTANDING AROUND  
WHEN DOES THIS LOOK LIKE.

OUR TEAM, WE FOUND THAT WHILE WE  
ARE TALKING TO COMMUNITY GROUPS  
WE ASK THE QUESTION, BECAUSE  
WHEN WE ARE THINKING ABOUT OUR  
NAME, IN OTHER LANGUAGE, THERE  
ARE QUESTIONS ABOUT ARE YOU ONLY  
TALKING ABOUT LANGUAGE, ONLY  
TALKING ABOUT DISABILITY?  
EVEN IN ENGLISH, YOU KNOW WE

WANT A LITTLE BIT MORE CLARITY.  
SO WE KNOW A LOT OF THESE ARE  
JUST GOING TO REQUIRE A LITTLE  
BIT MORE CONVERSATION INTO MAKE  
SURE THAT WE ARE OPENING UP  
SPACES TO HAVE THOSE  
CONVERSATIONS.

>> EXCELLENT.

I'M VERY EXCITED TO WORK WITH  
YOU.

>> ONE THING I FORGOT TO  
MENTION, ALSO I MENTIONED  
ELECTIONS, MY OFFICE IS ON THE  
ELECTIONS TASK FORCE, AND ONE  
THING THEY ARE INSTITUTING THIS  
YEAR WITH THE CITY CENSUS IS  
QUESTIONS ON DISABILITY.

OSO WE'RE REALLY EXCITED ABOUT  
THAT.

THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY,  
THE ELECTION COMMISSION ISN'T  
DOING THE WHOLE THING BECAUSE  
IT'S VERY LONG BUT THEY'RE  
INSTITUTING FIVE QUESTIONS OFTEN  
DISABILITY, THE FIRST TIME  
THAT'S EVER BEEN DONE SO WE CAN  
ACTUALLY GET DATA ON MEDIUM WITH  
DISABILITIES, WHERE THEY LIVE  
AND WHAT TYPES OF DISABILITIES  
THEY HAVE, GREAT JOB WORKING  
WITH THE P BPDA, WHO IS IN WHAT  
NEIGHBORHOODS AND WHAT TYPES OF  
DISABILITIES THEY HAVE.

>> THAT IS EXCELLENT.

THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU, COUNCILOR EDWARDS.

THAT'S IT FOR THE FIRST ROUND.

AT THIS TIME I'M GOING TO TAKE  
PUBLIC TESTIMONY AND MAYBE WE  
CAN GO BACK TO FURTHER  
QUESTIONING.

BUT THERE WAS SEVERAL PEOPLE  
THAT DID SIGN UP FOR PUBLIC  
TESTIMONY.

IF I COULD CALM YOUR NAME OUT  
YOU COULD GO TOWARDS THE LEFT OR  
THE RIGHT.

AND YOU COULD ASK A REQUEST.  
TWO OR THREE MINUTES, GIVE YOUR  
NAME, NEIGHBORHOOD OR  
AFFILIATION.

AND I'LL START WITH JERRY BOYD.  
FRANK STAFF STAFF STAFF EA TAVERNA.

>> I THINK IT'S VERCH IMPORTANT

TO HEAR IN YOUR CONSTITUENTS  
WITH DISABILITIES AND TO SEE  
WHAT THE COUNCIL CAN DO AND WHAT  
THE CITY CAN DO, TO IMPROVE THE  
ACCESS TO PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES I APPRECIATE THIS  
HEARING AND BEGINNING THAT  
DIALOGUE.

I HAVE THE HONOR OF BEING THE  
CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION'S  
ADVISORY BOARD IT'S MADE UP OF  
13 VERY STAUNCH ADVOCATES OF  
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE  
CITY, CHARGED WITH BEING THE  
EYES AND EARS OF FOLKS WITH  
DISABILITIES IN THE CITY.  
SO THEY COME TO US, WITH ISSUES  
THAT THEY HAVE IN THEIR  
NEIGHBORHOODS, AND WE BRING THEM  
TO THE COMMISSIONER AND WE WILL  
HELP WORK AND SOLVE THOSE  
ISSUES.

SO I'M VERY HONORED TO BE PART  
OF THAT.

AND WE JUST CAME UP WITH SEVERAL  
ISSUES THAT WE'D LIKE TO FOCUS  
ON AND MAYBE YOU CAN WORK WITH  
THE COUNCIL ON TO IMPROVE,  
AGAIN, THE LIVES OF FOLKS WITH  
DISABILITIES AND YOUR  
CONSTITUENTS WITH DISABILITIES.  
THE FIRST ISSUE IS TREATMENT.  
HOW THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY  
GETS AROUND BOSTON IS IMPORTANT  
TO HOW WE CAN LIVE WORK AND PLAY  
IN BOSTON.

THE MBTA, BE SIDEWALKS,  
PARATRANSIT, AROUND THE NEW  
TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANY,  
LIKE UBER AND LYFT, HAVE CHANGES  
IN ACCESSIBILITY AND  
INCLUSIVENESS.

NOW ELECTRIC SCOOTERS ON THE  
HORIZON, IT MAKES THE ROLE OF  
MONITORING HOW THESE IMPACTS --  
HOW THESE AFFECT PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES AS IMPORTANT AS  
EVER.

SO WE AS THE ADVISORY BOARD ASK  
THAT THE CITY COUNCIL WORK WITH  
US TO HELP ENSURE THAT THE TNC'S  
ARE HEALTH ACCOUNTABLE AND  
PROVIDE EVER INCREASING AMOUNTS  
EVER MODE OF TRAININGS.

WE ASK THAT YOU WORK WITH THE DISABILITY COMMISSION TO ENSURE THAT THE PILOT PROGRAM OF DESIGNATED PICKUP AND DROPOFF SPOTS PROVIDES FEACIAL AND 16 DROPOFF SPOTS FOR US AS WELL. THE SECOND ISSUE WE'D LIKE TO EMPHASIZE IS HOUSING. HOUSING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT SOCIAL DETERMINANT OF HEALTH. CREATING MORE AFFORDABLE AND 16 HOUSING IN BOSTON CONTINUES TO BE A KEY FOCUS OF BOTH THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY. HAVING INCLUSIVE HOUSING FOR OUR COMMUNITY CAN MEAN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM OR BEING LOCKED AWAY IN A SKIMMED -- SKILLED NURSING FACILITY. WE APPLAUD THE CITY FOR ALL THEY'VE DONE TO INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE CITY, EVER INCREASING REBTS IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS, AND REALIZE MORE CREATIVE WORK NEEDS TO BE DONE. BUT WE ASK THAT THE COUNCIL, THE MAYOR'S OFFICE AND THE OFFICE OF HOUSING STABILITY, WORK WITH THE DISABILITY COMMISSION TO ENSURE THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE INCLUDED IN ANY SOLUTIONS REGARDING THE PROBLEM THAT THE CITY COMES UP WITH. ANOTHER MORE PRACTICAL ISSUE AT A WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO CONSIDER IS SNOW REMOVAL. SNOW REMOVAL IMPACTS MORE THAN JUST MOBILITY. THE ABILITY TO ACCESS EMPLOYMENT, HEALTH CARE, CURB CUTOUTS AND ACCESSIBLE PEDESTRIAN SIGNAL BUTTONS, WE ASK THAT THE CITY HOLD ITSELF AND ITS RESIDENTS ACCOUNTABLE AND MAKE SURE THE SNOW IS REMOVED FROM OUR SIDEWALKS AND CURB CUTS IN A MANNER TO ENSURE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES HAVE FREE AND EASY ACCESS TO OUR STREETS AND SIDEWALKS, ET CETERA. AND THIS IS ANOTHER VERY

IMPORTANT ISSUE THAT WE'D LIKE YOU TO CONSIDER, WE'D LIKE YOU TO CONSIDER ADVOCATING ON OUR BEHALF WITH YOUR ARE COLLEAGUES UP ON BEACON HILL IN REGARDS TO THE ARCHITECTURAL ACCESS BILL THAT'S IN THE HOUSE, AND THE SENATE, CURRENTLY TO DISABILITY IS IMPORTANT IN TERMS OF IT WOULD HELP US GAIN EMPLOYMENT, FIND ACCESSIBLE INTEGRATED HOWKS AND LIVE IN OUR COMMUNITIES. ESPECIALLY WITH THE LOSS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS ARCHITECTURAL ACCESS BOARD CHAIRMAN, TOM HOPKINS AND THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMUNITIES WANTING TO USE THE INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE INSTEAD OF THE MASS ARCHITECTURAL ACCESS BOARD REGULATIONS, THIS BILL CAN DO NOTHING BUT IMPROVE LIFE FOR BOSTONIANS WITH DISABILITIES. ONLY 37% OF MASSACHUSETTS RESIDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ARE EMPLOYED. THIS WOULD GO A LONG WAY TO ENSURE THAT MORE WORKPLACES OPEN THEIR DOORS TO YOUR CONSTITUENTS WITH DISABILITIES. WE URGE YOU TO LOBBY YOUR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES ON BEACON HILL TO PASS THIS VERY IMPORTANT PIECE OF LEGISLATION. INCLUSION AS AN ASPECT OF DISABILITY WHICH WE'VE HEARD ALREADY TODAY, INCLUDING OUR VIEW THAT ACCESSIBILITY IS NOT ALWAYS INCLUSIVE, THAT CLUKS OF INCLUSION OF ALL PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES MEANS GOING THAT ONE STEP BEYOND BASE REQUIREMENTS TO MAKE ALL PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES PEOPLE WELCOME AND COMFORTABLE AT CITY FUNCTIONS PROJECTS AND AT CITY HALL. NO MATTER YOUR ABILITY YOU SHOULD FEEL WELCOME IN OUR CITY OF BOSTON, AS THE COMMISSIONER STATED TOO OFTEN PEOPLE EQUATE ADA COMPLIANCE WITH INCLUSION. AND WHILE IT IS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT STEP TO MAKE SURE THAT

ALL OUR PUBLIC BUILDINGS ARE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL, WE ONEED TO GO THAT ADDITIONAL STEP TO MAKE SURE PEOPLE OPERATING THOSE BUILDINGS, BUSINESSES, SCHOOLS, ET CETERA ARE AS INCLUSIVE AS POSSIBLE.

THE ADVISORY BOARD AND THE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE DID A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF WORK FOR EXAMPLE IN MAKING THIS VERY CHAMBER ACCESSIBLE TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

BUT UNTIL WE SEE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES FILLING UP THIS ROOM, BOTH AS SPECTATORS, TESTIFIERS AND CITY COUNCILORS THAT OUR WORK CONTINUE.

WE ASK THAT YOU THINK OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, REGARDING IN I ISSUE AND THAT YOU REACH UP TO THE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE AND YOUR CONSTITUENTS WITH DISABILITIES, TO HEAR OUR VOICES REGARDING YOUR IMPORTANT WORK, OR ON ANY PREFERRED CHANGES IN THE CITY WHICH WOULD IMPACT OUR COMMUNITY.

AGAIN I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR CONVENING THE HEARING TODAY AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING THIS VERY IMPORTANT DIALOGUE.

>> THANK YOU JERRY.

FRANK TAVERN A.

A.

>> HI, MY NAME IS FRANK TAVERNA.

I'M A LONG TIME RESIDENTS OF SOUTH BOSTON.

MY PROBLEM IS, BUS STOPS AND CURB CUTS.

AND SOME CROSSWALKS.

ONE INCIDENT IS LAST WEEKEND I HAD GONE OVER TO THE NORTH END, BECAUSE NOW THEY START HAVING THE PROCESSIONS FROM ALL THE SOCIETIES.

I'M A MEMBER OF ST. JOAFTION JOSEPH SOCIETY, BUT I'M ALSO A MINUTE OF THE CII, CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING.

THE PROBLEM I HAVE WITH BUS STOPS IS VEHICLES CONTINUE TO PARK ONE AFTER THE OTHER, AND IT'S NOT JUST RECOGNIZE VE

VEHICLES.

THEY ARE BOSTON VEHICLES,  
MEANING LIKE BOSTON POLICE  
OFFICERS, STATE POLICE, AND ANY  
OTHER CITY OF BOSTON VEHICLE.  
AND THEY'LL ALSO EVERY NOW AND  
THEN BLOCK THE CURB CUTS TO GET  
UP ONTO THE SIDEWALK AND THAT  
WOULD BE AT THE INTERSECTION OF  
L STREET AND EAST 8th STREET.  
I KNOW COUNSELOR FLYNN KNOWS  
THAT AREA, THAT'S EAST BOSTON,  
AND ALSO I'LL GIVE YOU ONE  
EXAMPLE.

SUNDAY, WHEN I HAD LEFT THE  
NORTH END, I USUALLY TAKE PUBLIC  
TRANSPORTATION HOME.

I WAS GOING UP HANOVER STREET, I  
WOULD GET THE GREEN LIGHT AND  
WHEN I WAS ON THE SIDEWALK ON  
HANOVER STREET, I GOT ALL THE  
WAY TO THE POINT WHERE YOU HAVE  
THE SATELLITES THAT WHEN YOU  
CROSS, YOU CROSS HANOVER AND I  
BELIEVE IT'S CONSIDERED ATLANTIC  
AV, THERE WAS CONSTRUCTION IN  
THE AREA, AND I DIDN'T KNOW THEY  
DID SOME WORK ON THE SIDEWALK.  
AND THEN I WENT FORWARD, I  
DIDN'T NOTICE BECAUSE I AM ALSO  
VISUALLY IMPAIRED.

SO I SAID OKAY, I MISS SAID  
THAT.

I'LL GO FORWARD, TO GO TOWARDS  
THE CURB CUT SO I COULD WAIT FOR  
THE LIGHT TO CHANGE.

BUT I COULDN'T, BECAUSE THERE  
WAS ANOTHER LIP, AND I TRIED  
GETTING UP IT, AND I COULDN'T.  
SO I HAD TO TURN AROUND AND A  
COMPLETE STRANGERr SHOWED ME  
WHERE THEY HAD MADE A RAMP ON  
THE SIDE THAT WAS MADE OUT OF  
TAR.

AND I HAD TO SLOW THE SPEED DOWN  
ON MY CHAIR SO I WOULDN'T  
TICH -- I MEAN I -- TIP -- I  
MEAN I WASN'T NERCHES ARE  
NERVOUS DOING IT BUT WHEN I WENT  
DOWN THAT TAR RAMP IT WAS GOING  
ON HANOVER STREET.

LUCKILY THERE WAS LIGHT SO IT  
STOPPED SOME TRAFFIC.

THE FOLLOWING DAY I REPORTED IT



AT 311 AND SHE LOOKED UP IN THE SYSTEM THAT IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE TAKEN CARE OF WITH FRESH NEW CONCRETE AS OF TUESDAY. AND NOW THIS IS AFTER THE MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY. AND ONE OTHER THICK. IN THE WINTER, AS JERRY HAD STATED, WITH A LOT OF SNOW THAT WE USUALLY GET, MY PROBLEM IS, THE CURB CUTS. BECAUSE HAD THEY SHOVEL IN FRONT OF MY HOME, I HAVE A COUPLE OF SNOW ANGELS FOR THE CATHOLIC CHARITIES THEY ARE REALLY NICE PEOPLE, ALL I DO IS CALL THEM, THEY ARE NICE ENOUGH TO COME OUT AND MAKE SURE I HAVE ROCK SALT AND MAKE SURE I HAVE NO PROBLEM GETTING OUT. AND A LOT OF TIMES I ASK IF THEY CAN SHOVEL THE RAMP THAT GOES OUT ONTO THE STREET. BECAUSE AS YOU KNOW, EDDIE, I HAVE -- I'M WHEELCHAIR BOUND. AND A LOT OF TIMES WHAT MY LITTLE TOUCH OF LUPUS, I HAVE DOCTOR APPOINTMENTS. I CANNOT GET TO THE RIDE OR TO EVEN UBER OSH TRANSPORTATION FOR MY INSURANCE. BECAUSE I CAN'T GET OUT ONTO THE STREET TO GET ON THE LIFT. SO I JUST WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT CAN BE DONE WITH THE BUS STOPS. I'M NOT DOING IT JUST FOR MYSELF. I KNOW A LOT OF ELDERLY PEOPLE IN MY AREA. AND ALSO, I AM TRYING TO HELP THE BUS DRIVERS. BECAUSE IT MAKES IT EASIER FOR THEM TO COMMUNICATE WITH ME, AND THEY GET REAL NICE WHEN IT'S OPEN. AROUND IT'S NOT ALWAYS OFTEN. IT'S LIKE A POT LUCK. >> THANK YOU, FRANK. >> YOU'RE WELCOME. AND THANK YOU FOR HAVING THIS. >> THANK YOU, WE APPRECIATE YOU BEING HERE FRANK, I SEE YOU OFTEN AT VARIOUS MEETINGS IN

SOUTH BOCHT, YOU'RE ALWAYS BE  
ADVOCATING FOR -- SOUTH BOSTON,  
YOU'RE ALWAYS ADVOCATING FOR  
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.  
WE APPRECIATE YOU FLARCHG.  
HELLO.

>> MY NAME IS OLIVIA, I'M A  
RESIDENT OF BRYANT.  
OF BRIGHTON. I WANTED TO HIGHLIGHT THE  
TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF  
RESPONSIVENESS FROM THE PEOPLE  
ON THE COMMISSION.  
MY BUILDING CAUGHT FIRE ON, OF  
ALL DAYS, VALENTINE'S DAY,  
SENIOR COMPLEX.  
I WAS AT MY WIT'S END, I DIDN'T  
KNOW WHAT ELSE TO DO.  
I WAS SHAKEN AND LOST.  
AND I WAS ABLE TO CONTACT THE  
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSION FOR  
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.  
AND BE LIKE, OH, MY BUILDING  
JUST CAUGHT FIRE.  
I'M REALLY STUCK HERE.  
AND SOMEONE CAME.  
SOMEONE HELPED.  
IT GOT MY FRIEND THEIR OXYGEN.  
GOT ME MY MEDS, GOT ME A NEW  
BATTERY FOR MY CHAIR, I HAVE  
MULTIPLE BATTERIES THAT THIS  
THING TAITTS.  
AND WHEN I BROUGHT I UP WITH THE  
MAYOR, THAT, YOU KNOW, OUR  
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NEEDED TO  
EVALUATE.  
WELL, NOW WE'VE HAD THE TRAINING  
FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ON  
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR  
THEMSELVES.  
WHICH WAS PHENOMENAL.  
I CAN'T SPEAK HIGHLY ENOUGH WHEN  
THE RESPONSIVENESS AND THE DRIVE  
OF THIS COMMISSION.  
>> ALL FAIRNESS, I AM A MEMBER  
OF THE COMMISSION FOR  
DISABILITIES ADVISORY BOARD.  
SO WE ARE PARNL.  
BUT I HAVE -- SO WE ARE PARTIAL.  
BUT I HAVE SAY, THE HELP THAT I  
HAVE RECEIVED AS A CITIZEN OF  
THE CITY HAS BEEN TOP-NOTCH.  
THANK YOU.  
>> THAT'S GREAT TO HEAR, THANK  
YOU OLIVIA.

WE'RE GOING TO GET THROUGH A  
COUPLE MORE NAMES OF PEOPLE THAT  
ARE REQUESTING TO TESTIFY.

NEAH VAUGHN, ANDRE PAUL, TAKE A  
COUPLE OF WORDS TO STATE YOUR  
NAME AND YOUR AFFILIATION.

>> GO IN ORDER?

>> YEAH, WE'LL GO IN ORDER.

>> I'VE NEVER DONE THIS BEFORE.

SO BEAR WITH ME.

I WANTED TO TESTIFY, I'VE NEVER  
DONE THIS BEFORE.

I WROTE SOMETHING UP.

I DON'T WANT TO BE TOO

TIME-CONSUMING.

I'M A PERSON WHO WAS DIAGNOSED  
WITH ASBERGER'S SYNDROME, A FORM  
OF AUTISM, BACK IN 2002.

AND FOR MANY YEARS, I'VE BEEN  
LIVING IN JAMAICA PLAIN FOR MANYÑi  
YEARS, FROM ROSLINDALE.

WHY I FILED A CHAPTER 13, BUT  
THE PROBLEM WAS, I COULDN'T -- I  
COULDN'T AFFORD A LAWYER AT THE  
TIME.

AND YOU WANT ME TO READ THIS  
WHOLE STORY OR --

>> WHY DON'T YOU GIVE US A TWO  
OR THREE MINUTE SYNOPSIS OF IT.

>> OKAY, MY NAME IS YVONNE  
CHRISTIAN AND I'M A 54-YEAR-OLD  
AUTISTIC BLACK WOMEN, I

UNDERSTAND THE SERVICES TO HELP  
THE AWE ADVERTISE STICK PEOPLE  
WHO ARE HOMEOWNERS.

FOR MANY TIMES I'VE HAD A  
DIFFICULT TIME, FINDING  
EMPLOYMENT THAT PAID ENOUGH  
MONEY, MY EMPLOYERS COULD NOT  
PROVIDE ME THAT COULD COVER ALL  
MY EXPENSES.

EVEN TRIED SELF EMPLOYMENT AS A  
WRITER AND ARTIST, COULD NOT  
MAKE SUFFICIENT AMOUNT OF MONEY.  
THEY REFUSED AND KEPT ON RAISING  
THEM ITCH IN MY CONDO FEES.

GIVING THE FACT, PROVED TO BE  
INADEQUATE BECAUSE THEY COULD  
NOT RESOLVE MY PROBLEM, AND THE  
EVEN THE OWNERS DASH WITH THE IN  
NOVEMBER 2017 -- MY CONDO.

I HAD TO FILE CHAPTER 13 CHAPTER 13  
BANKRUPTCY ON MY OWN BECAUSE I  
COULD NOT AFFORD THE LAWYER,

THAT MY CASE -- BESIDES THE  
LAWYER WAS -- ABUSIVE OLD MAN.  
MY CASE -- TO GET ME THE  
PAPERWORK TO FILE THE BANKRUPTCY  
-- BECAUSE OF MY CONDO HAD  
EQUITY.  
I HAD TO HANDLE MY BANKRUPTCY  
ALL BY MYSELF.  
AND APRIL 2018, THEY HELD A  
HEARING WITH ME AND THE LAWYERS  
REPRESENTING THE MORTGAGE  
COMPANY AND THE CONDO  
ASSOCIATION.  
THE JUDGE -- HAD TO BE -- AND  
ATTORNEY -- OF BRAINTREE.  
I ULTIMATELY AGREED TO THE  
SITUATION OTHERWISE THE  
BANKRUPTCY WOULD HAVE BEEN  
DISMISSED AND THEY WOULD HAVE  
TRIED TO -- MY CONDO AGAIN.  
TOLD ME THAT THE CONDO HAD TO BE  
SOLD AND I HAD TO MOVE TO A  
RENTAL APARTMENT.  
HE TOLD KNOW WORK WITH A REALTOR  
AND COME FITZPATRICK ABOUT THE  
REALTY BECAUSE MY CONDO WAS  
LOAMED IN JAMAICA PLAIN. IS  
THIS A CAR ACCIDENT AND SUFFERED  
A NECK INJURY.  
PUTTING MY HOME ON SALE IN  
OCTOBER -- SOLD IN LESS THAN A  
WEEK.  
BUT WORKING WITH COLLEEN BECAUSE  
NIGHTMARE TO ME.  
SHE WOULD NEVER COOPERATE  
WHENEVER I ASKED FOR -- ASKED  
FOR HER HELP.  
THE PROBLEM IS AS I WAS PACKING  
UP MY THINGS SHE CHAINED OVER  
THE FACT I WAS IN A CHAPTER 13  
BANKRUPTCY BECAUSE MY RENTAL  
INDICATION TO THE -- SHE ORDERED  
ME TO -- I TOLD HER -- I LIVE --  
I WORK IN QUINCY -- INSURANCE.  
AND BUT -- MY APPLICATION,  
BECAUSE -- CHAPTER 13  
BANKRUPTCY.  
NOVEMBER -- COLLEEN HAD ME SIGN  
A RENTAL LEASE FOR AN APARTMENT,  
AND -- THREE FAMILY, HOUSE.  
ONLY THREE MILES AWAY FROM MY --  
PENTHOUSE CONDO IN JAMAICA  
PLAIN.  
SHE -- I THINK -- I NEED IN HELP

WITH PACKING.

BECAUSE I HAVE A HERNIATED DISK  
AND NECK PAIN FROM THE CAR  
ACCIDENT.

I TOLD THEM I NEEDED HELP WITH  
PACKING UP MY HOME.

SHE SAID SHE WOULD CALL ME THE  
NEXT DAY TO MAKE DONATIONS --  
REMOVING -- BUT SHE NEVER CALLED  
ME.

AND THEN IN THE MEANTIME, I GOT  
NEWS FROM MY FAMILY THAT MY  
UNCLE DIED ALL OF A SUDDEN IN  
TEXAS.

I WAS VERY UPSET.

I TOLD COLLEEN ABOUT THIS IN A  
TEXT MESSAGE, BUT SHE STILL  
WASN'T DISCUSSING WITH ME MOVING  
-- SHE WAS -- GIVING ME THE KEY  
TO THE NEW APARTMENT.

THEY MADE ARRANGEMENTS -- FOR  
THE FUN VALUE, BUT THEN WHEN I  
TOLD COLLEEN AND JULIAN AND --  
ABOUT IT IN AN E-MAIL -- I TOLD  
REAL ESTATE LAWYER ABOUT THE  
FLYING DOWN TO TEXAS ON  
DECEMBER 13, COLLEEN --

>> COULD YOU --

>> WHAT HAPPENED WAS, COLLEEN  
GOT THIS MOVING COMPANY CALLED  
-- CLEANUP CREW.

THEY STOLE SOME OF MY STUFF.

, YOU KNOW, AND I TOLD THEM, YOU  
KNOW, PLEASE MOVE MY BELONGINGS  
AND ALL OF THIS STUFF BUT SHE  
REFUSED TO FOLLOW MY  
INSTRUCTIONS AND AT THE TIME, I  
WAS OUT ON VACATION TIME AND --  
AND WORK AND DOING THE MOVE ON A  
SUNDAY.

AND SINCE I MOVED IN DECEMBER,  
DASH REALTY AND THE OWNER OF THE  
CLEANUP CREW TO TELL ME WHERE MY  
STUFF IS BUT THEY ARE NOT  
TELLING THEY TRUTH.

THEY SAY MY STUFF WAS DESTROYED  
BUT I DON'T BELIEVE IT BECAUSE  
THEY KEEP LYING TO ME EVERY TIME  
I CONTACT THEM.

>> YOU KNOW WHAT I CAN DO IS  
AFTER THIS MEETING, I COULD HAVE  
ONE OF MY STAFF PEOPLE HELP YOU,  
IT MIGHT BE A CONSTITUENT  
SERVICE REQUEST, AND WE COULD

TRY TO HELP YOU --  
>> THEY TOLD ME YOU WERE HAVING  
THIS HEARING SO I AM JUST  
TELLING YOU -- RELATIVELY -- NO  
ONE EVER TOLD ME.  
I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT -- I WAS  
LIVING AT MY CONDO AT THE TIME.  
AND I WAS UNEMPLOYED AND WHEN I  
GOT EMPLOYMENT AGAIN, -- IT HAS  
BEEN DIFFICULT FOR SO MANY  
YEARS.  
>> AND WE CAN ALSO TAKE A  
STATEMENT TOO AND WE CAN --  
>> YEAH.  
AND -- ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO.  
IT IS ALL WRITTEN BUT I CAN GIVE  
YOU INFORMATION.  
I MEAN -- I MADE COPIES OF WHAT  
I WROTE.  
FOR EVERYBODY TO READ.  
LET ME GIVE YOU -- THIS IS MY --  
I FORGOT TO TYPE IT.  
>> YVONNE, MY NAME IS LYDIA, I  
JUST WANT TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
TESTIMONY.  
>> I JUST DON'T WANT TO DRAG OUT  
MY STORY.  
>> BUT I WANTED TO SAY, YOUR  
POINT ESPECIALLY ABOUT ENSURING  
AUTISTIC ADULTS HAVE HELP IS --  
WE WILL FOLLOW UP WITH.  
>> SEE --  
>> IN TERMS OF YOUR INDIVIDUAL  
CONCERNS AND YOUR SEARCH FOR  
HOUSING, BANKRUPTCY AND THOSE  
ISSUES, I ECHO COUNSELOR FLYNN'S  
COMMENT WE NEED TO SIT DOWN WITH  
STAFF WITH YOU TO SPECIFICALLY  
GO THROUGH THOSE ISSUES AND TAKE  
THE TIME, COUNCILOR FLYNN,  
BECAUSE UNFORTUNATELY WITH  
PUBLIC --  
>> I KNOW.  
I DON'T WANT --  
>> -- TO TESTIFY, BUT YOU DID AN  
EXCELLENT JOB.  
>> I KNOW.  
THANK YOU.  
>> YOUR WRITTEN COMMENTS WILL BE  
EXTREMELY HELPFUL.  
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.  
>> THANK YOU SO MUCH.  
>> THANK YOU FOR TESTIFYING.  
>> YOU'RE WELCOME.

>> ANDREA.

>> GOOD AFTERNOON.

THANK YOU.

MY NAME IS ANDREA AND REPRESENT  
WORK, INC. IN DORCHESTER.

I AM HERE TO ASK FOR THE  
COUNCIL'S SUPPORT ON A BILL THAT  
HAS BEEN PUT FORTH BY SENATOR  
COLLINS.

IT IS AN ACT RELATIVE TO  
EMPLOYMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH  
DISABILITIES AND STATE  
CONTRACTS.

SO THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS  
THERE IS NO -- NOTHING THAT SAYS  
EMPLOYERS, INCLUDING THE STATE  
HAVE TO HIRE INDIVIDUALS WITH  
DISABILITIES AND THE  
REGISTRATION THAT NICK COLLINS  
HAS PUT FORTH ON THE SENATE SIDE  
AS WELL AS REPRESENTATIVE HUNT  
IN -- ON THE HOUSE SIDE, GIVE  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS  
WITH DISABILITIES TO HAVE ACCESS  
TO JOBS ON VARIOUS STATE  
CONTRACTS.

AND THE WAY THAT IT IS WRITTEN  
IS IT WILL OVER THE NEXT FIVE  
YEARS GET TO TEN PERCENT, SO IN  
THE FIRST YEAR IT WOULD BE  
TWO PERCENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH  
DISABILITIES AND THEN WORK ITS  
WAY UP TO 10.

SO ASKING FOR THE CITY COUNCIL'S  
SUPPORT TO SUPPORT THE WORK ON  
BEACON HILL WITH THIS  
LEGISLATION.

>> EXCELLENT.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

AND I AM FAMILIAR WITH THE  
PROPOSED LEGISLATION AND I DO  
KNOW ABOUT THE GREAT WORK OF  
SENATOR COLLINS -- AND A THAT IS  
SOMETHING WE WILL WEIGH IN ON.  
SO THANK YOU FOR LETTING US KNOW  
ABOUT THAT.

BUT WE DO KNOW THAT WE HAVE  
EXCELLENT LEADERS UP IN THE  
STATEHOUSE THAT ARE COMMITTED TO  
SUPPORTING PERSONS WITH  
DISABILITIES.

>> GREAT.

THANK YOU.

AND I KNOW THERE WILL BE A

HEARING AND THE QUESTION WILL  
GET TO THAT DATE AS WELL.

>> THANK YOU.

>> EXCELLENT.

THANK YOU.

>> THE NEXT TWO PEOPLE KARL AND  
CHRISNESS MY NAME IS PAUL KAREN.  
I LIVE IN DOWNTOWN BOSTON AND I  
AM THANKFUL AND GRATEFUL TO BE  
ON THE ADVISORY BOARD TO THE  
COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES AND I  
JUST WANT TO THANK CHAIRMAN  
FLYNN AND HIS FAMILY TO BE SO  
UNDERSTANDING AND ACCESSIBLE TO  
PEOPLE WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES.  
AND NOT REALLY HERE TO TESTIFY  
BUT JUST TO GIVE THANKS TO MAYOR  
WALSH FOR PROVIDING AN  
OUTSTANDING ADVOCACY PROGRAM FOR  
PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES WITH  
MENTAL DISABILITIES.

MAYOR WALSH HAS RECOGNIZED THE  
PROBLEMS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS  
AND PROVIDES A LOT PROVIDED OF A  
LOT OF SOLUTIONS AND HELP FOR  
US.

HIS WHOLE FAMILY HAS OVERCOME  
STIGMA ASSOCIATED WITH MENTAL  
ILLNESS, AT A YOUNG AGE WITH  
ADVOCACY PROGRAMS, EDUCATION,  
EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, AND MOST  
IMPORTANTLY HOSPITAL ASSISTANCE  
IN THE INTAKE PROGRAMS.

THERE IS STILL A LOT OF LEARNING  
TO DO BUT IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS  
WE HAVE REALLY OVERCOME A LOT.

>> AND ALSO WANT YOU TO REALIZE  
THAT OFTEN TIMES THE STRUGGLE  
RELEASE -- AND ONCE AGAIN,  
CHAIRMAN FLYNN, COUNCILOR  
EDWARDS, ESPECIALLY CHAIRMAN  
FLYNN TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY FOR  
YOUR ACCESSIBILITY AND  
UNDERSTANDING, YOU HAVE BEEN  
MORE THAN A HELP.

THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU, PAUL.

>> HEY, CHRIS.

>> MY NAME IS CHRIS DASH CAN YOU  
HEAR ME?

>> YES.

IT WILL TURN ON IN A SECOND.

>> IT IS ON.

>> OKAY.



I AM GOING TO THANK THE  
COUNCILORS, COMMISSIONER -- AND  
THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS FOR BEING  
HERE.

I HAVE TESTIFIED HERE BEFORE MY  
INJURY ON A NUMBER OF OTHER  
ISSUES.

BUT MY ACCIDENT TWO YEARS AGO  
THRUST ME INTO THE CHALLENGES  
FACING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.  
CHALLENGES I AM ASHAMED TO SAY I  
HAVE IGNORED.

I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE  
REMEMBER -- I HAVE TO REMIND  
MYSELF THAT I AM A PERSON WITH A  
DISABILITY.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY ARE  
PEOPLE AND DESERVE ALL OF THE  
SAME RIGHTS, TREATMENTS AND  
RESPECT OF ALL PEOPLE.

I AM TO THE STREAK CITY  
REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE ADVOCACY  
REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE UNITED  
SPINAL WHICH IS AN ORGANIZATION  
.. OF THE COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE  
WITH SPINAL CORD INJURIES.

I DO ALSO WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE  
ALL OF THE WORK OF ACTIVISTS AND  
LAWMAKERS WHO CAME BEFORE ME  
THAT ALLOW ME TO HAVE AN  
ACCESSIBLE APARTMENT, IMPROVE  
MASS TRANSIT, SUPPORT FROM  
COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER, AND  
ISD TO HELP ME WITH RENOVATION  
PROCESS.

I HAVE PCA'S, AND ADVOCATE  
ORGANIZATIONS OF DCIL,  
DISABILITY LAW CENTER, THE  
DISABILITY POLICY CENTER.  
GREATER BOSTON LEGAL SERVICES,  
AND SO FORTH.

WITHOUT THOSE THINGS IN'T -- I  
WOULDN'T BE HERE SO I REALLY  
APPRECIATE ALL THOSE WHO HAVE  
COME BEFORE ME AND THE  
IMPORTANCE OF THOSE LAWS.

THERE IS CLEARLY MUCH MORE WORK  
TO, DO EVEN THOUGH I AM THE IN  
AN ACCESSIBLE APARTMENT AFTER  
TWO YEARS, I JUST FOUND OUT THAT  
THE VARIANCE THAT WAS RECEIVED  
FOR THIS HUGE 200 PLUS PROJECT  
IN JAMAICA PLAIN REQUIRE THAT  
THEY HAVE ACCESSIBLE SINKS, SIX

OF THEM ON HAND TO BE ABLE TO  
REPLACE WITHIN A WEEK.  
WELL, TWO YEARS LATER I FINALLY,  
WHEN I GOT THAT -- FROM THE  
ARCHITECTURAL ACCESS BOARD I WAS  
ABLE TO LAY THE LAW BEFORE THE  
MANAGEMENT, WHICH OWNED AND  
MANAGED THE PROPERTY AND AT THAT  
POINT, THEY FINALLY FOUND A  
SINK.

I WANT TO SAY THAT THE GREATER  
BOSTON CHAPTER REALLY  
UNDERSTANDS THE IMPORTANCE AND I  
AM REALLY ECHOING WHAT OTHERS  
HAVE SAID, AND IT IS A CONTINUED  
CRISIS OF A LACK OF ACCESSIBLE  
AND ADAPTABLE HOUSING AND  
WORKPLACES AND I WANTED TO TALK  
ABOUT THE IDEA OF ADAPTABLE  
BECAUSE FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO  
DON'T BRING YOUR OWN CHAIRS WITH  
YOU WHEN GREW PLACES GO PLACES  
AND RELY ON OTHERS TO PROVIDE  
CHAIRS FOR YOU, YOU MIGHT NEED A  
CHAIR WITH YOU ALL THE TIME OR  
OTHER MOBILITY DEVICES AND THE  
ADAPTABLE PIECE OF THIS IS, THAT  
WHEF WE ARE BUILDING NEW  
BUILDINGS AND THEY ARE ALL OVER  
THE CITY OR RENOVATING THESE  
MASSIVE RENOVATIONS THOSE  
APARTMENTS SHOULD BE ADAPTABLE,  
SO THAT LATER IF YOU NEED THAT,  
YOU CAN LIVE IN YOUR COMMUNITY  
WITHOUT HAVING TO FIND THE  
FIVE PERCENT OF ACCESSIBLE  
HOUSING.

>> WITHOUT HAVING TO HAVE  
SOMEONE GO IN AND DO A GUT  
RENOVATION.

THIS IS SO IMPORTANT TO US.  
AND WE HAVE FOCUSED OUR, OUR  
CHAPTER IS FOCUSED WITH WORKING  
WITH OTHER ADVOCACY GROUPS AS  
OTHER MEMBERS HAVE OTHER  
SPEAKERS HAVE DISCUSSED.

THE LEGISLATION ENTITLED AN ACT  
-- AN ACT TO -- I AM SORRY.

IT IS AN ACT TO -- AN ACT  
RELATIVE TO THE ARCHITECTURAL  
ACCESS BOARD.

AND YOU KNOW THAT ORGANIZATION  
WHICH IS THERE TO ENSURE THAT  
HOUSING AND WORKPLACES NEED

ACCESSIBLE STANDARDS.

BUT IT IS WAY OUT OF DATE AND  
THERE ARE LARGE LOOPHOLES THAT  
WE NEED CLOSED.

AND SO WE ARE ASKING THAT YOU  
SPEAK WITH YOUR FRIENDS,  
ACTIVELY ENDORSE AND ACTIVELY  
SUPPORT THIS LEGISLATION.

IT HAS BEEN FILED.

IN THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE AND  
IT NEEDS TO BE VOTED OUT OF  
COMMITTEE AND THEN WE WILL NEED  
YOUR HELP TO GET IT OUT OF THE  
HOUSE WAYS AND MEAN COMMITTEE.  
SO I THINK WE WILL BE FOLLOWING  
UP WITH COUNCILORS TO ASK FOR  
YOUR ACTIVE SUPPORT.

AND IF YOU ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT  
THAT LEGISLATION, THERE ARE MANY  
PEOPLE IN THIS ROOM WHO CAN  
ANSWER THOSE QUESTIONS.

>> SO THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR  
TIME.

>> THANK YOU.

THANK YOU, CHRIS AND THE LAST  
TWO PEOPLE THAT SIGNED UP, DAVID  
AND FELIZ AT THIS.

>> GOOD AFTERNOON, COUNCILORS.

>> GOOD AFTERNOON.

>> GOOD AFTERNOON, COMMISSIONER.  
MY NAME IS DAVID -- FROM HYDE  
PARK.

I APPRECIATE THE COMMISSION OF  
BRINGING UP THE SUBJECT OF THE  
GRANT AT THE LIBRARY BECAUSE I  
WAS GOING TO GIVE YOU GUYS A  
LITTLE BACKGROUND ABOUT THAT.  
BACK WHEN I WAS PRESIDENT OF THE  
CITY WIDE FRIENDS OF THE  
LIBRARY, BETWEEN 2001 AND 2013,  
MY FRIEND JOHN KERRY WHO WAS  
WHEELCHAIR BOUND CALLED ME OUT.  
THIS WAS BACK IN 2005, 2006, AND  
TOLD ME ABOUT THE FACT THAT IN  
ORDER TO GET INTO THE LIBRARY IN  
HIS CHAIR, HE HAD TO GO TO THE  
-- STREET ENTRANCE, PUSH A BELL,  
AND WAIT FOR SOMEBODY TO COME  
AND OPEN THE DOOR FOR HIM.  
IN THE RAIN AND THE COLD AND THE  
SLEET.

AND I BROUGHT JOHN TO A MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND  
EXPLAINED THE NECESSITY OF

PUTTING IN A SELF ACTIVATING DOOR, AND IT TOOK THEM UNTIL 2010 TO DO THAT.

AND I BROUGHT UP AT THE SAME TIME THE FACT THAT THE DARTMOUTH STREET ENTRANCE ALSO NEEDED A RAMP AND THEY TOLD ME THAT THE -- THEY COULDN'T DO THAT BECAUSE THEY WERE LANDMARK PROTECTED AND THE BOSTON LANDMARK COMMISSION WOULD NOT LOU A RAMP ON THE MCCANN SIDE OF THE BUILDING. SO 2014, THE JOHNSON BUILDING ENTRANCE CLOSED BECAUSE OF THE RENOVATION THAT YOU ARE ALL AWARE OF, AN A RAMP MAGICALLY APPEARED ON THE MCCAIN SIDE, THE COPLEY SQUARE SIDE OF THE BUILDING, ALONG WITH AN AUTOMATIC DOOR.

AND I WAS THRILLED AND I WAS TOLD AT THE TIME THAT THIS WAS A TEMPORARY VARIANCE AND AS SOON AS THE RENOVATION WAS COMPLETED, THE RAMP WAS GOING TO GO AWAY.

AND I DIDN'T BELIEVE THEM.

AND A WEEK AFTER THE JOHNSON BUILDING OPENED, THE RAMP WENT AWAY.

RATHER THAN THE RAMP GOING AWAY THAT THE RENT -- THE RAMP BE A PART OF RE-INSTALLING THE OLD SWING DOORS AND TAKING OUT THE AUTOMATIC DOOR.

AND I GOT, GOT TO A BOARD MEETING AN COMPLAINED ABOUT IT AGAIN.

THAT FALL, THE ELECTION DEPARTMENT WAS HAVING -- WAS USING ONE OF THE ROOMS ON THE MCKINN SIDE OF THE BUILDING FOR VOTING AND THE RAMP MAGICALLY REAPPEARED FOR 48 HOURS TO ACCOMMODATE THE ELECTION.

AND THEY HAD TO POST AN ELECTION OFFICER AT THE PREVIOUSLY AUTOMATIC DOOR TO LET PEOPLE IN SO WITH THE ELECTION OFFICE SPENT 12 HOURS SITTING IN THAT FOYER WAITING FOR SOMEBODY WITH A WHEELCHAIR TO COME IN.

SO I GOT SORT OF TIRED OF TALKING TO THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY ABOUT THIS.

AND I CAME TO THE COMMISSION  
HERE AND I SPOKE TO COMMISSIONER  
MACINTOSH AND I SPOKE TO THE  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND THEY TOOK  
A VOTE THERE WAS A LETTER TO THE  
PRESIDENT OF THE BOSTON PUBLIC  
LIBRARY COMMISSIONER -- HAD  
PERSONAL MEETING WITH THE  
COMMISSIONER OF THE BOSTON  
PUBLIC LIBRARY AND THE RAMP IS  
BACK AND THE AUTOMATIC DOOR IS  
BACK.

MY POINT HERE IS THIS, FOLKS.

? THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF  
BOSTON SHOULDN'T HAVE TO PLAY  
FIVE ROUNDS OF ROCK, PAPER,  
SCISSORS IN ORDER TO GET A BASIC  
ACCESS TO THE MOST IMPORTANT AND  
MOST HEAVILY USED BUILDING IN  
THE CITY OF BOSTON:WE HAVE  
TOURISTS COMING IN THERE, YOU  
HAVE PEOPLE ON WALKERS, ON  
CRUTCHES AS WELL AS FOLKS WHO  
ARE IN CHAIRS, AND FOLKS WHO  
HAVE A PROBLEM NEGOTIATING THE  
STEPS DURING CERTAIN LIGHT  
CONDITIONS ON THE SQUARE.  
I THINK THIS SHOULD BE BASIC.  
IT IS NOT JUST THE BOSTON  
PUBLICLY LIBRARY THAT IS AT  
FAULT HERE.

WE ALL KNOW ABOUT THE COURT SUIT  
THAT WAS RECENTLY SETTLED UP ON  
BEACON HILL THAT DRAGGED ON FOR  
SEVERAL YEARS.

THE COMMISSION AND THE PHONES  
WHO HAVE EQUITY IN THESE  
HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS HAVE TO  
UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE NOT  
LIVING IN THE 1,800S ANYMORE,  
AND IT IS NICE TO BE PRETTY, BUT  
IT IS NICER TO BE ABLE TO GET  
INTO A LIBRARY, TO WALK UP AND  
DOWN THE STREET AND BE ABLE TO  
USE A RAMP AT A CURB CUT.

PO PEOPLE NEED TO UNDERSTAND  
THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE NO  
IMPAIRMENTS, YOU ARE DAB YOU  
TAKE -- YOU TAKE -- YOU DON'T  
REALLY SEE THE OBSTACLES THAT  
ARE AROUND US EVERY DAY.

WE HAVE HYDRANTS.

WE HAVE POLES.

WE HAVE PAPER BOXES.

WE HAVE BRICKS THAT HAVE POPPED UP AND HAVE NOT BEEN REPLACED. THERE ARE ALL KIND OF OBSTACLES THAT PEOPLE WHO DO NOT HAVE IMPAIRMENTS DON'T REALLY FOCUS ON BECAUSE THEY CAN SEE THEM. THEY CAN MANEUVER AROUND THEM. THEY DON'T THINK OF THEM AS DIRECT OBSTACLES TO MOBILITY. IT IS JUST SOMETHING THAT THEY TAKE THE RIGHT TO JUST NOT PAY ATTENTION TO BECAUSE BEFORE I HAD MY VISION IMPAIRMENT, I WAS THE SAME WAY.

AND AS I STARTED TO LOSE MY VISION, I FINALLY UNDERSTOOD WHAT IT MEANT TO HAVE THOSE KINDS OF -- THOSE KINDS OF IMPAIRMENT. SO WHEN YOU GO OUT TODAY AND WE TAKE A WALK, LOOK AROUND AND SEE, REALLY SEE AND UNDERSTAND SOME OF THE THINGS IN THE CITY THAT HAVE HAD IMPROVEMENTS BUT STILL NEED TO BE LOOKED AT.

THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU, DAVID.

FELICITY.

>> I LIVE ON -- I AM 22 YEARS OLD.

I HAVE A RARE DISEASE, INCURABLE DISEASE -- TYPE 2, WHICH IS HAS CAUSED PROFOUND DEAFNESS. AND -- I WANTED TO TALK ABOUT TRAFFIC.

I -- A COMPLICATION.

AND THE -- SO REGULAR -- I AM IN A CROSSWALK.

-- SO SLOW.

>> BOSTON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION -- CROSSWALK -- WASHINGTON STREET AND -- A FEW YEARS AGO THE SIDEWALK HADN'T BEEN CLEARED OFF AND BECAUSE OF MY DISORDER I MOVED TO THE CITY WHERE TRAFFIC -- SO IT WAS A MIRACLE.

IT IS JUST LIKE -- ANOTHER TIME THERE WAS AN EXTREMELY CLOSE CALL.

I WAS ON BROADWAY AND B STREET AND AT THIS TIME -- IN 2014 -- A SIDE EFFECT OF BRAIN SURGERY.

SO IT IS LIKE WHEN YOU ARE IN THE SHOWER AND LOOK IN THE MIRROR, LIKE YOU CAN SEE THE SHAPE, BUT YOU CAN'T REALLY SEE CLEARLY.

AND -- IN THE CROSSWALK, IT IS LIKE -- AND THE TRUCK MADE THAT TURN, A LEFT-HAND TURN, LIKE -- I SENTENCED THE CROSSWALK AND AT THE SAME TIME THE TRUCK, YOU KNOW, LIKE -- I TOOK A REAL HARD LOOK AND -- IT IS LIKE DEATH JUST WAITING TO HAPPEN.

AND THAT WAS THE TERRIFYING CLOSE CALLS.

THE TRAFFIC, THE WALKS, I WANT TO MENTION MY BOYFRIEND WE SHOULD HAVE HAD A CALL LAST FALL.

HE WAS IN THE CROSSWALK, MIDDLE OF THE DAY, THE DRIVER ON THE CELLPHONE AND --

>> SHE WAS IN THE CROSSWALK. I BELIEVE ON BEACON STREET.

AND -- SHE WAS IN THE CROSSWALK ON THE WALK SIGNAL.

IT WAS TERRIFYING.

CAME THROUGH.

IT IS A LOT OF STRESS.

I HAVE A BALANCE DISORDER.

AND I HAVE NERVES.

AND -- IS UNSTABLE BECAUSE OF BACK AND FORTH.

SO -- ON TRACK I HAVE TO SIT AT HOME OR I HAVE TO WALK IN THE ROAD.

AND THE SMALL CURB -- GET TO WHERE WE NEED TO GO -- USED TO TAKE A CAR TO WHERE THEY NEED TO GO, OR IN MY VIEW, LIKE SUMMER STREET.

IF THERE ARE TWO LANES OF TRAFFICS GOING BOTH WAYS AND THE SIDEWALKS ARE COMPLETELY -- THEN SOUTH BOSTON -- FOR FIVE YEARS, AND SUMMER STREET BETWEEN CONVENTION CENTER AND UNTIL THE -- UNTIL THE -- SUMMER STREET.

SO I WALK IN THE ROAD.

AND SO THE FEELING IS -- INSTEAD OF -- IN EACH DIRECTION -- AS OPPOSED TO WALKING IN THE ROAD,

-- A VEHICLE IS GIVEN PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT TO A

PERSON THAT WAS IN THE LANE,  
THANK GOD OF THE UNIVERSE -- AN  
AND.

>> YEAH.

>> THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU FOR LISTENING TO  
THIS.

THANK YOU.

THANK YOU, FELIZ AT THIS AND WE  
WILL FOLLOW UP ON YOUR  
RECOMMENDATIONS.

THEY WERE REALLY GOOD.

>> THEY WERE EXCELLENT.

WE HAVE TWO MORE PEOPLE THAT  
REQUESTED TO TESTIFY.

SO YOU CAN COME ON DOWN.

AND RACHEL.

AND IF YOU COULD GIVE YOUR NAME  
AND NEIGHBORHOOD AND AFFILIATION  
AND MAYBE SPEAK FOR TWO OR THREE  
MINUTES.

PLEASE.

>> GOOD EVENING.

I WAS RUSHING HERE FROM CLASS,  
SO I HOPE I SPEAK COHERENTLY.

MY NAME IS -- ALPHA SHORT.

I WILL KEEP THIS SHORT.

I AM ON THE DISABILITY

COMMISSION AND -- I WAS PLANNING  
TO SPEAK ABOUT MBTA HOUSING BUT  
I HAVE MY COLLEAGUES HAVE SPOKEN  
AN EARFUL ABOUT THE MBTA TO --  
ABOUT MY CONCERNS ABOUT HOUSING.  
MY CONCERN IS, ON BEHALF OF.

>> -- WHICH IS -- APARTMENTS.

>> TO TALK ABOUT THIS ESPECIALLY  
THOSE WHO HAVE STAIRS.

AND/OR DO NOT HAVE ELEVATORS,  
WHICH IS AN ISSUE, BECAUSE THERE  
ARE MANY -- ESPECIALLY HIDDEN  
DISABILITY, PTSD, ANY MENTAL  
HEALTH ISSUES THAT NEED TO USE  
EITHER THE APARTMENTS OR THE  
ELEVATOR, AND MANY OF THEM NEED  
TO, BY THEMSELVES, IF THEY DO --  
I ASSUME THE ORIGINAL IDEA WAS  
THAT PEOPLE WHO GET DASH BECAUSE  
IT IS JUST FOR COMMUNITY RELATE  
SOD THEY CAN HAVE PEOPLE -- BUT  
THERE ARE PEOPLE -- IN THE  
NEIGHBORHOOD WHO WOULD ACTUALLY  
BENEFIT FROM THIS, ALTHOUGH  
DESPITE THAT, FACT THEY COULD  
HAVE -- IF THEY -- THEY COULD



JUST HAVE A PCA SERVICES --  
EASIER LIVE BY THEMSELVES.  
I DO KNOW THAT -- DISABILITIES  
DO LIVE BY THEMSELVES BUT A HUGE  
LIST, IT IS LIKE A WAITING LIST  
FOR ANYBODY TO GET ACTUAL  
APARTMENT AND THAT'S ONE OF MY  
CONCERNS, SOCIAL FOR THE  
DISABLED PEOPLE.

I MENTIONED PEOPLE WHO ARE  
DISABLED PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WHO  
WALK WITH CANES AND THOSE WITH  
DISABILITIES AS I MENTIONED PTSD  
AND OTHER MENTAL HEALTH AND  
ALTHOUGH YOU CAN'T SEE IT THEY  
HAVE IT.

THEY HAVE -- FOR LACK OF BETTER  
WORD INABILITY TO USE STAIRS AND  
STAIRS USUALLY WITH AN APARTMENT  
THAT HAS STAIRS, AND IT IS A  
CONCERN THAT SOME OF THEM, FOR  
INSTANCE IN MY CASE, I HAVE SOME  
-- I HAVE ALSO SOME HEALTH  
CONSIDERATIONS OF MY OWN, AND  
JUST TO GIVE YOU AN EXAMPLE.

ALTHOUGH I LOOK LIKE I CAN RUN  
AROUND AND DO ANYTHING, I AM NOW  
ENERGY TRICK BUT A FEW DAYS AGO  
I WAS SO EXHAUSTED I COULD  
BARELY MOVE, LITERALLY I COULD  
BARELY MOVE AND WANT TO SHARE  
THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES WHO HAVE THESE  
ISSUES AND I DO WANT TO ADDRESS  
IT AND JUST MAKE YOU WEAR SO  
MAYBE YOU, YOU AWARE THAT YOU  
CAN IMPROVE HOUSING POLICIES.

>> I WOULD LIKE TO SAY 0 MORE  
BUT RIGHT NOW, I CAN'T THINK OF  
ANYTHING BUT WANTED TO SHARE A  
JUST I REALLY APPRECIATE IF IT  
COULD BE IN ANY WAY IMPROVED.  
THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU FOR SHARING.  
MAY I JUST ADD, IF YOU HAVE  
ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS WE ACCEPT  
THEM THROUGH, CONTINUALLY, WE  
FOLLOW THE OPINIONS AND CAN FILE  
SUPPLEMENTAL THINGS AND ALWAYS  
SUBMIT THEM AGAIN.

>> THANK YOU.

>> HI, RACHEL.

>> HI.

GOOD.

RACHEL TAN THEN HOUSE I CAME TO THIS MEETING ORIGINALLY IN MY PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY.

I REPRESENT THE CAMBRIDGE COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

I AM THEIR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND ADA COORDINATOR FOR THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE AND IN THAT

CAPACITY I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THIS IS AN AMAZING MEETING AND I FEEL VERY PRIVILEGED TO BE HERE AND I AM TRYING TO SOAK UP AS MUCH OF IT AS POSSIBLE, LIKE A SPONGE BECAUSE JUST DOING THIS IS GREAT AND I THINK CAMBRIDGE .. HAS A LOT TO LEARN FROM THIS PROCESS, SO THANKS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

MOST OF WHAT, MOSTLY WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO SAY IS IN MY CAPACITY AS A PRIVATE CITIZEN.

I AM NOT A BOSTON RESIDENT BUT I WORK AROUND THE CORNER FROM HERE FOR 12 YEARS.

AND SO I WORKED DOWNTOWN AND THE -- HAPPENED IN BOSTON TWICE, ONCE OUTSIDE OF THIS BUILDING, ACTUALLY.

AND SO WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO RESPECTFULLY REQUEST IS THAT PERHAPS THERE BE SOME EFFORTS TO TRAIN THE BOSTON POLICE AROUND PROBE DISABILITY ISSUES IN GENERAL BUT CERTAINLY AROUND ISSUES OF SERVICE DOGS AND GUIDE DOGS.

JUST BASED ON THE EXPERIENCES THAT I HAVE HAD AND OTHER PEOPLE THAT I KNOW AND LOVE HAVE HAD. FRIENDS OF MINE HAVE TALKED TO ME ABOUT WALKING DOWN THE STREETS IN BOSTON WITH THEIR GUIDE DOGS AND HAVING A BOSTON POLICE OFFICER COME UP AND GRAB THE HARNESS.

OR GRAB THEM.

AT NO POINT IN TIME WERE THESE FRIENDS COMMITTING A CRIME OF ANY SORT OR IN ANY REAL DANGER.

THE DOG IS A PROFESSIONAL.

IT TAKES CARE OF THESE THINGS.

AND DEFINITELY IF SOMEONE -- YOU DON'T GO UP AND GRAB SOMEONE

WITHOUT THEIR PERMISSION ANYWAY  
GENERAL ELI BUT YOU CERTAINLY  
DON'T IF YOU DON'T SEE THEM  
COMING, AND YOU ABSOLUTELY LIKE  
DON'T INTERFERE WITH A GUIDE DOG  
HARNESS, I DON'T CARE IF YOU ARE  
A POLICE OFFICER.

I DON'T CARE IF YOU ARE THE  
CHILD OF BIG BOPPY AND THE POPE.  
YOU JUST DON'T DO THAT.

BUT IN MY PARTICULAR CASE MY  
PREVIOUS DOG, WHO IS ACTUALLY  
THE OLDER BROTHER OF MY CURRENT  
DOG, MY PREVIOUS GUIDE DOG, AND  
I WERE ATTACKED TWICE BY OFF  
LEASH DOGS IN THE CITY OF BOSTON  
WHICH IS NOT NECESSARILY  
SOMETHING THAT, YOU KNOW, THE  
BOSTON POLICE 0 ARE NOT  
RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERY DOING  
TOWN, BUT WHEN I TRIED TO GET  
HELP, THEY WERE VERY UNHELPFUL,  
AND I FEEL -- AND THESE WERE  
EXTREMELY -- THESE WERE  
TRAUMATIC SITUATIONS.

I LITERALLY PUT MY LIFE IN MY  
DOG'S PAWS EVERY SINGLE DAY, MY  
GUIDE DOG IS RESPONSIBLE IN A  
LARGE PART FOR MY SAFETY AND MY  
INDEPENDENCE AND MY CONFIDENCE  
AND MY ABILITY TO GET AROUND.  
I HAVE BEEN -- A GUIDE DOG USER  
FOR 14 YEARS, JUST ABOUT, AND I  
DON'T EVER -- AT TIMES WHEN I  
HAVE BEEN BETWEEN GUIDE DOGS  
HAVE BEEN THE LONGEST TIMES OF  
MY LIFE NO MATTER WHAT THEY WERE  
CHRONOLOGICALLY AND YOU MAY OR  
MAY NOT BE AWARE ALSO THAT THE  
COST OF PUTTING A GUIDE DOG TEAM  
OR A SERVICE DOG TEAM ON THE  
STREET OUT THERE IS  
APPROXIMATELY \$50,000 PER TEAM.  
SO THESE ARE -- IF YOU RUIN A  
SERVICE DOG, YOU PAY AS WELL  
JUST LIKE, YOU KNOW, WRITE A  
CHECK AND SEND IT TO YOUR  
FAVORITE SERVICE DOG SCHOOL.  
SO IN BOTH OF THESE CASES, WE  
WERE ATTACKED BY OFF LEASH DOGS,  
IN THE FIRST CASE MY DOG WAS NOT  
INJURED PHYSICALLY.  
BUT HE DID BECOME MORE REACTIVE  
AS A RESULT.

AND I -- THE NEXT DAY, I WAS WAY TOO SHAKEN UP TO GO TO THE POLICE THAT DAY.

I JUST SORT OF MADE MY WAY HOME AND CURLED UP IN A BALL, BUT THE NEXT DAY I WENT TO THE POLICE STATION DOWN THE STREET FROM HERE BECAUSE THIS IS WHERE IT TOOK PLACE.

AND I TRIED TO MAKE A REPORT AND THEY HAD ME YELL WHAT HAPPENED TO ME THROUGH PLEXIGLAS AS PEOPLE WALKED BACK AND FORTH BEHIND ME AND AROUND ME, THANK GOD I WAS REPORTING AN ATTACK ON MY DOG, I DON'T MEAN THAT BUT, YOU KNOW, CAN YOU IMAGINE IF GOD FORBID I WAS REPORTING AN ATTACK ON MY PERSON?

AND I AD TO YELL ALL THE DETAILS THROUGH THE PLEXIGLAS.

AND THEN THE WOMAN BEHIND THE COUNTER, THE DAB THE -- I PRESUME SHE WAS AN OFFICER, SHE WAS IN UNIFORM, I CAN'T TELL THE DETAILS.

SAID, YOU KNOW, OKAY, WELL WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?

>> AND I SAID I VAGUELY RECALL AND IT THE TURNS OUT THIS IS TRUE THERE IS A STATE LAW PROHIBITING INTERFERING WITH A WORKING DOG, AND I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW, YOU KNOW, I WOULD LIKE TO FILE A REPORT, I WOULD LIKE -- I HAVE THE CONTACT INFO FOR THE PERSON WHO -- WHOSE DOG ATTACKED ME.

I WOULD LIKE SOME SORT OF THING DONE HERE, AND I DON'T -- I WOULD LIKE SOME HELP.

AND SHE SAID, WELL, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT ANY LAW LIKE THAT AND I SAID WELL COULD YOU ASK YOUR SUPERIOR?

SHE WAS -- YOU KNOW, YOUR SUPERVISOR.

AND I SAID, AND SHE WAS NOT HAPPY WITH ME. YOU KNOW,. AND SO SHE WENT BACK AND SHE ASKED, WELL HE DOESN'T KNOW EITHER.

AND THAT WAS IT.

I NEVER HEARD BACK ANYTHING

ABOUT THAT.

AND THEN ABOUT A YEAR LATER, WE WERE ATTACKED AGAIN.

I SWEAR WE WERE JUST WALKING DOWN THE STREET, RIGHT?

TRYING TO ENTER A T STATION.

AND IN THAT CASE MY DOG WAS INJURED.

I HAVE NEVER HEARD MYSELF SCREAM LIKE THAT BEFORE AND AFTER WE LITERALLY KICKED THE DOG OUT OF

MY DOG'S HIND LEG, AND GOT A SORT OF CALMED DOWN AND WE WENT

INTO THE T STATION AND THE POLICE SPENT THE NEXT TWO HOURS

TRYING TO FIGURE OUT IF I WAS THE BOSTON POLICE'S PROBLEM OR

THE T POLICE'S PROBLEM AND WHEN FINALLY WHEN THEY

DETERMINED I WAS THE BOSTON POLICE'S PROBLEM BECAUSE I

REALLY WAS PRETTY ADAMANT ABOUT FILING A COMPLAINT AT THAT POINT

SIN MY DOG HAD BEEN INJURED,

THEY SAID -- SHE SAID WELL I CAN TAKE A REPORT, BUT I DON'T KNOW

IF ANYONE IS REALLY GOING TO DO ANYTHING.

AND I FOUND OUT LATER FROM ANIMAL CONTROL THAT IF A DOG --

IF SOMEBODY IS ATTACKED LIKE THAT THE REPORT IS SUPPOSED TO

GO TO ANIMAL CONTROL BUT THEY NEVER HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT IT.

THE OFFICER DID WIND UP GIVING ME A RIDE TO ANGEL MEMORIAL

AFTERWARDS BECAUSE I SAID IF YOU NOT GOING TO ANYTHING THE LEAST

YOU CAN DO IS GIVE ME A RIDE --

AND AFTER THESE ATTACKS MY DOG HAD TO BE RETIRED.

HE HAD WORKED FOR THREE YEARS, HE WAS FIVE YEARS OLD, I MEAN HE

IS OKAY, I MEAN SHE LIVING WITH FRIENDS OF MINE.

AND I WAITED, YOU KNOW -- I HAD TO WAIT FOR ANOTHER DOG

FORTUNATELY.

ECHO WAS AVAILABLE.

BUT I WAS MUCH LESS SAFE WHEN I WAS USING MY KAINÉ CAIN AND TO

THIS DAY I STILL HAVE ANXIETY

AROUND BEING ATTACKED AGAIN,

THAT I UNFORTUNATELY AM WORKING

ON NOT PASSING ON TO MY DOG, BUT DOGS ARE SMART AND SOMETIMES I AM NOT, AND, YOU KNOW, IT IS AFFECTED MY LIFE A LOT. WHAT WOULD HAVE BEEN REALLY HELPFUL IS IF I HAD KNOWN THAT I COULD WHO TO LAW ENFORCEMENT, GO TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AND FEEL THE LAW WOULD BE ENFORCED FOR ME. AND I SAY THIS AS SOMEONE WHO I MEAN LET'S BE HONEST HERE, I AM WHITE, MIDDLE CLASS AND WELL EDUCATED AND SPIKE LANGUAGE. I CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE WHAT MY EXPERIENCE WOULD HAVE BEEN LIKE IF ANY OF THOSE THINGS HAD NOT BEEN THE CASE. AND I STILL WAS TREATED LIKE WHAT HAPPENED TO ME DIDN'T MATTER. AND I THINK ONE OF THE ISSUES IS THAT THE POLICE REALLY JUST HAVE NO CONCEPT OF WHAT GUIDE AND SERVICE DOGS DO. THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT THE LAWS ARE REGARDING THEM. AND MAYBE THERE ARE SOME, YOU KNOW, INSTITUTIONAL LABELING GOING ON FROM WHAT I HAVE HEARD FROM FRIENDS WHO HOW THEY HAVE BEEN TREATED AND HOW THEIR DOGS HAVE BEEN, YOU KNOW, GRABBED AND SUCH. I KNOW THAT GENERAL PUBLIC SOMETIMES IS IGNORANT ABOUT SERVICE DOGS AND MAYBE THE IT IS A LITTLE NAIVE OF ME TO EXPECT BETTER OF THE POLICE, BUT I KNOW BOSTON CAN -- I KNOW BOSTON CAN DO BERT AND IN MOST SITUATIONS HAS AND SO I FEEL THAT IF I ASK YOU ALL, HEY, CAN WE WORK ON THIS TOGETHER? CAN WE GET THE POLICE TO KNOW ABOUT THESE THINGS? I BELIEVE THAT SOMEBODY WILL HAPPEN. I HAVE OFFERED TO HELP AND I CAN'T OFFER TO HELP IN ANY WAY I CAN AND WHEN I REPORTED THE INDENT TO MY GUIDE DOG SCHOOL BOTH TIMES, THEY ACTUALLY SAID, IF THE CITY OF BOSTON WOULD LIKE OUR HELP IN PROVIDING TRAINING,

WE WILL HAPPILY DO SO, AND THEY ARE ON LONG ISLAND IN NEW YORK. BUT THEY ARE WILLING TO HELP. SO I JUST -- I RECOGNIZE THAT THIS IS SORT OF A NICHE ISSUE BUT FOR ME, IT CAN BE A LIFE AND DEATH ISSUE AND FOR A LOT OF US IT CAN AND I WOULD JUST LIKE YOU TO CONSIDER IT.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

>> THANK YOU.

THANK YOU, RACHEL AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMENTS AND FOLLOWING THIS MEETING, OR TOMORROW I WILL CALL THE POLICE COMMISSIONER AND TRY TO GET SOME GIEPS FROM THE COMMISSIONER BUT I WILL ALSO TALK TO COMMISSIONER MCKOSH AND MAYBE THE THREE OF US WITH THE THREE COMMISSION CAN SIT DOWN SOME TIME AND AT LEAST MAYBE FIGURE OUT A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT OR WHAT THEIR TRAINING IS FOR THE GUIDE DOGS AND SEE WHAT THEIR POLICY WOULD BE OR MAYBE WE NEED TO IMPROVE IT OR IMPLEMENT IT, BUT I WILL TAKE YOUR SUGGESTIONS AS WELL, COMMISSIONER AS WELL.

THANK YOU SO MUCH, I REALLY APPRECIATE THAT.

THANK YOU.

>> RACHEL, THANK YOU, COUNCILOR FLYNN, AND COUNCILOR EDWARDS, IRONICALLY WE HAD JUST -- ONE OF OUR FEW POSITIONS THAT WE ARE HIRING IS FOR AN OUTREACH ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST, AND ONE OF THE TASKS THAT THEY WILL BE WORKING ON IS PUBLIC SERVICE CAMPAIGNS, WE HAVE SLATED TO BEGIN IS ON SERVICE ANIMALS, AND THAT IS FREFG BUSINESSES -- BECAUSE WE GET FAIRLY STRONG NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS ABOUT EM BEING REFUSED A TAXI RIDE, BEING REFUSED AN UBER RIDE AND BEING QUESTIONED AT A RESTAURANT, EVEN IN MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS SO WE DEFINITELY HAVE A PUBLIC SERVICE CAMPAIGN UNDERWAY.

I AM ALSO IN TOUCH WITH THE ANIMAL CONTROL BECAUSE WE HAD

ANOTHER COMPLAINT, NOT AN ATTACK  
BUT OF A RESIDENT BEING ASKED TO  
LEAVE A CITY PARK WITH THE DOG,  
BECAUSE IT WAS ON LEASH, SO WE  
DO -- WE ARE IN TOUCH WITH  
ANIMAL CONTROL AND THEY KNOW  
LAWS SO I THINK IF WE CAN LINK  
THE POLICE WITH THE AMENDMENT  
CONTROL OFFICER THAT WOULD BE A  
FIRST STEP IN THE RIGHT  
DIRECTION.

SO THANK YOU, RACHEL FOR  
BRINGING THAT UP.

>> THANK YOU, KRISTIN AND MAYBE  
MINAR OR KRISTIN, DO YOU WANT TO  
OFFER ANY CLOSING REMARKS BEFORE  
MYSELF OR COUNCILOR EDWARDS DO?  
JUST BRIEFLY, I WAS MAKING NOTES  
ON ALL OF THE TESTIMONY AND IT  
IS AMAZING THE WIDE RANGE OF  
ISSUES THAT WERE BROUGHT UP AND  
THIS REALLY IS LIKE A MICROCOSM  
OF THE CITY.

WE HAD EVERYTHING FROM -- WE HAD  
HOUSING, SNOW REMOVAL, BUS  
STOPS, CURB RAMPS, A FIRE,  
SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH  
ASPERGER'S AND AUTISM,  
EMPLOYMENT BILL, MENTAL HEALTH,  
THE AD BILL, HISTORICAL  
BUILDINGS BEING PRIORITIZED OVER  
ACCESSIBILITY, TRAFFIC ISSUES,  
MBTA, HOUSING, AND SERVICE DOGS.  
SO THAT IS BASICALLY IN A  
NUTSHELL EVERYTHING WE WORK ON,  
SO A REAL BIG SHOUT WITHOUT TO  
THE COMMUNITY THAT CAME OUT  
TODAY AND THANK YOU FOR APTLY  
SUMMARIZING EVERYTHING WE NEED  
TO WORK ON AND WE WILL GET  
STARTED RIGHT AFTER THIS  
MEETING.

>> EXCELLENT.

THANK YOU, KRISTIN.

>> THANK YOU AGAIN. CHAIRMAN  
AND COUNSELOR EDWARDS.

I THINK THE ONLY THING THAT I  
WANT TO ADD TO THIS IS THAT THE  
WAY THAT WOMEN ARE TALKING ABOUT  
ACCESSIBLE IT IS A PART OF THE  
CONVERSATION WE HAVE BEEN HAVING  
AND THE WAY WE LOOK AT, YOU  
KNOW, TRAINING AND TALKING TO  
STAFF ABOUT THIS IS THINKING



ABOUT INCLUSION, THINKING AN THESE THINGS LIKE ADAPTABILITY, YOU KNOW, INTERSECTIONALITY ALL OF THESE THINGS ARE THINGS WE TAKE CARE OF AND A LOT OF THE FERTION CANS A LOT OF THESE CONVERSATIONS ARE HAPPENING AND HAVE HAPPENED AND HAVE BEEN HAPPENING BEFORE I HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE THE ORDINANCE CAME ABOUT, I JUST WANT TO SAY THAT, YOU KNOW, I AM LIKE REALLY PART TO BE PART OF AN ADMINISTRATION THAT CARES ABOUT THIS WORK AND IS PUTTING INVESTMENTS TOWARDS THIS.

OUR TEAM IS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR FEED BACK AND SO SIMILAR TO A LOT OF THE TESTIMONY THAT WE HEARD TODAY IF THERE ARE THINGS SPECIFICALLY AMOUNT LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATIONS ACCESS OR ANYTHING THAT, YOU KNOW, FITS UNDER YOUR, UNDER THE SCOPE OF MY OFFICE I AM MORE THAN HAPPY TO HEAR THAT AND TAKE THAT INTO ACCOUNT AND MOVE FORWARD.

>> THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU.

COUNCILOR EDWARDS.

>> THANK YOU BOTH.

I THOUGHT THIS WAS INCREDIBLY INFORMATIVE I DO APPRECIATE, I CAME HERE TO LEARN AND TO LISTEN AND I FEEL LIKE I LEARNED A GREAT DEAL.

WELCOME WITH TO BOSTON ALL THE WAY FROM CAMBRIDGE, WE DO APPRECIATE.

WE THINK, YOU KNOW, WE WOULD SAY TO OUR 0 COLLEAGUES TO OUR BROTHERS AND CITIES ACROSS THE RIVER, YOU KNOW, THIS IS A REGIONAL GOOD CONVERSATION AND THERE IS NO -- WE CAN LEARN FROM ANYONE AND I THINK THAT IS WONDERFUL THAT YOU CAME HERE TODAY TO EXPRESS YOUR PERSONAL STORY BUT ALSO TO JUST REALLY DEMONSTRATE SOLIDARITY WITH US OVER HERE.

SO THANK YOU SO MUCH AND AGAIN I LOOK FORWARD TO FOLLOWING UP ON FOLKS, LITERALLY TRYING TO

FIGURE OUT HOW WE CAN CONTINUE THIS CONVERSATION AND THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR COMING.

>> WELL, THANK YOU 15 TO THE PANELISTS WHO KRISTIN AND 0 MINAR FOR BEING HERE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PASSION AND DEDICATED SERVICE .. FOR THE PEOPLE OF BOSTON.

I WANT TO THANK THE PUBLIC FOR BEING HERE AND I ALSO WANT TO LET THE PUBLIC KNOW THAT MYSELF AND COUNCILOR EDWARDS, IF YOU ARE INTERESTED WE ARE HOSTING A SMALL RECEPTION RIGHT AT THE CURLY ROOM FOR ANYONE THAT WOULD LIKE TO JOIN US TO CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION.

I KNOW YOU DO HAVE A FORMAL MEETING PROBABLY IN ANOTHER MEETING OR SO.

BUT IT IS AN HONOR FOR ME TO WORK THE COUNCILOR EDWARDS AND COUNCILOR FLAHERTY ON THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE.

TO THE LANGUAGE ACCESS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES DESERVE THE SAME RESPECT AND DIGNITY AS ANY OTHER PERSON, AND I AM PROUD THAT THE CITY GOVERNMENT IS WORKING HARD AND WORKING CLOSELY ON THAT ISSUE.

IT IS MY TOP PRIORITY IS LANGUAGE ABSCESS AND MAKING SURE THAT MY CONSTITUENTS, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY EVERY RESIDENT OF BOSTON HAS THE SAME ACCESS TO BASIC CITY SERVICES AS ANYONE ELSE DOES, AND AS IT RELATES TO A PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES I HIGHLIGHTED MY PARENTS THAT ARE ELDERLY BUT HAVE CUSTODY OF A SPECIAL NEEDS BOY THAT CAN'T WALK OR SPEAK, SO WHEN I AM WITH THEM, I ALSO LOOK AT THE PITFALLS OF THE STREET OR A SIDEWALK BECAUSE I KNOW THEY ARE AND A HALF BAIG THE SIDEWALK AND THE STREETS AS WELL.

SO THEY ARE HAVING A VERY DIFFICULT TIME WALKING WITH SOMEONE IN A CARRIAGE WITH A CHILD IN A CARRIAGE.

SO I PUT MY -- I PUT MYSELF IN

YOUR SHOES AND, YOU KNOW, IF I WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT MY PARENTS AND MY NEPHEW RECEIVE THE BEST POSSIBLE CARE THAT THEY CAN AND PAUSE I DO, I THINK EVERYONE ELSE SHOULD RECEIVE THAT SAME LEVEL OF COMPASSION AND CARE AS WELL.

SO I JUST WANT TO THANK ALL OF THE ACTIVISTS FOR BEING HERE, FOR WORKING HARD, FOR DEDICATING YOUR LIFE TO ENSURING EVERYBODY IN OUR CITY IS TREATED WITH RESPECT AND DIGNITY THAT THEY HAVE EARNED.

I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THANK YOU TO JUAN LOPEZ ON THE CITY COUNCIL STAFF FOR HELPING US COORDINATE THIS MEETING.

AND 15 IF ANYONE WOULD LIKE TO JOIN US FOR COFFEE AND PACE I HAVE, YOU ARE MORE THAN WELCOME.

>> .. HE IS BEHIND THE POLE BUT I WANT TO RECOGNIZE MY FRIEND BILL HENNING.

>> WE ARE ABOUT TO END.

>> NO, NO.

JUST HE IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF -- FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING AND I HAD THE MEDS USER TO BE ON 0 THAT BOARD FOR SOME TIME AND I JUST WANTED TO RECOGNIZE THAT YOU CAME HERE.

GOOD FRIEND TO THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY.

>> AND WITH THAT, THIS MEETING IS CONCLUDED.

>>