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Committees
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State Representative Catherine D. Ingram

May 17th, 2017

Sponsor Testimony
House Bill 195
Transportation and Public Safety Committee

Chairman Green, Vice Chair Greenspan, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 195. This bill will allow services such as Uber and Lyft, as well as traditional taxis, the option to advertise toward, and provide a service to, those who utilize wheelchairs and other mobility aid devices.

Currently, individuals who use wheelchairs are required to be transported in ambulettes—modified vehicles designed to transport ill or injured individuals. This restriction prevents wheelchair bound passengers the option of utilizing traditional commercial transportation options commonly available to the general public—options such as taxis, Uber, or Lyft.

Current law requires “persons who are seriously ill, injured, or otherwise incapacitated *or who require the use of a wheelchair*” to be transported exclusively by ambulettes. However, the use of a wheelchair does not automatically necessitate this level of care in transportation. This is also an unnecessary burden on these individuals’ time, and comes at a cost that is much more expensive than other options. These costs are billed either to the individual, private insurer, or in many cases the state Medicaid fund.

This legislation is permissive and in no way a mandate. Under this legislation, wheelchair bound passengers will be given the option to choose which service best meets their needs—an ambulette, a taxi, or a service such as Uber or Lyft.

Chairman Green, Vice Chair Greenspan, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the Transportation & Public Safety Committee, I thank you for your time, and I hope that you will join Representative Seitz and me in support of House Bill 195. I will be happy to answer any questions at this time.

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