

Chairman Baldrige, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the House Transportation Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to offer proponent testimony on House Bill 31.

I am a 24-year-old year old with Cerebral Palsy, and I use an electric wheelchair to get around independently. I am well educated college graduate. I am currently pursuing a Master of Science in Psychology. My parents taught me to advocate for myself and others. Growing up, I often thought my presence was seen as an afterthought by society. People are able to park in the designated "blocked off" loading zone. When the designated loading zone is blocked off, I cannot safely get in or out of my family's vehicle, or I can't get in or out of the vehicle at all. I don't know if it is a result of ableism or pure ignorance but the lack of regard for the disabled community is tremendous. I need this law to be accepted into legislation. For a true inclusive society, we need to embrace the disability community not just accept them. It's 2020, almost 2021 and too many people still don't know what the Americans with Disabilities Act is. One of the most significant changes I hope to see is: Allow Law Enforcement Agencies to Create a Volunteer Enforcement Program that allows civilians to issue non-confrontational parking violations for parking in access aisle, and blocking a curb cut. In addition, I also hope to see Allow a Citation to be Left with an Unoccupied Vehicle. These changes will encourage accountability not only for people without disabilities and to law enforcement. I think one of the biggest problems right now is people think the punishment is "trivial" "because no one really cares". We need to make people care. I believe I need to advocate for people with disabilities that follow me. Children with disabilities need to realize that they are important too. That the lives of the disability community are not trivial or an "afterthought" I respectfully ask for your support of this legislation. Thank you all for your time and I am happy to answer any questions at this time.