

## **RESOLUTION 2014-02**

### **Michigan Flyer and SMART Bus Access to Airport**

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Flyer, Air Ride and Smart bus services offer a convenient and affordable means of traveling to the Detroit Metropolitan Airport (DTW); and

**WHEREAS**, many blind people use public transportation including the Michigan Flyer, Air Ride and SMART to travel to and from the McNamara Terminal of Detroit Metropolitan Airport; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a 70% unemployment rate among blind people who wish to work, making affordable transportation an extremely important part of life activities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Airport Board has decided to move the Bus Stop for these services to another location, called the Ground Transportation Center, which is inadequate, dangerous and inconvenient to persons using public transportation to travel to the McNamara Terminal; and

**WHEREAS**, until recently, the busses have dropped passengers at an accessible stop within 50 feet of the entrance to the terminal with no safety or other negative consequences for over 2 years; and

**WHEREAS**, the Ground Transportation Center (GTC) severely limits a disabled person's access to and communication with Prospect Airport Services, since Prospect is located inside the McNamara Terminal near the former bus stop,, a service used by disabled persons to assist them in getting around at the Airport, thus leaving persons needing this assistance without access to reasonable accommodations when getting off the bus; and

**WHEREAS**, the new location at the GTC is approximately 200 yards from the nearest indoor area of the airport, as opposed to 50 feet in the McNamara Terminal at the former location, thus forcing people to either wait outside for their bus or run quickly once it arrives. Disabled persons, especially those with mobility limitations, who cannot "run" quickly enough are thus forced to wait outside, even in harsh weather conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, when all three unloading spots at the new stop are occupied, passengers loading and unloading from a bus in the middle lane are forced to exit between vehicles and cross over a lane of traffic, an action which could result in severe bodily harm and/or death; and

**WHEREAS**, the change in bus stops conflicts with the Americans With Disabilities law by limiting access to the terminal by persons with disabilities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Ground Transportation Center does not have a service dog relief area unlike the former stop which has dog relief facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, passengers traveling from the McNamara Terminal to the new transit pickup location outside of the GTC must either choose to travel directly out “side doors” that exit to active lanes of traffic, or go through a revolving door, which when often broken is inaccessible to those with mobility impairments. To wit, the Detroit Free Press in 2009 reported that the door had broken 33 times from April 1, 2008 to March 22, 2009; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan Governor Rick Snyder communicated his support in “maintaining the integrity of the previous stop locations” in a letter to Mr. Tom Naughton, CEO of the Wayne County Airport Authority and to Mr. Michael Ford, CEO of the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority dated June 11, 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, the change of bus stop only effects those using public transportation and drastically reduces the convenience and accessibility for these passengers, this change unreasonably and discriminatorily targets persons who use public transportation to travel to and from the airport by making the environment hostile and unwelcoming to visitors to our state who use these services to reach the many attractions and services including colleges, industries, residences, tourist attractions and the vast natural and commercial resources of the state of Michigan: Now, therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the National Federation of the Blind of Michigan in convention assembled this 12<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2014, in the city of Flint, Michigan, that this organization condemns and deplors the action of the Wayne County Airport Authority in discriminating against users of public transportation, especially those with disabilities by relocating bus drop off points used by the Michigan Flyer, Air Ride and SMART; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**; that this organization call upon the Airport Authority to immediately and permanently reverse its decision to move the Bus Stop for the Michigan Flyer, Air Ride and Smart busses to the Ground Transportation Center and return it to its former location at the entrance to the McNamara Terminal; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**: that this organization empower our president and board to join in any legal actions to remediate this move by the Airport Authority, including filing of friendly briefs, or other actions; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**: that, this organization empower our president and board to authorize any actions, including, but not limited to, press releases, testimony or demonstrations, which seem prudent, effective and are designed to, result in the restoration of convenient transportation to users of public transportation to the Detroit Metropolitan Airport.