

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY IN FOR- HIRE & AV LEGISLATION

What We Have Learned From Other Markets And Our Customers

Presentation for
Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Council (MAAC)
October 14, 2026

Who is BraunAbility, and Why We're Involved



1950's

Diagnosed with spinal muscular atrophy and unable to walk by age 15, Ralph Braun was determined to find a better way to stay mobile.

1960's

At 20, he built a motorized scooter and later adapted an old postal Jeep with hand controls and a wheelchair lift to commute to work.

1972

What started as a personal solution grew into a global mission. His company was incorporated as The Braun Corporation in 1972.

Today

More than 50 years later, BraunAbility continues manufacturing in Winamac, Indiana, fulfilling Ralph's enduring mission to give wheelchair users the freedom to go where they want, when they want.



Why these bills

Rideshare and driverless fleets are becoming a bigger part of how America moves. Cities and states set terms of service once, when they grant permission to operate. BraunAbility supports including equivalent service for wheelchair users at that point.



Our interest, up front

BraunAbility is a leading manufacturer of wheelchair accessible vehicles and securement systems. More accessible fleets mean we can serve more customers like Ralph.

Nothing here asks any city to buy anything specific from anyone, including us.

No Autonomy without Accessibility.

The freedom to scale starts with meeting the social obligation to serve every rider.

WHY NOW?



AV Permits Are Being Written Now, A Chance to Plan for Every Rider



Driverless Fleets Are Entering Markets Across the US

Goldman Sachs Research projected in 2025 that US robotaxis would grow from about 1,500 vehicles to about 35,000 by 2030. The rules set now will govern a fleet that is still growing. ^[27]

Current Landscape

Waymo public service today:

Phoenix, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Austin, Atlanta, Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, Miami, Orlando, and Nashville, Denver, San Diego and Tampa. ^{[46][47]}

Announced next (among others):

Washington DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, and Seattle. ^[47]

Once Established, Robotaxi Fleets Scale Quickly

The leading operator had about 1% of San Francisco rideshare dollars two years after launch, over 14% by January 2025, and an estimated 20 to 27% by April 2025. ^{[48][49]}

AV Permits Are Being Written Now, A Chance to Plan for Every Rider



This is an opportunity to address existing accessibility challenges while preparing for the expansion of autonomous vehicle services.

Only 34%

of working-age adults with a travel-limiting disability worked in 2022, versus 80% of those without a disability. The National Council on Disability (NCD) finds transportation barriers contribute to unemployment, isolation and missed health care. [3]

Increased WAV availability improves access to employment, healthcare, and other essential services for residents with disabilities.

16 of 18

taxi companies fall short of the 20% accessibility requirement, according to records obtained by *The Wash.* [5]



Stronger reporting and enforcement requirements improves government oversight, promoting accountability and ensuring that resources dedicated to WAV accessibility are being used effectively.

LEARNINGS FROM OTHER MARKETS:

How D.C. Can Include Every Rider From the Start

Four Asks That Ensure Every Rider is Included



THE FOUR PILLARS

01

RELIABLE PICKUPS

Performance standard

ADA standards require equivalent wait times, fares, coverage, hours, trip types, information, and capacity. ^{[33][34]}

02

SUPPLY ECONOMICS

Dedicated funding

Seattle and California charge 10¢ per trip ^{[42][12]}.

New York charges \$1 per taxi trip ^[7], and Chicago uses a similar funding model. ^[17]

03

PUBLIC SCORECARD

Reporting

Public, anonymized reporting of ride requests, completed trips, wait times, and complaints across all for-hire services.

Include wait-time percentiles to reveal how long the slowest riders wait.

04

REAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Enforcement

Enforcement for accessibility standards can be seen through penalties, permit renewals, and medallion controls (taxi operating licenses).

Four Policies That Work Together to Get Wheelchair Users a Ride

In our view, equivalent service takes four policies working together. Where cities adopted some, accessible rides improved. NYC put all four in place for taxis and most for rideshare, and more than 9 in 10 accessible rideshare requests are now picked up within 10 minutes. ^{[2][10]}

City	Performance Standard	Supply Economics	Public scorecard	Real Enforcement	What riders get
Seattle					70 accessible vehicles serve Seattle and King County, backed by a 10¢ ride surcharge ^{[42][43]} but wait times are not published. A missed ride can be a missed shift.
Los Angeles					Differences across modalities. Accessible rides took about 15 minutes longer to arrive than standard rides in 2022 ^[44]
Washington, DC					In September 2025, only 56 of 77 active accessible taxis completed a wheelchair trip ^[45] , leaving riders struggling to reach appointments, social outings, and even home.
New York					Rule: 90% of accessible pickups within 10 minutes, up from 80%. Uber and Lyft reached 88% in the year to June 2024 and 93% to 95.5% by November 2025. ^{[2][7][10]}
 In place  Partial  Missing					

⁴⁵ DC Department of For-Hire Vehicles, Request for Information, FY26 Taxi Incubator

Two Bills Will Shape Wheelchair Access in D.C



1

SETS THE REQUIREMENT

Bill 26-0818 · Nadeau

For-Hire Passenger Service Reform Act of 2026.

Introduced: Sept 25, 2026.

Hearing Oct 19 · No markup yet [TBA]

2

AUTHORIZES THE VEHICLES

**Bill 26-0684 · Allen
(Pinto, Frumin)**

AV Deployment Authorization Amendment Act of 2026.

Introduced: May 1, 2026.

Hearing held July 13 · No markup yet [TBA]

Bill 26-0818 Overview & Learnings from Other Markets



The For-Hire Passenger Service Reform Act of 2026 already includes the four policies behind dependable rides. Learnings from other markets can improve legislation effectiveness so a wheelchair user can count on a ride in every ward and at every hour.

Policy Pillar	What the bill does	Learnings from other markets
1. Reliable pickups	Requires accessible trips to be picked up within 110% of the average wait for other trips.	Averages can hide lack of performance. Replace the average with an acceptable deviation from median wait times by for-hire mode, by daypart, across the district.
2. Supply economics	A 10-cent charge on non-wheelchair trips pays into the Accessible Passenger Service Fund.	Funding needs to create supply of vehicles and drivers. Ensure the proposed fee and fund can support the supply needed to meet the determined performance standard.
3. Public scorecard	Requires regular, public reporting.	Data transparency is key. Report wait times as percentiles, by ward and time of day, for every provider. Make accessible request counts public.
4. Real accountability	Directs DFHV to set penalties by rule. These may include per-trip fines that grow with delay and, for serious violations, suspension or revocation.	Penalties need to scale. Set the penalty schedule by a deadline: a corrective plan, then fines scaled to trip volume, then license action for repeated misses.

**See You at the
Wilson Building
OR
on Zoom
on Monday!**



APPENDIX



Rideshare Today: Accessible Rides Can Be Hard To Find



1

LIMITED AVAILABILITY

In tests summarized by the National Council on Disability in 2025, an accessible Uber or Lyft was available in 26% of attempts, while a standard vehicle was available every time. ^[1]

2

THE COST OF ACCESSIBILITY

One accessible airport trip in the Baltimore area was quoted at about \$135 to \$175. The same trip by app was about \$17 to \$20. ^[1]

3

THE REGULATORY GAP

In D.C., taxis, which are required to keep part of their fleet wheelchair accessible, make up about 5% of for-hire trips. Rideshare is roughly 95% of trips and has no accessible vehicle requirement. ^{[3][4]}

Equivalent Service Examples



NEW YORK CITY

90%

of trips in 10-minutes

New York City now asks accessible dispatchers to serve 90% of trips within 10 minutes, up from 80%. ^{[2][10]}

99.5%

Uber

TLC data shows 95.5% of Uber and 93% of Lyft accessible requests met it in the most recent month reported. ^[2]

93%

Lyft



CHICAGO

Accessible Option

Through company drivers or a contracted dispatcher

Chicago asks rideshare companies to offer a wheelchair accessible option, through their own drivers or a contracted dispatcher.



No wait time standard

The ordinance sets no wait time standard, so service levels are harder to measure. ^[17]

Funding Examples



NEW YORK CITY

\$1

Per Taxi Ride

New York City taxis: a \$1 surcharge on every taxi ride funds the Taxi Improvement Fund. An owner receives \$20,000 up front plus \$2,500 a year for four years toward an accessible vehicle. A \$10 driver bonus on certain WAV trips began in mid-2025. ^{[7][8]}



CALIFORNIA

10¢

Per Rideshare Trip

California: a 10-cent fee on every rideshare trip supports on-demand wheelchair accessible service. ^[12] Through mid-2024, rideshare companies reported spending about \$73 million on wheelchair accessible service, mostly by contracting third-party providers, and about \$43 million was reimbursed from the fee. ^[44] The Legislature extended the program through 2032. ^[13]



CHICAGO

10¢

Per non-accessible rideshare trip

Chicago: up to \$35,000 toward a factory-built WAV taxi and \$25,000 toward a conversion. ^[18] Lease subsidies of \$25 or \$50 a day. ^[19] Rideshare companies pay 10 cents per ride on non-accessible vehicles into the city's accessibility fund. ^[17]

Data & Reporting Examples



CALIFORNIA

Reporting Across Every County

California requires rideshare companies to submit wheelchair accessible trip data to the CPUC in every county, ^{[15][44]} and requires autonomous vehicle operators to report trip data that includes wheelchair accessibility. ^[16]



NEVADA

Tracking Referred Accessible Trips

In Nevada, driverless companies must provide wheelchair accessible vehicles on request, and most contract with human-driven taxi companies to do so. ^[29] How referred trips are counted is worth defining up front as it is a common model.

Enforcement Examples



NEW YORK CITY Over 50%

Accessible yellow taxi fleet

A 2024 TLC rule requires all new taxi conversions to be wheelchair accessible vehicles, and over half of the active yellow taxi fleet was wheelchair accessible as of June 2025. ^{[7][9]}

NEW YORK CITY \$50

Proposed fine for every 100 trips short

TLC's trip mandate rule, as proposed in 2017, set a \$50 fine for every 100 trips a base fell short of its required share of trips dispatched to accessible vehicles. ^[11]

CALIFORNIA Performance- Based Funding

Rideshare companies recover costs from the fee when they show improved access. ^{[15][44]}

CHICAGO 40 Trips

Monthly minimum to qualify

Subsidized drivers complete at least 40 centralized dispatch trips a month to qualify. ^[19]

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