

Disability Rights Advocates For Technology

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September 14, 2018

The Honorable John Thune, Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
512 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson, Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
425 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Gary Peters
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
724 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Thune, Ranking Member Nelson, and Senator Peters:

On behalf of the more than 2,000 disabled veterans and their more than 10,000 family members who have benefited from the Segs4Vets program and whom we represent I write to urge the members of the United States Senate to take up and pass the AV Start Act, S. 1885.

Through the use of universally designed technology devices, the Ally Chair and the Segway, these great Americans who are now permanently disabled after being severely injured while serving our nation, have found a pathway which allows them to regain their independence, participate in all aspects of our society, and experience fulfillment.

Through the passage of the AV Start Act, S. 1885, and other supporting legislation and regulations aging Americans, people with disabilities and our disabled veterans will begin to see a dawning of an age where they can indeed participate in society on a level playing field.

Today technology will allow me to sit at my desk in my home, using voice recognition software on my computer, and order virtually anything that I want or need and have it delivered from anywhere in the world to my door tomorrow, to use my computer to order groceries, down to the number of bananas and

the ripeness I'd like, and have them delivered to my front door within two hours. I can work and interact with my friends from all of the world from the privacy of my home 24 hours a day.

But for those who cannot drive, or should not drive, the inability to access transportation alternatives is reaching crisis proportions for our disabled veterans, aging Americans our disabled American citizens as a whole, and tens of millions of their family members. Human beings require physical interaction with other human beings and we must not allow this opportunity, which will free millions of our American citizens from confinement in their home, to pass.

With the passage of the AV Start Act, S. 1885, the foundation will be laid to create the regulatory environment which will allow the development of autonomous vehicles which could be summoned on our mobile devices and within minutes a universally designed wheelchair accessible vehicle would appear to transport us anywhere we'd like. Access to our physicians, our places of worship, places where we could interact with others, the opportunity for independence and self-determination.

Whatever perceived risk envisioned by those who have caused this very important measure to languish in the United States Senate pales in comparison to the benefits which will be derived by our entire society with its passage.

We urge every member of the United States Senate who holds high the welfare of our disabled veterans, our senior citizens and all people with disabilities to vote to pass this very important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Kerr", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jerry Kerr
President

CC: The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader
The Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Minority Leader
The Honorable Roy Blunt
The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
The Honorable Roger Wicker