



STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION

MICHAEL PETTERSSON MLA (CHAIR), JONATHAN DAVIS MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), PETER CAIN MLA

Inquiry into referred 2019–20 Annual and Financial Reports and Budget Estimates 2020-21
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by Elizabeth Kikkert:

In relation to: Expansion of the Taxi Subsidy Scheme
Budget Paper 3, page 105.

1. Communities and organisations for people living with disability have expressed an interest in expanding the Taxi Subsidy scheme to include Uber and possibly other Rideshare alternatives. During hearings, the Community Services Directorate stated that ‘it is not on the agenda, from an Office for Disability perspective, to be advocating for that to transition.’ However, it was subsequently said that the CSD would be happy to ‘take on board any input and put that on the table.’ Minister, is such an expansion of the Taxi Subsidy scheme something that the Office for Disability will decide to advocate to the Chief Minister’s Directorate and work alongside to help implement in the ACT?
 - a. If no: what plans does the ACT Government have to otherwise improve access to transport for people living with disability and what did the ACT Government take into account in determining that Canberrans living with disability could do without greater access to transport in this city?
2. During hearings, the Minister noted ‘real accessibility issues with transport in this city and making sure that everyone can get around safely.’ What kind of accessibility issues is the Minister currently aware of?
3. During hearings, the Community Services Directorate stated that they ‘advocate very strongly for accessibility for people with a disability.’ For what and in what ways has the Directorate advocated for accessibility for people with a disability?
 - a. Were there any particular accessibility issues identified relating to a certain location and transport mechanism
4. The Minister also mentioned the possibility of establishing an access committee that can ‘provide advice and input into urban planning and transport at a really stage in planning.’ What plans does the ACT Government have in creating such a committee and when would such a committee be anticipated to commence operation?



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

QON No. 46

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Emma Davidson MLA: The answers to the Member's question are as follows:–

1. The Chief Minister, Territory and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) note that a range of implementation issues need to be fully explored prior to any expansion of the Taxi Subsidy Scheme to include the additional providers within the on-demand transport industry, such as rideshare services. The Office for Disability supports this approach and is willing to work with the CMTEDD to support this work and advocate for the accessibility needs of people with disability.
2. People with disability experience greater barriers in accessing transport services. The safety of people with disability using public transport is a primary concern, especially during a global pandemic. People with disability are at a higher risk of contracting COVID-19 and experiencing more severe symptoms. The pandemic has added to the accessibility limitations of people with disability who seek to use transport services.
3. The Community Services Directorate has advocated for accessible transport through the work of the ACT Disability Reference Group and in working with Transport Canberra to assist them with the establishment of a disability reference group to inform their work across a range of areas and responsibilities.
 - a) Disability stakeholders advocated for the light rail to be an accessible mode of transport for people with disability. The Disability Reference Group was engaged through the development of light rail and provided feedback on accessibility features of the carriages, stations and surrounding areas.
4. Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) has previously indicated to the Disability Reference Group their willingness to establish a transport-related reference group that would include some members of the Disability Reference Group. The establishment of this group would be a significant step to including the voices of people with disability in transport decision-making.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion

Signature:

Date: 31 MAR 2021

By the Minister for Disability, Emma Davidson MLA



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