



## Paralyzed Veterans of America

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Chartered by the Congress of the United States

August 23, 2016

Ms. Michele Erwin  
Founder and President  
All Wheels Up  
55 Columbia St.  
Islip, NY 11751

Dear Ms. Erwin:

On behalf of Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), I write to express our support for your organization's efforts to develop scientific data in support of allowing passengers with disabilities to use in-cabin wheelchair restraints when traveling by air.

PVA is an organization of veterans who are catastrophically disabled by a spinal cord injury or disease. Access to transportation, including air travel, is critical to ensuring that these veterans are able to fully participate in their communities. As a result, PVA has been working for over 30 years to ensure the right to access air travel and to improve the experience for passengers with disabilities.

In response to efforts by PVA, President Ronald Reagan signed the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) into law on October 2, 1986. Despite progress, too many travelers with disabilities still encounter significant barriers to air travel, including damaged assistive devices, delayed assistance, and lack of seating accommodations. Access for people with disabilities in air travel must improve. Otherwise, people with disabilities will be left behind unable to compete in today's job market or enjoy the opportunities available to other Americans.

Allowing passengers who use wheelchairs an opportunity to use in-cabin wheelchair restraints would have numerous benefits. For example, too many wheelchairs are currently damaged in-flight while stowed in the cargo hold. If individuals with disabilities who use wheelchairs were able to use in-cabin wheelchair restraints, then damage to their assistive devices would be minimized. In addition, individuals who are unable to travel without the support of their wheelchairs may now be able to travel for work, health care, or recreation.

We are hopeful that wheelchair restraints will become a reality on airplanes. The efforts of All Wheels Up to crash test wheelchair restraints for commercial flight is an important part of creating that reality. We support your mission and look forward to the results.

Respectfully,

Carl Blake  
Associate Executive Director  
Government Relations  
Paralyzed Veterans of America