Presenter and Key Staff Biographical Information

Forum On Disability And Transportation

June 20-22, 2017

Forum Facilitators (In Alphabetical Order)

# Marilyn Golden

Marilyn Golden is Senior Policy Analyst at the Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund, a leading national law and policy center on disability civil rights. She has been closely involved with the Americans with Disabilities Act throughout all the stages of its proposal, passage, and implementation. Golden continues to play a key role in ADA transportation policy development, research, and organizing. She was made a White House Champion of Change in Transportation in 2014 by Pres. Obama.

# Richard Petty

Richard Petty is Director of the National Center for Aging and Disability (NCAD) at TIRR (The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research) and Co-Director of ILRU at TIRR. NCAD addresses the concerns of persons with disabilities who are aging and of those who acquire disabilities as they age. Petty serves as Assistant Professor in the Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation in the McGovern Medical School at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth). He chairs the Houston Commission on Disabilities. Petty is also the board chair of Link Houston, a people-centered transportation advocacy group focused on ensuring equitable transportation for people of all incomes, abilities and areas in Houston.

# Carol Tyson

Carol Tyson is a DC-based disabled transportation equity advocate and consultant. As the former Director, Disability Policy for United Spinal Association, Carol embraced the organization’s tradition of advocating for access to all modes of transportation as a civil right at both a national and local level. Carol has served on numerous committees, and organized with fellow advocates and labor union allies to call for full accessibility and quality jobs in any DC transit agency-TNC partnerships.

Presenters (In Alphabetical Order)

# **Billy Altom**

APRIL has a rich history in transportation advocacy and operated a transportation voucher program in 10 locations across the United States. As the Executive Director of APRIL, I was privileged to chair the Rail Vehicles Accessibility Advisory Council for the US Access Board. I was appointed by DOT Secretary Foxx to serve on the Federal Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity and was also appointed by Governor Hutchinson to serve on the Arkansas Public Transportation Coordination Council.

# Todd Brogan

Todd Brogan is a Field Specialist and international organizer with the Amalgamated Transit Union. He has designed and led campaigns to raise the wages of workers, improve public transit funding and service, and develop coalitions that unite transit workers, riders, and community allies. He has been especially involved in work surrounding paratransit, privatization, and transportation network companies in the Washington, DC region.

# Tim Frisbie

Tim leads SUMC’s communications and policy efforts. He previously served as Senior Account Executive at KSA Public Relations/Public Affairs, where he worked on several transportation projects including helping to launch Getting America to Work, a national coalition advocating for increased federal transit funding. He also planned and executed strategic communications campaigns for clients such as Alexian Brothers Health System, Chicago Bar Foundation, HACIA (Hispanic American Construction Industry), Illinois Chamber of Commerce, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance and Mainstreet Organization of REALTORS. Before KSA, Tim worked as Online Content Editor for Baird & Warner Real Estate in Chicago. He has also done communications work for Governor Quinn’s 2010 primary campaign, Friends of the Chicago River and boutique marketing firm Quast & Associates. Tim has a BA in Political Science from the University of Iowa and serves on the executive board of the Publicity Club of Chicago, the nation’s largest independent public relations membership organization. A new Logan Square resident, Tim’s interests include Chicago history, public media and pancakes.

# Candace Groudine

Candace Groudine is Senior Policy and Regulatory Specialist for the Federal Highway Administration’s Office of Civil Rights, where her program areas of concentration are Title II of the ADA and Section 504 as the latter pertains to State and local public agencies; EJ; and LEP. Prior to joining FHWA, Candace served as an administrator/lecturer in higher education for more than 20 years. Her J.D. is from Georgetown University Law Center, and she’s a member of both the Maryland and DC Bars, but does not serve as an attorney for the federal government. Her Ph.D. is in Educational Administration and Policy Studies from SUNY Albany in New York, with a focus on public trust obligations in institutional strategic planning.

# **Susan Henderson**

Susan Henderson is the Executive Director at Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund. She has been actively involved since 2014, in the promotion of accessibility in autonomous vehicle technology and policy. She is the co-author of the National Council on Disability report “Self-Driving Cars: Mapping Access to a Technology Revolution” June 2015, which includes recommendations to Congress and model legislation.

# Gina Hilberry

Ms. Hilberry specializes in accessibility and inclusive design with an emphasis on Public Rights of Way (PROW) and outdoor environments. She served the Access Board on the Public Rights-of-Way Advisory Committee and worked on the Technical Assistance Manual for PROW. She is the Vice-Chair of the ANSI A117.1 Standards Development Committee, Chair of the Scoping Task Group, and Co-Chair of the Wheeled Mobility Task Group. She consults on PROW work for MoDOT and various locations/cities across the country.

# Toby Olson

Toby Olson is the Executive Secretary to the Governor’s Committee on Disability Issues and Employment for the State of Washington. He has served on three Transit Cooperative Research Program disability-focused research projects and is the former Vice Chair APTA Access Policy Oversight Committee. Mr. Olson has thirty years of experience in state level advocacy on transportation policy and funding and was also ADA-TA Center Director for ten years. A former Chair for the International Code Council, Disability Access Committee, he helped facilitate community forums on transportation and disability for the Federal Transit Administration in Boston and Portland, OR. He continues to encourage public dialogue that actively challenges the preconceptions and stereotypes about people with disabilities in an effort to evoke change.

# Mel Plaut

Mel Plaut is a program analyst at TransitCenter, where she has been developing a campaign to improve subway accessibility in New York City. She also has been engaged with the local taxi industry to support accessibility initiatives in for-hire vehicles. Mel helped develop performance indicators for the Federal Transit Administration's Mobility on Demand Sandbox Program, which emphasizes accessibility as one of its guiding principles.

# Gary Talbot

Gary Talbot is an Accessibility and Transportation subject matter expert and Program Director a for large rail agency.

# Maria Town

Maria Town serves as the Director of the Houston Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities. Previously, she served as the Disability Community Liaison for the Obama White House and as a Policy Advisor at the US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. Though none of her roles have been specific to disability transportation, in each position she has worked on disability transportation issues. Her current work in Houston is focused on accessible public rights of way.

# Sylvester Turner

Mayor Sylvester Turner was elected Mayor of Houston on December 12, 2015, to serve a four year term beginning January 4, 2016. Sylvester graduated from the University of Houston and Harvard Law School before joining the law firm of Fulbright & Jaworski. He later founded the Houston law firm of Barnes & Turner in 1983. In 1988, Sylvester was elected to the Texas House of Representatives to serve the people of House District 139 in Northwest Houston. He served until his election as mayor, working on the House Appropriations Committee for 21 years and serving as Speaker Pro Tem for three terms. He was appointed to several Budget Conference Committees to help balance the state’s budget and served on the Legislative Budget Board. As mayor, Turner serves as the Executive Officer of the City of Houston. As the City's chief administrator and official representative, the Mayor is responsible for the general management of the City and for seeing that all laws and ordinances are enforced. Administrative duties include the appointments, with Council approval, of department heads and persons serving on advisory boards. Mayor Turner recently discussed upcoming developments and innovation in transportation for the city of Houston in his annual State of the Mobility Speech given on June 8, 2017.

# Jim Weisman

Jim Weisman is president and CEO of the United Spinal Association. Weisman was General Counsel for United Spinal Association for over 35 years until he became President and Chief Executive Officer in July 2015. Along with disability advocates, he has led efforts on public transit (including bus and subway access) and taxicab accessibility in New York City and other major cities. He was also a key negotiator with Congress in drafting and achieving the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and authored transportation provisions in the law.

# George Powers

George Powers, J.D., is an attorney and legal specialist for the Southwest ADA Center, a program of Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU) program in Houston, TX. Powers received his bachelor's degree in speech communications from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. He went on to earn a Juris Doctor from the University of Houston Law Center, where he also worked in the Immigration Clinic. In 2014, he was appointed to the City of Houston Transportation Accessibility Task Force to provide policy guidance. Powers' research interests include the application of disability rights legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, to the exponentially evolving communication and multimedia technologies.

Staff (In Alphabetical Order)

# Marisa Demaya

Marisa Demaya is the Training Coordinator for the Southwest ADA Center at ILRU, the Independent Living Research Utilization Program in Houston, Texas. As training coordinator she works with businesses, consumers, and community organizations to train and inform them on their rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Ms. Demaya graduated from the University of Houston in 2002 with a BS in Professional Writing. Her interest in civil rights of persons with disabilities developed through personal experience as a family member of a person with a disability. Marisa has been with the Independent Living Research Utilization program for over 12 years having joined them under separate projects in 2004 then later joining the ADA center in 2009.

# Dawn Heinsohn

Dawn Heinsohn is a training and publications/materials coordinator for the CIL-Net and SILC-Net projects at the Independent Living Research and Utilization program (ILRU). Mrs. Heinsohn has coordinated trainings, events, publications and provided technical assistance to countless consumers across several projects for over 20 years. As one of the more prominent faces of ILRU she has a deep understanding of the independent living movement and the importance of the work of advocates/consumers in helping people with disabilities live in their respective communities.

# Dionne Rauseo

Dionne Rauseo is a program office coordinator for the Independent Living Research Utilization Program (ILRU). Having been with the program for over a decade Mrs. Rauseo serves across several of their national technical assistance related projects including the Southwest ADA Center, CIL-NET and SILC-Net. In her central role at the Southwest ADA Center Dionne assists with daily coordination of ADA Technical Assistance related activities including materials/publications coordination and responding to training/event/consumer related inquiries via the center’s toll-free assistance line. She remains a dedicated and indispensable member of the ILRU staff; working tirelessly to assist consumers served by the center while balancing several behind-the-scenes program related duties across the board.