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Silvan Bruno
Chair, External Advisory Committee
Metrolinx
20 Bay Street, Suite 901
Toronto, ON M5J 2N8

March 19, 2010

Dear Mr. Bruno,

We are writing to you to offer feedback on improving the GO Transit system for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing individuals. We are a committee composed of Deaf residents living in the Durham Region and established to address local accessibility issues.

We would like to propose that GO Transit include the installation of LED signage or billboards on all GO trains and buses to notify passengers of upcoming stops as part of the next Accessibility Plan for 2010-2011. This will provide equal access to information for Deaf and Hard of Hearing passengers who may not be able to hear audible announcements or notifications being made.

In early 2009, some members of our committee used the GO train travelling from Oshawa to Toronto on the Lakeshore East train system to go to Queen Park. On the return home, some members of the committee were not aware that the train had already arrived in Oshawa and everyone had departed. It was not until the train left the Oshawa station to make it way back to Union Station when they realized they had missed their stop. They were advised by a train attendant that they will not be able to get off the out-of-service train until its arrival in Union Station. Upon arrival, they took another train back to Oshawa.

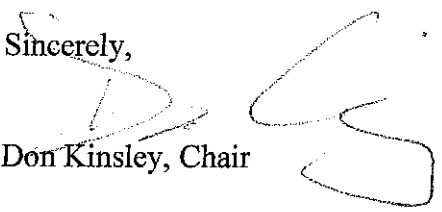
Deaf and Hard of Hearing commuters often depend on external signage or landmarks to determine whether or not they have arrived at their destination. This ability is limited when travelling at night and this is exacerbated when they get off at the wrong location and there is limited recourse to get them to their correct destination. This is also difficult for passengers who are not familiar with the transportation system, or are newcomers or visitors in the area.

We have reviewed your Accessibility Plan for 2009-2010 and there is no mention about including LED signage on trains and buses. Deaf and hard of hearing people rely on visual communication so LED signage is an effective way of letting them where the Go

has stopped or when there is an emergency. We strongly encourage you to include this in the next Accessibility Plan. This technology already exists and the Toronto Transit Commission has already taken action to include this in their transportation system.

Thank you and we hope to hear from you sometimes in the near future.

Sincerely,



Don Kinsley, Chair

cc: Durham Deaf Accessibility Committee – Mike Finnegan, Veronica Bickle, Gordon Ryall, Beverley Dooley, Kim Reid, David Hamen and Mirek Swiecicki
cc: Gary McNeil, Executive Vice-President, Metrolinx, Managing Director, GO Transit
cc: Maggie Doherty-Gilbert, Regional Director, The Canadian Hearing Society, Peterborough, Durham and City of Kawartha Lakes Regions
cc: Rex Banks, Director, Hearing Health Care, The Canadian Hearing Society