[DATE]

[Senator Name]

United States Senate

[Senator Address] [Senator Office Building]

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator [name]:

This letter is to support the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act (ACAAA), S. 545, and ask that you co-sponsor this legislation. This bill would ensure I have equal access to air travel by requiring the U.S. Department of Transportation to develop regulations mandating accessible PA announcements and captioned in-flight entertainment (IFE).

Although airlines have provided IFE for many decades, it remains inaccessible for deaf and hard of hearing passengers who are entitled to the same enjoyment as hearing passengers. Despite being a modern form of travel, airlines are essentially the last frontier of uncaptioned videos.

In this age of smartphones, tablets, and laptops, captioning is technically and economically feasible on all forms of displays right now, and no further delay is needed. Moreover, captioning is now ubiquitous on every form of Internet video streaming service and nearly every movie shown in a movie theater is also captioned. IFE is truly the last area to be fully captioned. Airlines can no longer contend that the video content they seek to show on IFE do not have caption files. The reality is that the vast majority, if not all, of the videos that are shown on IFE already are captioned elsewhere. Moreover, some airlines are already providing captioning for a limited set of videos which demonstrate the feasibility of captioned IFE, but such captioning access is limited and haphazard rather than uniformly available. In addition, airlines often use programs that do not identify upfront which content is accessible, forcing consumers to check every title to see whether it is accessible to them.

Moreover, we do not have access to aural-only PA announcements, which can be dangerous in an emergency in the air. We pay the same price for tickets as hearing passengers yet do not receive the same service. That is inequitable.

The time has come to rectify the USDOT’s failure to mandate captioned IFE and access to PA announcements as part of its effort to address equity. Please support S. 545. My rights to equal access in the air depend on it.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

[Your address]