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ALABAMA DISABILITIES ADVOCACY PROGRAM  
July 5, 2013

The Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program (ADAP) is part of the nationwide federally mandated protection and advocacy (P&A) system. ADAP's mission is to provide quality, legally based advocacy services to Alabamians with disabilities in order to protect, promote and expand their rights.

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## Week of Action on Amtrak for the 23<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act!

TO: Coalition partners, Protection and Advocacy agencies, and other advocates

FROM: Patrick Wojahn, National Disability Rights Network

Nearly twenty-three years after passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act and despite the fact that many people with disabilities rely on Amtrak and other passenger rail services, trains and stations are not fully accessible to people with disabilities. This has left many people with disabilities with fewer transportation options, unable to access trains to get to where they need to go, and sometimes even left people stranded.

There are countless examples of how Amtrak has not provided accessible facilities for people with disabilities. At the commuter rail station in Paoli, Pennsylvania, which serves the Southeast Pennsylvania Transportation Authority commuter rail network and Amtrak, it was for many years nearly impossible for people using wheelchairs to access the trains, as there was not even a platform lift. Only after the Disability Rights Network of Pennsylvania filed a lawsuit did Amtrak install a platform lift. Numerous other stations around the country are not accessible for people with physical and sensory disabilities. Many information and alert systems are inaccessible to people with visual or auditory disabilities or both.

People with disabilities are sick and tired of not being able to get on trains, or having to board or disembark at stations far away from their homes or their destinations. People with visual or

hearing impairments are sick and tired of not having accessible information about their trains or about Amtrak services. People with disabilities are also tired of hearing that funding for needed accessibility improvements does not exist when news stories of Amtrak wasting millions of dollars are written: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-05-29/amtrak-risks-hundreds-of-millions-in-equipment-ig-says.html>.

The National Disability Rights Network and the nationwide network of Protection and Advocacy agencies for people with disabilities is going to be holding a week of action on Amtrak, and we need your help!

A number of Protection and Advocacy agencies and other advocates for people with disabilities will be visiting Amtrak and commuter rail stations across the country to record and report as many accessibility problems as we can. We need you to help us during the week of July 21-27, the week of the 23<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please take some time during this week to visit a local train station. While there, please fill out a survey on whether the train station is accessible to people with physical disabilities, hearing and visual impairments.

NDRN will be holding a webinar at 3 pm EDT on Monday, July 15, where you can learn about the survey and what you need to do to participate. To sign up, please go to <http://app.certain.com/profile/form/index.cfm?PKformID=ox1561592ad08> and fill out the form.

Please spread the word! Thank you for participating.

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## HAVE PRESENTATION. WILL TRAVEL

Are you a member of a group that needs a speaker for an upcoming meeting? If so, ADAP can fill this need. ADAP staff provides education/training sessions on a wide variety of disability-related topics including, but not limited to: the Americans with Disabilities Act, Medicaid waivers, guardianships, special education, general disability rights, and transition services for youth who will soon become adults. We will also speak on specifically requested, disability-related topics. If you are interested in making arrangements for ADAP to come speak at one of your meetings, please contact Anita Davidson, one of ADAP's Legal Assistants, by calling 205-348-5107, or emailing her, [akdavidson@adap.ua.edu](mailto:akdavidson@adap.ua.edu)



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