



July 2, 2024

Inside this issue:

- **FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 Signed Into Law**
- **PVA Awards 2024 Gordon Mansfield Award to Senator Elizabeth Dole**
- **PVA National President and CEO Testify at Hearing on Care and Benefits for SCI/D Veterans**
- **DOJ Releases Final Rule on ADA Requirements for Web Access for State and Local Governments**

FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 Signed Into Law

On May 16, the President signed the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 into law. The Reauthorization includes several PVA-supported provisions focused on addressing the experience of air travel passengers with disabilities. Specific sections in the new law include training requirements for assisting passengers with limited mobility and properly stowing assistive devices; analyzing and improving the Department of Transportation's (DOT) complaint process; addressing the need for more access standards and accessibility of inflight entertainment, as well as improved access to airline websites, applications, and information communication technologies; and increasing access to seating accommodations.

The FAA Reauthorization Act also requires continued study into safe and secure in-cabin wheelchair tie-down systems, and if technically feasible, a study into their economic and financial feasibility; the need for DOT to perform a more in-depth analysis of airline-reported mishandled wheelchair data; and reauthorization of the Air Carrier Access Act Advisory (ACAA) Committee,

as well as a requirement for the ACAA Committee to ensure safe transport for assistive devices powered by lithium-ion batteries. In addition, we were pleased to see the inclusion of a pilot grant program to increase airport accessibility and requirements for adult changing tables; new requirements related to the availability of onboard wheelchairs; expansion of the Advanced Materials Center of Excellence to address safe and accessible air travel for passengers with disabilities; and the creation of a known service animal pilot program.

Thank you for advocating for this important piece of legislation. Over 1,387 letters were sent to representatives on behalf of PVA and 4,862 advocates signed the petition to address the needs of air travel passengers with disabilities.

PVA Awards 2024 Gordon Mansfield Award to Senator Elizabeth Dole

In mid-April, PVA awarded this year's Gordon Mansfield Award to Senator Elizabeth Dole. Established in 2015, the award recognizes members of Congress who champion PVA's legislative priorities in the areas of veterans' healthcare, benefits, and disability civil rights. Senator Dole was selected for this prestigious award due to her extensive history of advocacy and support for the care of veterans and their caregivers. Her dedication to the well-being of our nation's heroes and their families has left an indelible mark on the community, embodying the spirit of the Mansfield Award.

PVA National President and CEO Testify at Congressional Hearing on Care and Benefits for SCI/D Veterans

On June 13, PVA National President Robert Thomas and CEO Carl Blake testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Committee in a hearing titled, "A Call to Action: Meeting the Needs of the Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders (SCI/D) Veteran Community." In his testimony, President Thomas focused on the importance of care provided to veterans through the VA's Spinal Cord Injury/Disorder (SCI/D) system of care." He then called on the VA to properly deploy its resources and request the funding the department needs to provide the level of care outlined in Veterans Health Administration Directive 1176. CEO Blake's statement took exception to VA's claims that staff vacancies are low as he outlined staffing deficiencies in the SCI/D system of care and their impact on paralyzed veterans. He noted the SCI/D system of care is "at a breaking point."

DOJ Releases Final Rule on ADA Requirements for Web Access for State and Local Governments

Recently, the U.S. Department of Justice announced a final Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) rule on the accessibility of web content and mobile apps provided by state and local governments. The rule has been more than a decade in the making. Under the rule, state and local governments' web content and mobile apps usually need to follow the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Version 2.1, Level AA. However, there are exceptions to this requirement. More information about the rule, including when it applies, is available [here](#).