

[INSERT NAME AND ADDRESS OF RECIPIENT]

[INSERT DATE]

Dear Senator,

We are writing to you on behalf of [INSERT NAME OF ORGANIZATION] regarding Bill C-81, *An Act to ensure a barrier-free Canada*.

As you may know, 1 in 5 Canadians over the age of 15 have a disability. Many persons with disabilities live in poverty, do not have equal access to the labour market, and are faced with a myriad of other barriers that prevent them from using services and participating in public life.

Bill C-81 proposes to set accessibility standards that the Government of Canada and federal organizations will have to follow. This is a good first step, which we hope will break down some of the barriers we experience. However, Bill C-81 is not strong enough. We need a law that not only strives for full inclusion of persons with disabilities in Canadian society, but also has the tools to achieve it.

Together with 95 other disability organizations across the country, we have signed an Open Letter which sets out 9 key concerns with Bill C-81. This letter was originally sent to the House of Commons Committee that studied Bill C-81. Although that Committee made some amendments to the Bill, the 9 key concerns in our Open Letter remain relevant and important.

We have enclosed a copy of the Open Letter and ask that you support changes to Bill C-81 to address these 9 key concerns. We believe that these changes are necessary to strengthen Bill C-81 and give it the tools it needs to achieve its purpose of a barrier-free Canada.

[OPTIONAL] Of the 9 Open Letter concerns, we wish to draw your attention in particular to the following:

[SOME GROUPS MAY WISH TO EMPHASIZE 1, 2, 3 OR 4 OUT OF THE 9 OPEN LETTER CONCERNS. YOU MAY WISH TO USE TEXT FROM THE BRIEFING NOTES TO FILL IN THIS PART.]

We thank you for taking the time to consider how you can help to strengthen Bill C-81. This legislation has the potential to truly improve the day-to-day lives of persons with disabilities in Canada, but it needs some changes in order to fulfill its potential. We hope you will prioritize our perspectives, as persons with disabilities in Canada who will be impacted by Bill C-81.

We would be pleased to give you more details about any of the 9 key concerns in the Open Letter.

[OPTIONAL] Please let us know when you are available for a meeting to discuss Bill C-81 with us.

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAME]