Mobility Assistance from Airport Entrance to Boarding

- Alexander A. Taday
- Director of Civil Rights Advocacy
- Office of Aviation Consumer Protection



Carriers must assist passengers:

- in getting on or off an airplane (including through the use of lifts/ramps)
- in moving between gates so passenger can connect to another flight
- in accessing key areas of the terminal
- to make a stop at the entrance of a restroom
- with their checked or carry-on luggage
- to make a stop at an animal relief area

Preboarding

- Carriers must permit a passenger with a disability to board the aircraft before all other passengers if that passenger says that she needs additional time or assistance to board, stow accessibility equipment, or to be seated.
- A carrier cannot leave a passenger who has requested enplaning, deplaning, or connecting assistance unattended in a ground wheelchair, boarding wheelchair, or other device, in which the passenger is <u>not independently mobile</u>, for more than 30 minutes.

- Passengers must inform carrier that they have arrived at the airport and need assistance.
- Passengers arriving at a terminal entrance where an airline has no employees or contractors at the curbside or other vehicle drop-off point are responsible for entering the terminal (or having someone do so on his/her behalf) to request assistance from the airline.

- At a foreign airport where airport operators have the responsibility to provide enplaning, deplaning, and connecting assistance, both U.S. and foreign carriers can rely on the airport operator's services.
- If services do not fully meet the requirements of Part 382, carrier must supplement the airport operator's services to ensure that the requirements are met.
- If a carrier believes that it is legally precluded from supplementing the airport operator's services, it can apply for a conflict of laws waiver.