



October 20, 2020

To the Cook County Board of Commissioners:

On behalf of Access Living, I would like to express our support for the County's effort to elevate its efforts to serve Cook County residents with disabilities of all kinds. The inaugural annual report on the status of the County's ADA physical compliance is an important first step towards both public transparency and building trust with people with disabilities. In particular, we commend the Office of the President and the Bureau of Asset Management staff for their efforts to compile this report and engage in dialogue with disability advocates.

We furthermore commend the steps that the County has taken to fold in a disability lens as part of the strategic planning work resulting from the Policy Roadmap. The ADA annual report references dialogue between the County and a new disability working group to investigate programmatic access on top of physical access. As a member of that workgroup representing Access Living, it has been my pleasure to help review this inaugural report and begin key discussions about how the County can further include people with disabilities both internally and with the public.

Creating accessibility and developing welcoming spaces for all is not easy work. However, we welcome the opportunity to work side by side with our colleagues at the County and in the workgroup, to actively create opportunities for full equity for all. We look forward to continuing this important and strategic work, in this 30th anniversary year of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amber Smock", on a light-colored rectangular background.

Amber Smock

Director of Advocacy, Access Living

Asmock@accessliving.org