

# Research among Adults with Disabilities: Travel and Hospitality



*Prepared for:*



# Open Doors Organization

- Chicago-based non-profit founded in 2000
- Mission—to create a society in which persons with disabilities have equal opportunities as consumers
- Primary Focus—Travel and Tourism



ODO Founder/Executive Director Eric Lipp

# ODO Aviation Initiatives

- Airline and Airline Service Symposia
- Disability Awareness Training for Airports
  - Classroom – Most recently, PHL
  - Online – ACI Online Learning Center
- Initial and Refresh Training for Airline Complaints Resolution Officials (CROs)
- Aviation Access Certification Program—for airline service company employees—*new in 2013*

# ODO Aviation Initiatives/2

- Ground Handling Wheelchair Stowage Workshops
- Technological Solutions—ODO-designed belt loader device for wheelchairs
- Participation on airline advisory boards and Federal committees including TSA
- Consultative Services—Staff training, Videos, Accessibility Audits, etc.
- Consumer education/media outreach



# Universal Access in Airports Conference

- 2-day event held biennially since 2006
  - Open exchange of ideas and best practice on how to improve accessibility and customer service for air travelers with disabilities and seniors
  - Who attends—airports, airlines, service companies, aviation suppliers, disability organizations
- 6th UAIA will take place August 16-18, 2016, in San Francisco

UNITED



*Open Doors  
Organization*

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## Three research reports - 2002, 2005 and 2015

**The study's key objectives were to:**

- **Measure general travel behaviors**, including how often adults with disabilities travel, how much money they spend, and which sources of information they use to make decisions;
- **Gauge experiences with travel services providers**, including airlines, airports, hotels, and restaurants;
- **Determine the obstacles** that adults with disabilities encounter with these service providers; and
- **Compare** the most recent findings to the findings of 2002 and 2005, where possible, to uncover possible trends and differences over time.

**Fifteen percent of American adults have some form of disability, amounting to more than 36 million people.\***

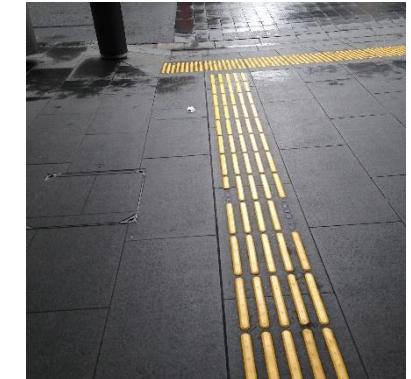
# Impact of Travelers with Disabilities



## General travel

In the past two years:

**26 million travelers** with disabilities have taken  
total of **73 million trips** and  
**Spent \$34.6 billion**



## Travel by air

In the past two years:

**31%** of adults with disabilities have taken a flight on a trip  
**11 million air travelers** taking **23 million air trips**, generating  
**Nearly \$9 billion in spending**

**More than one-quarter of travelers with disabilities have traveled outside the United States in the past five years (28%).**

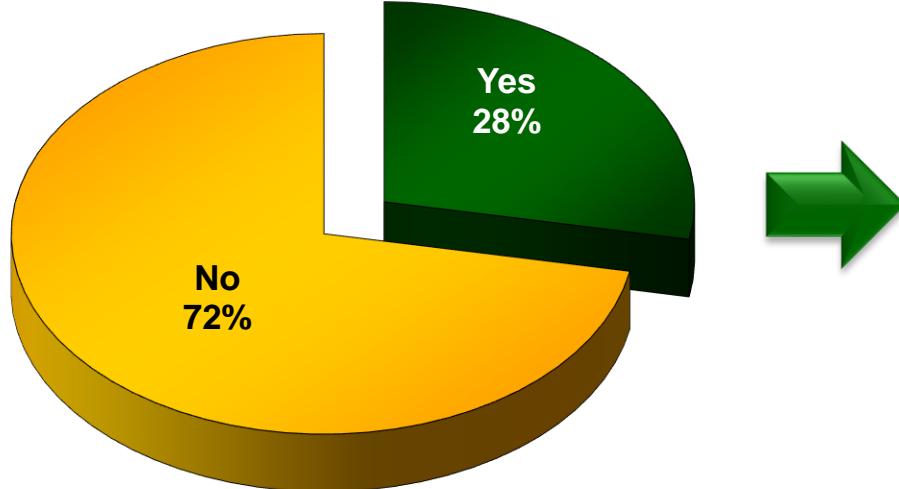
\*Based on U.S. Census estimates of 242,754,000 people age 18 years or older in the U.S. Incidence of adults with disabilities was obtained from The Harris Poll.

Nearly 3 out of 10 have traveled to locations outside the U.S. in the last five years (28%). The most common destinations include the Caribbean, Europe, and South or Central America.

On average, these international travelers spend about \$2,500 on their trips outside the U.S.

### Whether Traveled Outside U.S. in Last 5 Years

Among travelers  
(n=944)



### Top Regions

Among those who have traveled outside the U.S.

	(n=251)
Caribbean	40%
Europe	35%
South/Central America	32%
UK	27%
Mexico	26%
Canada	23%
Africa	19%
Middle East	19%
Asia	12%
Oceania	8%

**MEDIAN SPENDING: \$2,500\***

Have you traveled outside of the United States in the last five years?

How much have you spent on your own travel outside the United States?

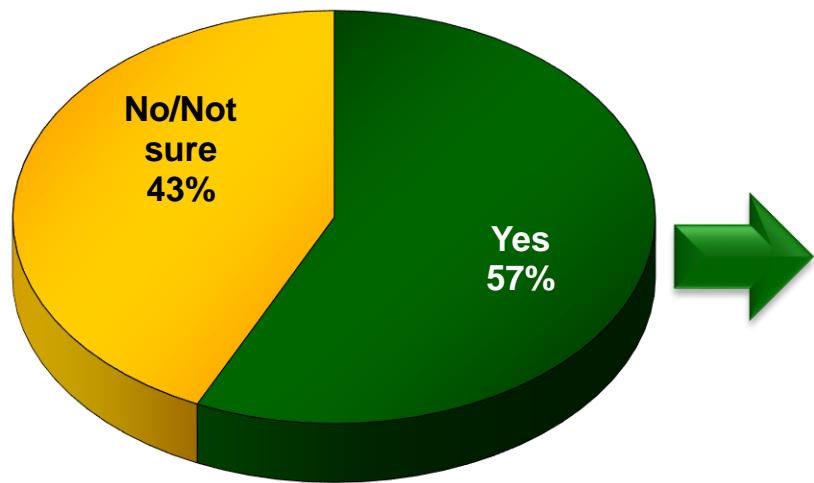
To which of the following countries or territories have you traveled in the past five years?

\*Median calculation excludes 0.

More than half of travelers with disabilities use mobile devices to support their needs (57%)  
– most often hotel applications or airport or airline websites.

Many also use airline apps or text alerts, mobile boarding passes, ground transportation apps, video chat applications, or airport apps.

### Use of Mobile Devices to Support Travel Needs



### Usage of Mobile Devices When Traveling

Among travelers who use mobile devices to support needs

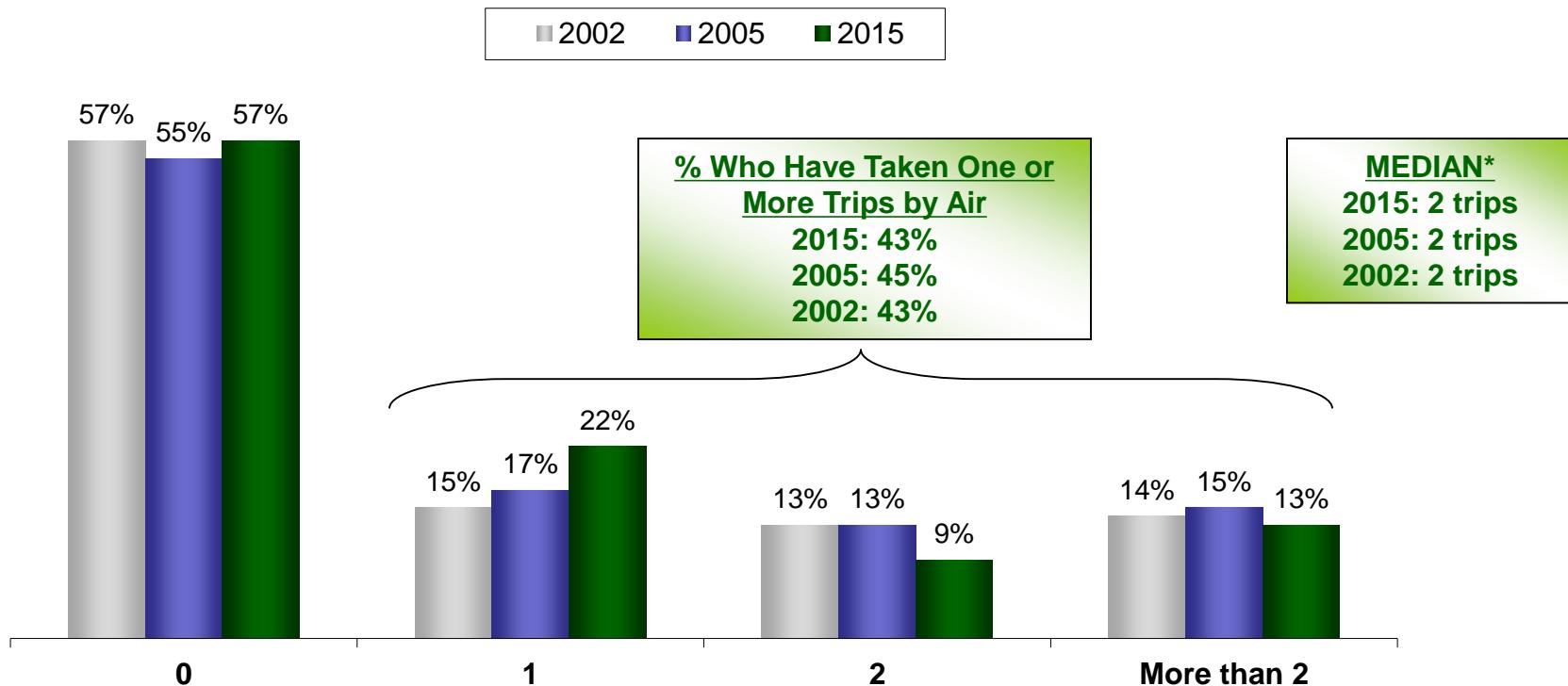
	(n=516)
Hotel app	32%
Airline or airport website	27%
Airline app	19%
Text alert from airline	19%
Mobile boarding pass	17%
Ground transportation app	13%
Video chat app	13%
Airport app	11%
Maps/GPS	5%
Wayfinding app for a person with vision loss	3%
Service dog relief area app	2%
Other	3%
Not sure	28%

Four out of ten travelers with disabilities have taken at least one trip by air in the past two years.

The number of trips by air taken by travelers with disabilities has not changed overall since 2002.

### **Number of Trips by Air Taken by Travelers with Disabilities in the Past 2 Years**

Among travelers



On average, air travelers with disabilities spend about \$400 on flights and \$20 at the airport.

The amount spent on air trips – for airfare and at airports – has increased.

### Amount Spent on Airfare for Last Trip by Airplane

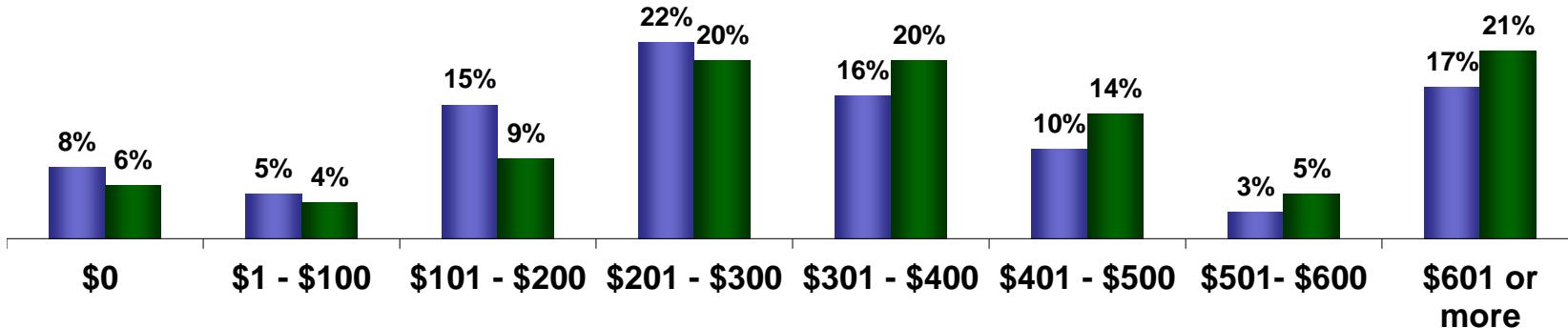
Among those who have traveled by air



**AMOUNT SPENT ON AIRFARE:**  
2015: MEDIAN=\$387  
2005: MEDIAN=\$302

**AMOUNT SPENT AT AIRPORTS:**  
2015: MEDIAN=\$20  
2005: MEDIAN=\$10

■ 2005 ■ 2015

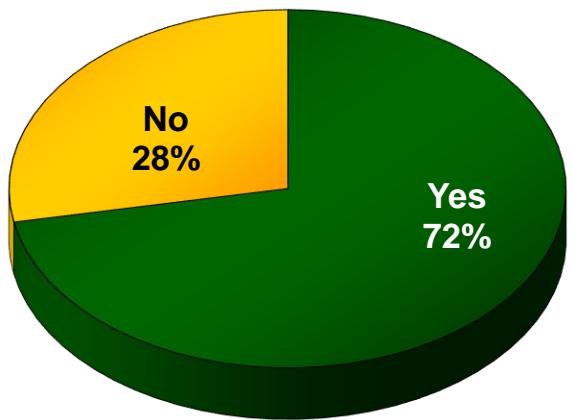


Seven out of ten air travelers with disabilities have encountered major obstacles when dealing with airlines (72%) – most commonly physical obstacles like cramped seating areas, and customer service obstacles like long lines.

The proportion of air travelers who say they have encountered a major obstacle with an airline has declined from 2005 (from 84%), as has the proportion of air travelers who experienced nearly all of the specific tested obstacles.

### Whether Encountered Airline Obstacles

Among air travelers (n=417)



**Encountered obstacles in 2005: 84%**

### Obstacles Encountered When Dealing with Airlines

Among air travelers

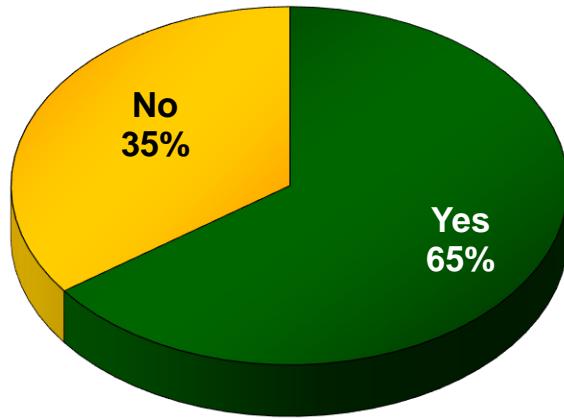
	2005	2015
<b>Physical obstacles (net)</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>56%</b>
Cramped seating areas	52%	47%
Difficulty navigating the narrow aisles	38%	24%
Not enough room for carry-on luggage	25%	21%
Inaccessible toilets on planes	16%	10%
<b>Personnel/Customer service obstacles (net)</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>40%</b>
Long lines at ticket counters/check in	42%	25%
Difficulty reserving preferred seat	20%	12%
Personnel being insensitive or unwelcoming	17%	11%
Lack of personnel to assist people with disabilities	17%	11%
Inadequate time to board/ exit the plane	--	5%
Damaging/mishandling wheelchair, scooter, walker	--	4%
Airline personnel inexperienced performing transfers	14%	4%
Unwelcoming attitudes toward service animal	4%	1%
<b>Expense obstacles (net)</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>29%</b>
Expensive tickets	33%	26%
Expenses/lack of a discount for a companion	13%	7%
<b>Communication obstacles (net)</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>23%</b>
Difficulty hearing announcements	17%	15%
Lack of printed menus for food and drink options	9%	5%
On-board entertainment not closed-captioned	9%	5%
Difficulty reading safety cards	4%	3%
Airline personnel unable to use sign language	3%	1%
<b>Other</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>6%</b>

Two out of three air travelers with disabilities have encountered major obstacles at airports (65%) – most commonly long distances to gates and long lines.

Air travelers are less likely to say they encountered a major obstacle at an airport in 2015 than they were in 2005 (down from 82%).

### Whether Encountered Airport Obstacles

Among air travelers (n=416)



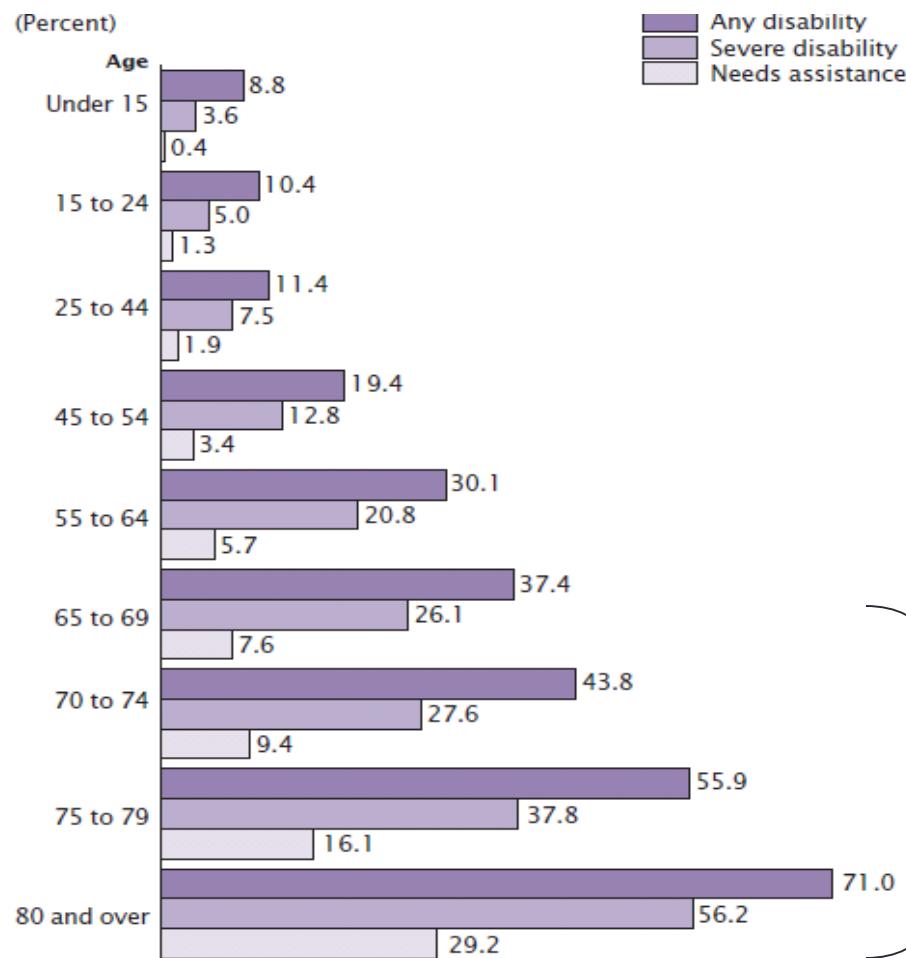
**Encountered obstacles in 2005: 82%**

### Obstacles Encountered at Airports

Among air travelers

	2005	2015
<b>Physical obstacles (net)</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>53%</b>
Long distance to or between gates	63%	43%
Lack of seating in airport	--	20%
Difficulty finding my way	16%	13%
Inaccessible shuttle systems within airports	16%	6%
<b>Personnel/Customer service obstacles (net)</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>49%</b>
Long lines	48%	31%
Difficulty getting assistance with baggage	23%	15%
Difficulties with security or TSA	22%	11%
Insensitive/unwelcoming to people with disabilities	14%	9%
Personnel's lack of awareness of services provided	22%	8%
Delays or breakdowns in accessible service	17%	8%
Difficulty with accessible ground transportation	14%	4%
Lack of functioning/poor quality wheelchairs	9%	3%
Unwelcoming attitudes toward service animal	3%	3%
<b>Communication obstacles (net)</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>19%</b>
Difficulty understanding baggage carousel info.	17%	10%
Difficulty using automated check-in kiosks	--	8%
Difficulty understanding connecting gate info.	12%	6%
Flight monitors that are difficult to read	11%	5%
<b>Other</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>&lt;.5%</b>

# Disability Prevalence by Age— U.S.



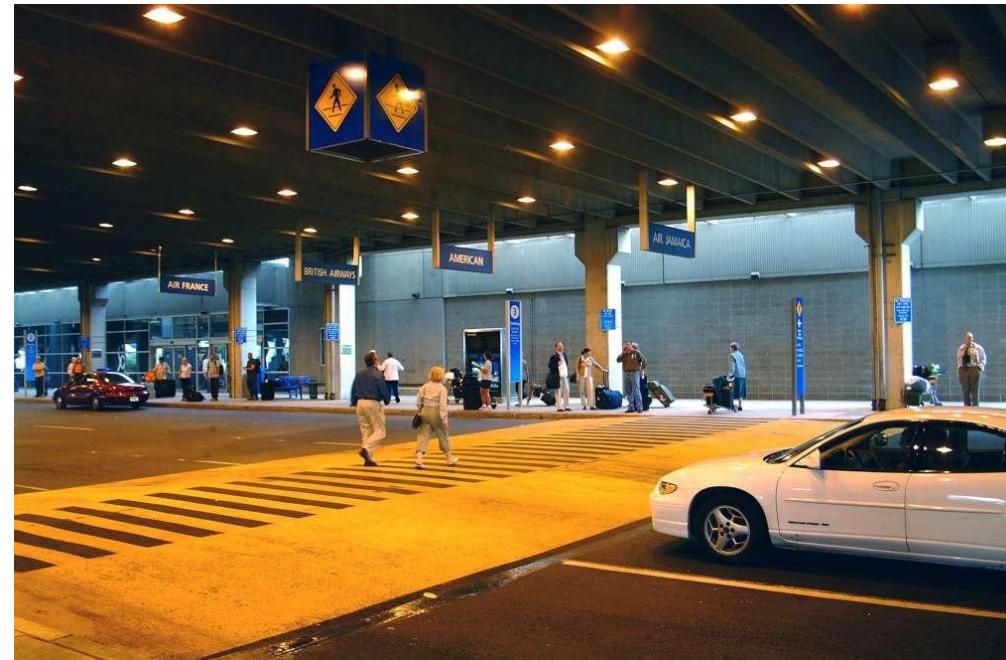
51.8% of Americans 65 and older have a disability, 36.9% a severe disability

Note: The need for assistance with activities of daily living was not asked of children under 6 years.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, June–September 2005.

# Universal Design Principles

- Equitable
- Flexible
- Simple & Intuitive
- Safe
- Reasonable Effort
- Space for Approach & Use
- Sustainable



# The Future

AA Form Ok16-C  
CPN# 1107282  
Rev. 9/10

**AA® American Airlines**  
**GATE DISPATCH/DELIVERY**  
**DESPACHADO/ENTREGADO**  
**EN PUERTA**

FLIGHT VUELO	1231	TRANSFER/FINAL CONEXION/FINAL
FLIGHT VUELO		TRANSFER/FINAL CONEXION/FINAL

Baggage checked subject to tariffs, including limitations of liability contained therein.  
Fragile items are accepted at customer's risk.  
El equipaje despachado esta sujeto a las tarifas vigentes y a las limitaciones de responsabilidad previstas en ellas. Los artículos frágiles se aceptan bajo la responsabilidad del pasajero.  
L/H

Customer Name / Nombre \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. / Telefono \_\_\_\_\_  
Customer Claim Check/Boleto de reclamo del pasajero  
**AA 03-61-98**  


**WHEELCHAIR / SCOOTER**

Weight 75 LBS

Battery location UNDER SEAT

Free wheel lever location(s) ON BACK, RIGHT

Lift spots ANYWHERE BUT  
THE SEAT

Parts taken in cabin \_\_\_\_\_

Other details \_\_\_\_\_



Any usage of this material should credit the Open Doors Organization, a Chicago-based non-profit.

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