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ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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July 22, 2008

The Honorable Mary E. Peters
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Madam Secretary:

The Oversight Committee is investigating reports that the new Department of Transportation Headquarters, which opened in the Spring of 2007, does not comply with long-standing statutory and regulatory requirements concerning accessibility for Department of Transportation employees and visitors with disabilities. Through legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Architectural Barriers Act, Congress has attempted to make the federal government an equal-opportunity employer for workers with disabilities and a model of accessibility to the private sector. Recent press accounts, however, have reported that the Department's new Headquarters building may not fully adhere to these standards.

To assist the Committee in this investigation, I request that the Department produce the following documents:

1. The lease for the new Department of Transportation Headquarters;
2. All contracts, task orders, amendments, and modifications related to the construction and design of the new Headquarters;
3. All documents and internal communications related to the new Headquarters building and premises' compliance with federal disability access statutes and regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Architectural Barriers Act, the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS), and other applicable statutes and regulations;
4. All communications between the Department of Transportation and outside agencies, contractors, and disability advocates, including the General Services Administration, the

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- Access Board, the District of Columbia, JBG/SEFC Ventures, and Michael Graves and Associates relating to compliance of the new Headquarters building and premises with federal disability access statutes and regulations;
5. All internal complaints that have been filed by Department personnel regarding non-compliance with the requirements of federal disability access statutes and regulations from the outset of occupancy;
 6. All communications related to financial responsibility for remediating accessibility deficiencies at the Headquarters and its premises;
 7. The April 22, 2008, e-mail circulated by Assistant Secretary for Administration Linda Washington and/or the Department's Disability Resource Center with "an outline of how cafeteria staff and DOT employees needing assistance can work together to provide employees with a positive experience," and all communications involving the development and implementation of this policy;
 8. All documents relating to the design and implementation of any "sensitivity training" instituted in response to the accessibility problems at the Headquarters; and
 9. All communications relating to impediments created by inaccessibility at the Headquarters to the implementation of Deputy Secretary Barrett's March 18, 2008, memorandum entitled "Fiscal Year 2008 Hiring Goal for Persons with Targeted Disabilities."

Please provide this information by August 1, 2008.

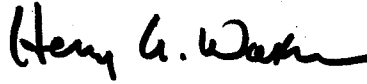
I also request that Department officials provide a briefing to Committee staff on accessibility at the Department's Headquarters by July 25, 2008.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee in the House of Representatives and has broad oversight jurisdiction as set forth in House Rule X. An attachment to this letter provides additional information about how to respond to the Committee's request.

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If you have any questions about this request, please contact David Rapallo or Daniel Davis of the Committee staff at (202) 225-5420.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henry A. Waxman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Henry A. Waxman
Chairman

Enclosure

cc: Tom Davis
Ranking Minority Member