ACB | American Council of the Blind
Together for a bright future

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January 25, 2023

Douglas Ito, Director
Consumer Protection & Enforcement Division
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: American Council of the Blind in Support of Resolution Cruise Advice Letter 002

Dear Director Ito:

The American Council of the Blind writes to express our support for Cruise's application to expand its autonomous vehicle services to serve the city of San Francisco 24 hours a day for 7 days a week.

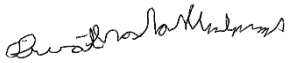
The American Council of the Blind is the nation's leading member-driven organization of and for blind and low-vision individuals. Founded in 1961 and comprised of 65 state and special-interest affiliate organizations, including the California Council of the Blind, ACB strives to increase the independence, security, equality of opportunity, and to improve the quality of life for all individuals who are blind and experiencing vision loss. Integral to our mission is ensuring safe and equitable access to transportation services.

Cruise's service and self-driving technology have the potential to empower people with blindness and other disabilities to live more independently and safely. For example, the company is currently developing the first fully autonomous and wheelchair-accessible vehicle, the Origin Mobility, a huge step in increasing mobility for those who cannot drive. Additionally, ACB has been working with Cruise to develop its technology, including mechanisms to request a ride from the rideshare service, find, enter and exit a vehicle upon pickup and drop-off, and request both emergency and non-emergency assistance, so that the service and vehicles are usable and accessible for blind and low-vision individuals.

The American Council of the Blind and our members are excited about the promise of truly autonomous transportation for blind and low-vision people across San Francisco and beyond, making it easier for them to live their daily lives and stay connected to their communities, including employment, education, and recreation. ACB urges the commission to approve Cruise's application to provide 24/7 service to all of San Francisco. This will increase access to equitable transportation options for the blind community and build a more accessible, affordable transportation network for the city.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions or would like to discuss our comments further, please contact ACB's Advocacy and Outreach Specialist, Swatha Nandhakumar, either by phone at (202) 467-5081 or by email at snandhakumar@acb.org.

Sincerely,



Swatha Nandhakumar
Advocacy and Outreach Specialist
American Council of the Blind

cc:
Alice Reynolds, President, CPUC
Karen Douglas, Commissioner, CPUC
Genevieve Shiroma, Commissioner, CPUC
Darcie Houck, Commissioner, CPUC
John Reynolds, Commissioner, CPUC
Christine Hironaka, Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Governor's Office
Mark Tollefson, Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Governor's Office