

“Rising to the Top”  
Senior and Disability Action

Elevator Testimonials—May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**Describe your SRO elevator experience:**

“My worst time in the elevator was a couple weeks ago when the elevator was out for 2 weeks. I was unable to wash, shop or socialize because I am 60 with bad knees so I couldn’t go anywhere which is no quality of life.”

“Our elevator always breaks down. It takes 3 to 5 days to fix. Manager doesn’t care. I have C.O.P.D. Stairs are a problem. It is hard for me to get up and down when elevator is out of order.”

“When the elevator goes out, we have to use the stairs and there are many people with disabilities in the building and those with wheelchairs have a problem. They can’t go outside or use the stairs. Our elevator at the Hillsdale goes out every other day.”

“Last time our elevator went down it was for two weeks. Before that, it was down for one week. Seems that it breaks down more often with more down times. Only carries 3 people through it is rated for 12. Had a dream about the elevators breaking down.”

“I live in an SRO on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor and when the elevator goes out it takes 45 minutes for me to climb the stairs. I have had a stroke and paralyzed on my right side. I can’t get meals on wheels because they leave my food at the front desk. Am confined to my room. One time it was out for a month.”

“I have lived in an SRO since 2008. Occasionally the elevator goes out. But twice, in the last 26 months, the elevator went down for 2 months at a time. On both occasions I lived on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. That’s a climb of 4 flights every time I go up to my room. I am overweight and this burdened me greatly. I have the perspective however, to realize others had it harder than I did. In fact, they had to be moved to other hotels as a way of accommodating them. The first time 2 years ago it all came without notice. Just recently from December 2015 to February of this year we received a notice. Being warned made a difference. I can’t deny this. I am hoping at my hotel that we have put the worst behind us. But given what’s occurred, I have my doubts.”

“On August 8, 2015 elevator was down. Unfortunately I had a medical emergency of a serious nature. I was in insurmountable pain. I called the front desk to call paramedical services. SFFD paramedics arrived and had to traverse the stairs with “Not a second to spare” in salvaging my life in this time consuming patient extraction. The transport down the stairs was jarring, and exacerbated my pain and discomfort.”

Elevator Testimonials—March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016

### **How has your building’s non-working elevator affected your life?**

“When the elevator is not working:

--I miss a doctor’s appointment which results in the delay of my health care for anywhere from 3 to 9 months later. This caused me to become much worse in my health condition.

--Another time I missed a court appearance which resulted in negative decisions on my (Default)

--I cannot negotiate stairways safely. I need all kinds of assistance to go up or downstairs. My primary care physician has instructed me to avoid stairs. I am blind in my left eye, had a stroke and have PAD (Peripheral arterial disease)

--I am aware of people with mental disabilities who had episodes when stuck in an elevator. Non-working elevators exacerbate these issues.”

“The elevator was broken down for 8 days. I had to walk up and down seven flights of stairs each of those days. I am in good health. However, many of my neighbors in the building are not in good health and I am concerned about the effects it has on them.”

“I have a hard time walking and breathing. When the elevator goes out it hurts me physically. At times I don’t care. I don’t want to go anywhere when the elevator is out because of the physical pain it will cause. It makes me feel like giving up.”

“Asthma has brought me to use the elevator daily. The elevator goes out at least once every 2 months and I’m forced to use the stairs which causes much discomfort.”

“Few repairs happen on the elevator—electricity, shut downs, buttons that don’t work. It adversely affects my life by taking the stairs up and down.”

“I am an African American man 47 years old with sciatic nerve damage. The elevator is not only useful but a part of life.”

“When the elevator goes out, I don’t eat. I have rheumatoid arthritis and live on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor. Our building has 2 elevators and sometimes both are non-working. I cannot carry groceries up 7 flights of stairs so I go without.”

“When the elevator goes out I am forced to climb my way to the 7<sup>th</sup> floor. By the time I get to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, I am clutching my chest and out of breath. I am aging and seriously fear a heart attack. I climb 70-80 stairs when the elevator is not working—1<sup>st</sup> floor to 7<sup>th</sup> floor. My legs give out.”

“Personally living in a place of my own, getting used to not being outside like I was for the last 15 years or so. Being so grateful that I asked my mother to come for a visit—as it would show that I’ve come around from my past and doing well. But when she came—after travelling some distance—the elevator was out of order and my mother is in a wheelchair and I live on the third floor.”

“I have had to help neighbors in the building when the elevator was down, those who would do for themselves if they could but can’t. Sometimes people have visitors—children and family—and when the elevator is down, it is a hardship, especially for disabled and seniors.”

### **Describe the problems with the elevator in your building**

“Our elevator stops unexpectedly. It takes a really long time to get to the floors it seems. It frequently gets stuck on several floors and often I find myself getting stuck inside the elevator because there’s apparently some ‘trick’ to getting the gate open so the sensors triggered to allow the door to actually open.”

“Out of order signs are frequently seen outside the elevator. Problems with doors closing all the way.”

“The elevator is old. There is heavy usage and there is no scheduled maintenance. They only come when it breaks down.”

“The elevator shuts down. It might be a problem with the building’s wiring. The elevator slows down.”

“Some days the elevator works ok, others, it doesn’t. When I am in pain the stairs are not an option.”

“Stiff inner gate makes my wrist swell and it is hard to open. Doors do not close properly on outside.”

“The elevator in our building has been broken for 2-3 months.”

### **Why should the issue of SRO elevators be a priority?**

“The consistently increasing population of tenants in SRO’s along with the yearly aging of said tenants is worthy of being a major priority because if it is not, there are several lawsuits due to lack of disabled access living environments that the city will be facing if not. Realistically, the city would save more in the long run if they spend a little more up front.”

“In case you don’t want to die trying to get to where you need to go.”

“Because we need it fully workable to be able to come and go from our rooms to where we need to go.”

“As a younger person with health problems, living in a building with a *working* elevator is *a must*. When our elevator goes out it puts a major strain on my ability to get groceries up to my apartment and it makes owning and using a bike impossible. My doctor has encouraged me to get a service animal but due to being unable to rely on our elevator, I’m unsure of how I’d get it outside efficiently to go to the bathroom or walk so I’ve been putting myself at risk for more unaided seizures by not being able to adhere to my doctor’s suggestions.”