

I've got a program called "Talx" right now on my Nokia that just cost me \$300 as an aftermarket add-on.

As you are well aware, people with disabilities must have full access to cell phone technology, for several reasons.

First, someone like myself who is blind has to spend \$300 on an aftermarket screen reader for my phone just so I can screen my incoming calls, a must-do nowadays. Not to generalize, but many people with disabilities, particularly blindness, receive state and federal aid and do not have \$300 to spend on a screen reader for their cell phone.

For this reason, cell phones must be manufactured with built-in accessibility features, particularly for the blind.

While it is true some cell phones are somewhat accessible to the blind, they are few and far between. ALL phones should meet certain minimum standards.

I feel the FCC should pass legislation requiring all cell phone manufacturers selling phones within the US to build phones that are accessible to the blind.

As useful a tool as this generation's cell phones and hand held devices can be, this usefulness must be extended to all. That is why cell phones must be designed with the blind in mind.

I do not know your involvement if any with the blind community. But it places a large emphasis on independent living. A lack of eyesight can pose significant challenges sometimes. However, full access to a smart phone with GPS and the ability to locate everything under the sun and perform myriad other functions could have a profound impact on a person's independence. It is the little things that give a person a sense of dignity, of belonging, of being connected to the human race, and in our society, a cell phone plays a crucial role in staying connected.

IN closing, few if any cell phones are accessible to the blind a meaningful way. This must change. The cell phone manufacturers of the world must bear the burden of making their products accessible. This is the 21st century, after all. Please enact legislation requiring cell phone builders to make their products accessible to the blind in a manner that allows for full access to the phone's available features.

