

I am the president of the Southwest Florida Council of the Blind (SWFCB). We are an active chapter of the Florida Council of the Blind (FCB). Which is an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind (ACB)

I have been visually impaired for over 6 years. A little over 2 years ago, I finally hit my stride, coping with my blindness. A friend's, he recently past on, family gave me his licensed copy of jaws 6.1 screen reader software. Otherwise, you wouldn't be reading this right now. Neither would I.

Two years ago, I went to my local AT+T store to get a cell phone, mostly for safety. I was kind of shocked when they looked at me like I had seven heads, because I asked for a phone that was accessible for the blind. They told me to come back the next day. When I did, they wanted to sell me a nice phone that cost about \$250.00. Now there's no way that I could afford that. Long story short, I ended up buying a phone that is a basic, but cost \$70.00, just because the numbers are raised enough to let me feel them, as I have some diabetic neuropathy. About the only thing that I can do is dial a number and hit send and end. I can not use the many other things, this basic phone can do.

I really use this phone a lot because I can't use a printed bus schedule. I can call Lee Tran, Our public transportation department in Lee county, Fl., they can talk me through it when I'm out ridding the bus with a lot of transfer's and to know the routes and times.

I really hope this email will help make cell phone technology more accessible and affordable for the blind.