

# Exhibit J

Taxi \_ Limousine Commission Board Meeting  
April 6, 2017

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NEW YORK CITY  
TAXI & LIMOUSINE COMMISSION  
BOARD MEETING  
  
April 6, 2017  
10:30 a.m.  
  
33 Beaver Street  
New York, New York

B E F O R E:

MEERA JOSHI, Chair and Chief Executive Officer

CHRIS WILSON, General Counsel

Board of Commissioners:

BILL AGUADO  
JACQUES JIHA  
LAUVIENSKA POLANCO  
NORA C. MARINO

Staff Members:

MIDORI VALDIVIA  
RODNEY STILES  
DAWN MILLER  
RYAN WANTTAJA

Reported By: Nicole Ellis

STENO-KATH REPORTING SERVICES, LTD.  
139 MAMARONECK AVENUE  
MAMARONECK, NEW YORK 10543  
(212) 95-DEPOS (953-3767) or (914) 381-2061  
FACSIMILE: (914) 722-0816  
E-mail: stenokath@verizon.net

**Taxi \_ Limousine Commission Board Meeting  
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1 SPEAKERS:

2 Gwendolyn Fairley Smith - IDG Council Member

3 Peter Mazer - Metropolitan Taxicab Board or Trade

4 Sarah Leberstan - Department of Consumer Affairs

5 Richard Thalor - Omni Payment Network LLC

6 Eugene Jano

7 Lewis Gudmundsen

8 James Parrot

9 Carlos Isabel

10 Nicolae Hent

11 Namgyae Dorji

12 Sergio Cabrera

13 Mohammed Barlas - Black Car Safety Center

14 Ryan Price - IDG

15 Nino Hervias - TMODA

16 Jesus Garay

17 Angel Fernandez

18 David Pollack - TSA Taxicab Service Assn

19 Lazkin Ibon

20 Ibraheem Ibraheem - IDG Council Member

21 Patrick Lorquet - ATU

22 David Beier - Committee for Taxi Safety

23 Miah Golam - B-D Association Inc.

24 Mohammed Zahrel Islam

25 (Speakers continued on following page.)

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- 1 SPEAKERS: (Continued)
- 2 Mustak Rahman
- 3 Leeor Sillman
- 4 Carolyn Protz
- 5 Mustafa Altan
- 6 Mohamed Tipu Sultan - NYTWA
- 7 Muhammed Ijaz
- 8 Suves Baiagi
- 9 Christian Libramonte - Gotham Government Relations
- 10 Doucouve Mamadou
- 11 Nina Godashi
- 12 Steven Savader - IDG
- 13 Nancy Reynoso - Green Taxis
- 14 Syed Mantar
- 15 Rafael Rosenio - Green Taxis New York
- 16 Edith Prentiss - Taxis For All
- 17 Hildu Wolf - Amk Luxury Car & Base
- 18 Eric Gyasi - Peadpod Transit
- 19 Roger Portella
- 20 Jose Aguagallo
- 21 Muhammad Nawar
- 22 Chris Demergis - All City Corp. Transportation Inc.
- 23 Michael Rosner
- 24 Alan Sapoznik
- 25 (Speakers continued on following page.)

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- 1 SPEAKERS: (Continued)
- 2 Fernando Galleria - Asotiny
- 3 Beresford Simmons - TWA
- 4 Charlie Smith - IDG Council Member
- 5 Firhntz Noel
- 6 Sohail Rana - IDG
- 7 Jose Molina - IDG
- 8 Steven Moore
- 9 Satwinder Singh - TMODA
- 10 Jashinder Singh
- 11 Rafael Estrella
- 12 Fredy Teno - Semperide/IDG
- 13 Bhairavi Desai - NY Taxi Alliance
- 14 Gary Farberov - Abba Coco Transportation
- 15 Luis Suarez - Suarez Management
- 16 Bernardo Celerino - Independent Medallion Owner
- 17 Sunu Miah
- 18 Zaheer Ahmed
- 19 Pablo Urena - Green Taxi
- 20 Javaid Tariq - NYTWA
- 21 Emmanouel Wambrin
- 22 Xenia Rodas
- 23 Mohammad Hossen
- 24 Hang
- 25 (Speakers continued on following page.)

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- 1 SPEAKERS: (Continued)
- 2 Moncef Fadili
- 3 Celestin Rossini
- 4 Carol Garza
- 5 Gloria Guerra
- 6 Zulker Hyder
- 7 Abubakr Mahamed - Kennedy Transportation Systems Inc.
- 8 Tendi Shepra
- 9 Asim Aknter - NYTWA
- 10 Sarwar Rafi
- 11 Lhakpa Ringi Sharpa
- 12 Mohammad Chaudhary
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2 CHAIR JOSHI: Good morning, everyone.  
3 The time now is 10:30 and we're going to  
4 start today's hearing.

5 I'm going to do a brief Chair's  
6 report because of the crowd today and get  
7 started with the hearing right away.

8 So the only announcement I make in  
9 the Chair's report is that a few weeks ago  
10 Mayor de Blasio signed into law two  
11 ordinances. One reduces the Medallion  
12 sales transfer tax from 5 percent to  
13 .5 percent, and the other got rid of the  
14 distinction between an independent and  
15 corporate Medallion, and there's now no  
16 ownership restrictions on Medallions. One  
17 owner can own as many as they want. And  
18 because last year we repealed the owner  
19 must drive rules, no owner is required to  
20 personally drive their Medallion taxi.

21 These changes should make it easier  
22 for people to enter the Medallion market  
23 and for existing owners and buyers to  
24 engage in transactions.

25 Today we're holding a hearing on taxi

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fares and Medallion and taxi vehicle leasecaps. We're required to hold this hearing every other year before the end of April. The last one we had was in 2015.

Historically, we've focused on the earnings of yellow taxi drivers, and we've done this through regulation of the fare -- of the fare that the passenger pays, and setting a cap on the amount that a driver can be charged for leasing a car or Medallion, and through transparency requirements, so a taxi driver can determine whether or not they've been overcharged.

Today, in line with the growth of the for-hire industry, we are, for the first, time expanding the scope of our hearing to include testimony about the income and expenses of drivers, vehicle owners and operators in the for-hire sector. That's livery cars, black cars and lux limos.

Why?

Today, there are more drivers. Today we license over 150,000 drivers. That's



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2 the equivalent of licensing the entire  
3 population of the City of Syracuse. It's  
4 about 35,000 more drivers than we licensed  
5 in 2014. Over 90 percent of these drivers  
6 are immigrants, and driving may be one of  
7 the few opportunities they have to earn  
8 money.

9 There are also more vehicles. We  
10 have about 35,000 more licensed vehicles  
11 today than we had in 2014, bringing  
12 today's total to over 100,000 licensed  
13 vehicles. And the vast majority of these  
14 vehicles are brand new.

15 In 2015, 10,000 of the over 11,000  
16 vehicles that we brought into service were  
17 model years 2015 or 2016. And in 2016,  
18 10,000 of the 11,000-plus vehicles that we  
19 brought into service were model years 2016  
20 or 2017.

21 At a very conservative purchase price  
22 of \$25,000 each, that amounts to a half a  
23 billion dollars that has been spent on new  
24 cars, and it raises questions for us about  
25 how the cost of all these new vehicles is

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2 being allocated.

3 It's also likely, though we don't  
4 quantify it because we don't collect  
5 passenger information, that there are  
6 probably more passengers today than there  
7 ever have been. New generations of  
8 passengers rely solely on the ease of apps  
9 to hire a car, and there are more service  
10 options, especially outside of Manhattan,  
11 than there were in the past.

12 And maybe, most significantly,  
13 competition to lower fares resulting in,  
14 at times, prices that are only slightly  
15 above the cost of mass transit. That has  
16 probably increased the number of people  
17 who choose to ride in a for-hire car many  
18 times instead of taking public  
19 transportation.

20 So we anticipate that today's hearing  
21 will focus on the individual effects in  
22 terms of in connection and expenses of  
23 these three trends.

24 There are some logistics because of  
25 the number of people we have, and we would

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2 really like to hear from everyone who has  
3 come to speak today.

4 And by the way, when we introduced  
5 leasecaps in 1996, the hearing started at  
6 10:00 a.m. and it ended at 5:23. So if  
7 history is any indicator, it will be a  
8 long day, and we would like to set a few  
9 parameters. Hopefully this will allow  
10 everybody to testify.

11 Everyone is limited to three minutes.  
12 Please pay attention to our timekeeper and  
13 respect your cutoff time when it's  
14 announced.

15 We, the Commissioners, will not ask  
16 any questions until each speaker has  
17 finished their three minutes. And if you  
18 need a translator, please let a staff  
19 member in a blue TLC polo shirt know.

20 There are three rooms to watch the  
21 hearing: this one, live, and two overflow  
22 hearing rooms. The hearing is also  
23 available on live stream, and you can get  
24 the website from one of our staff members  
25 in the back.

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2 A full transcript of the hearing will  
3 appear on our website soon after today's  
4 hearing is finished.

5 There are several people from the  
6 same group here today. If you signed up  
7 individually, please be appreciative of  
8 your other people here that would also  
9 like to testify, and come up as a group.

10 First of all, it gives us as a  
11 Commission member -- as a Commission a  
12 better visual of exactly how many people  
13 feel a certain way on a certain subject if  
14 you're all standing together. And that  
15 won't be lost on us.

16 And it's not just effective; it's  
17 efficient. Because that way it gives time  
18 for other people to come and speak.

19 And since there are people that  
20 aren't in the overflow rooms or up here  
21 able to testify, if you've testified,  
22 please make room for another person to  
23 come in, because we really would like to  
24 hear from everybody today.

25 For people that have written

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2 comments, you can hand them to any of the  
3 staff members in the polo shirts. We'll  
4 make sure that copies are made and that  
5 all the Commissioners get a copy of every  
6 piece of written comment that we get.

7 There are greeters that you've  
8 probably encountered already. They're  
9 taking names of people who want to  
10 testify. So make sure you give them your  
11 name if you would like to testify.

12 And for anyone who doesn't get to  
13 testify today and hasn't brought written  
14 comments today, please send your comments  
15 to [tlcrules@tlc.nyc.gov](mailto:tlcrules@tlc.nyc.gov).

16 We anticipate taking a 45-minute  
17 lunch break. And it will be executive  
18 session for us, but lunch break for  
19 others, at around 12:30.

20 So thank you everyone in advance for  
21 your cooperation and understanding.

22 I want to especially thank my fellow  
23 Commission members. Each is here today  
24 because they want to be. They are not  
25 paid to be here. It speaks volumes about

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2 their commitment to public service, so I  
3 want to personally thank each and every  
4 one of them in advance for taking the time  
5 out of their busy lives to better  
6 understand some of the issues that you  
7 face every day.

8 And I want to thank each and every  
9 driver who's taken the time out of their  
10 workday to provide us with direct  
11 feedback.

12 Please know that you can continue to  
13 speak directly to us even after today.  
14 You do not need to be represented by a  
15 group or an organization. Just talk to  
16 any one of the staff members -- they've  
17 got blue polo shirts on -- and get contact  
18 information to speak to us directly any  
19 time after this hearing.

20 So with that, I am going to just do  
21 one other piece of housekeeping, and  
22 that's to adopt of minutes from the  
23 February 2, 2017 Commission meeting.

24 All in favor of adopting the minutes?  
25 (Unanimous vote.)

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2 CHAIR JOSHI: And with that, we'll  
3 begin the hearing. Chris Wilson, our --  
4 oh, and I will do base applications, too.

5 MS. MEOLA: Good morning,  
6 Commissioners. My name is Angeliqe Meola  
7 (phonetic), director of Bases and  
8 Businesses.

9 Today we have 35 base applications  
10 for your approval: 1 new application, 18  
11 renewals and 12 various changes, and 4 for  
12 denial.

13 CHAIR JOSHI: All in favor of  
14 adopting the recommendation?

15 (Unanimous vote.)

16 CHAIR JOSHI: With that, it's  
17 unanimously adopted.

18 Thank you very much.

19 And now we will move on to our public  
20 hearing. Chris Wilson, our general  
21 counsel, will read off the names and  
22 organizations. If you are representing an  
23 organization and we haven't said it,  
24 please say it. And again, if everyone can  
25 be respectful of the three-minute time

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2 limit, we'll all -- we'll get to hear from  
3 everybody, which is our goal today.

4 MR. WILSON: When I read off the  
5 names, I'm going to call first the next  
6 speaker, but I'm also going to read off  
7 the following two speakers, so that people  
8 who are not in the room have time to get  
9 in here.

10 The first speaker will be Gwendolyn  
11 Fairley Smith from IDG. She will be  
12 followed by Peter Mazer and Sarah  
13 Leberstan.

14 MS. SMITH: Hi. My name is Gwendolyn  
15 Fairley Smith. I am one of the IDG  
16 Council members, and I'm also a TLC driver  
17 since 2015.

18 I'm coming here today in regard to  
19 some of the issues we're having as  
20 drivers, especially in regard to our wages  
21 and the amount that we earn as drivers.  
22 We seem to be having an issue in regards  
23 to the fares are being changed, and  
24 without our knowledge. We don't have an  
25 input in regards to the TLC's decisions on



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2 some of the licensing issues that we're  
3 having.

4 We feel that maybe we should also  
5 have a seat at the table when some of  
6 these decisions are being made. And this  
7 will also make us work together  
8 cohesively, so that we can also make sure  
9 that the drivers, the TLC and all of us  
10 working together to have a better working  
11 arrangement.

12 We also want to make sure that we  
13 have insurance for our drivers. We don't  
14 seem to have that with these changes. We  
15 don't have coverages for our leasing fees  
16 and the costs that we're imposed now. The  
17 cost is becoming exuberant for us to be  
18 able to afford our vehicles.

19 So the IDG has a number of items that  
20 we would like to have addressed. Some of  
21 our members will be speaking today and  
22 counting on some of these points to be  
23 mentioned and addressed by the TLC, as  
24 well. But we do appreciate the chance to  
25 speak here today and have our concerns

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2 heard.

3 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

4 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

5 And the next speaker will be Peter  
6 Mazer, followed by Sarah Leberstan and  
7 Richard Thalor.

8 MR. MAZER: Thank you.

9 I've given out a copy of my  
10 handwritten testimony and also the charts  
11 that we are going to be showing are in  
12 there, as well. I'm going to be going off  
13 the scripted testimony to keep within the  
14 three-minute time period.

15 My name is Peter Mazer, and I'm  
16 general counsel to Metropolitan Taxicab  
17 Board of Trade. We represent the owners  
18 of 5,500 Medallion taxicabs, that leads to  
19 more than 20,000 drivers.

20 This first chart shows average  
21 Medallion taxicab ridership per day. And  
22 we see that it's fallen 30 percent since  
23 2013, from an average of 500,000 to about  
24 350,000, or even less, today.

25 But passengers are still riding

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for-hire transportation. And we see in this chart we've combined both the yellow taxicab ridership, as well as the ridership of the TNC, that street hail liveries. So we see the number has increased from 500,000 to about 700,000 passengers per day.

But the problem is we've also seen a large increase in the number of licensed for-hire vehicles. The number was actually declining from 2008 to 2010, at below 40,000. It's more than double. There are now 86,000 for-hire vehicles licensed by the TLC.

The number of vehicles licensed far exceeds the rate of increase in the ridership. And what we've had is a net loss in the taxicab revenue of over \$350 million a year. And this chart shows the decline in revenue on a daily basis in the taxicab industry. That's a decline of over 15 percent.

This -- what does that revenue mean? That means that our drivers don't have

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2 money to feed their families. They don't  
3 have money to pay their bills or plan for  
4 the future. This is revenue that our  
5 industry members were counting on to fix  
6 their cars and pay the mechanics and buy  
7 replacement vehicles and, of course, to  
8 repay lenders.

9 The Commission has recognized these  
10 problems, but I want to focus on three  
11 areas where the Commission needs to do a  
12 little bit more.

13 Number one is the lack of enforcement  
14 against illegal for-hire activity. If you  
15 look at this chart again, and you'll see  
16 there's a hidden factor in here. As  
17 ridership has increased, there is an  
18 additional number of rides for who people  
19 who are engaged illegal for-hire activity.

20 A license means nothing unless you  
21 can be assured that -- if you have a  
22 licensed car and a licensed and insured  
23 vehicle, it means nothing if somebody can  
24 take away your fares.

25 Additionally, we need to look at

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2 flexible leasing. The taxicab industry is  
3 limited to the 12-hour lease rule, and our  
4 rules are very strict on how we have a  
5 leasecap. We are based on the premise  
6 that there will be 12-hour leasing. We  
7 need to have more flexible leasing.

8 And we must finally address the issue  
9 of vehicle choice. The Medallion industry  
10 has a mandated car, which is expensive,  
11 unreliable, extremely costly. We have an  
12 accessibility --

13 (Timer sounding.)

14 MR. MAZER: -- mandate. Costs go  
15 up --

16 CHAIR JOSHI: That's the time.

17 MR. MAZER: I know. I just wanted  
18 to -- I understand. And I thank you for  
19 giving me the opportunity to testify. If  
20 there are any questions --

21 CHAIR JOSHI: And there is a leasing  
22 pilot for flexible leasing that anyone can  
23 take advantage of.

24 MR. MAZER: I know. And I'm asking  
25 that we even consider additional

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2 flexibility in the leasing system. Thank  
3 you.

4 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

5 The next speaker is Sarah Leberstan  
6 from the Department of Consumer Affairs,  
7 to be followed by Richard Thalor from the  
8 Omni Payment Network, followed by Eugene  
9 Jano.

10 MS. LEBERSTAN: Good morning,  
11 Commissioners. Sarah Leberstan, labor  
12 policy adviser at the Department of  
13 Consumer Affairs, Office of Labor Policy  
14 and Standards, or OLPS. On behalf of DCA  
15 commissioner, Lorelei Salas, I thank you  
16 for the opportunity to speak at today's  
17 hearing.

18 Our longstanding work to assist  
19 low-income New Yorkers puts us in direct  
20 contact with workers who, like the drivers  
21 we're talking about today, face immense  
22 challenges in their struggle to make ends  
23 meet and support their families.

24 Our testimony today is particularly  
25 informed by the experiences of two of our

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2 divisions who have a special focus on  
3 low-wage workers, OLPS, where I work, and  
4 the Office of Financial Empowerment, or  
5 OFE. OLPS is the dedicated voice of  
6 workers in city government. We work to  
7 educate workers, employers and the public  
8 about the protections, conduct original  
9 research and, of course, enforce the  
10 City's key workplace laws.

11 OFE is the first local government  
12 initiative in the country with the mission  
13 to educate, empower and protect low-income  
14 New Yorkers.

15 We talk with many workers who,  
16 because they're employed in nontraditional  
17 work structures, are at risk of being shut  
18 out of those local labor standard laws we  
19 enforce, as well as state and federal  
20 protections. These nontraditional or  
21 contingent workers include workers with  
22 on-call or involuntary part-time  
23 schedules, workers employed by  
24 subcontractors working at the behest of  
25 larger industry players, and free-lancers

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and workers outside independent  
contractors, some working for  
platform-based companies who are saddled  
with employer side tax responsibilities  
and business costs, and may be shut out of  
other key employment protections and  
benefits.

This last category, of course,  
includes drivers in the taxi and for-hire  
service industry. They suffer from low  
and unpredictable income, rising  
out-of-pocket costs, potential labor  
standard violation, and a lack of  
benefits.

The median salary for taxi and limo  
drivers in the City is about \$31,000,  
significantly lower than the City's median  
salary of 48,000. And with average  
workweeks over 50 hours, hourly pay is at  
just about 11.50 an hour, which right now  
is not much above the current minimum  
wage. And this figure doesn't even factor  
in overtime, which the workers would be  
getting if they were classified as



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2 employees.

3 Low-income and income fluctuations  
4 may be an especially acute problem among  
5 for-hire drivers. Only 23 percent of Uber  
6 drivers reported that they see working for  
7 Uber as a stable source of income. And a  
8 recent survey found that average hourly  
9 pay before expenses was only about 15.50  
10 for Uber drivers and 17.50 for Lyft  
11 drivers.

12 But calculating expenses and net  
13 income is an ongoing problem, and many  
14 app-based drivers are reporting that  
15 take-home pay falls far below living wage.

16 A main reason that income is so low  
17 is because drivers are treated as  
18 independent contractors, exempt from  
19 workplace laws, including wage laws that  
20 require employers to cover certain  
21 business expenses of their employees.

22 Of course, drivers across the US are  
23 challenging this practice --

24 (Timer sounding.)

25 MS. LEBERSTAN: -- alleging that by

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2 misclassifying the drivers as independent  
3 contractors --

4 CHAIR JOSHI: We've got to cut  
5 everybody off at three minutes.

6 MS. LEBERSTAN: May I make one last  
7 point?

8 CHAIR JOSHI: No, because we have a  
9 full agenda. Thank you.

10 MR. WILSON: And we do have your  
11 written comments.

12 CHAIR JOSHI: We have your written  
13 comments.

14 MS. LEBERSTAN: Thank you.

15 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
16 Richard Thalor of Omni Payment Network.  
17 He will be followed by Eugene Jano, and  
18 followed by Lewis Gudmundsen.

19 MR. THALOR: Chair Joshi and  
20 Commissioners, thank you for the  
21 opportunity.

22 Some surprises today. The federal  
23 judge dismissed the Melrose case last  
24 week, but in dismissing the Melrose case  
25 apparently she opened the door for

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2 redress. And based on that, in my  
3 comments I proposed a compensation method  
4 where a fund could be created to  
5 compensate those segments of industry that  
6 suffered financial losses.

7 It turns out that it was -- in my  
8 comments, it was based on a violation of  
9 59B-08. Now 59B-08 says that the TLC is  
10 responsible for controlling the growth of  
11 the industry, and they have to further  
12 establish that there is a need for more  
13 service. And when there is, even though  
14 they have to see how that increased number  
15 of licenses really affects existing  
16 vehicles.

17 Well, it turns out that based on that  
18 violation, which is the premise for my  
19 compensation program, it turns out that  
20 59B-08, I just learned today, only applies  
21 to liveries. It does not apply to black  
22 cars. And the TNCs are black cars.

23 And I just want to add that I  
24 question that, because in the black car  
25 rules, most people take the TNCs are

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2 individuals. In the black car rules,  
3 90 percent of the fares have to be paid on  
4 a corporate account. So it's a question  
5 now -- and it might be worth a look -- as  
6 to whether there is validity to the  
7 licensing of the TNCs as bases, because  
8 they don't qualify under that -- under  
9 that 90 percent rule.

10 Just my last thought, as a separate  
11 matter, the Supreme Court decision last  
12 Wednesday could relieve Medallion taxi  
13 drivers of a financial burden regarding  
14 the high cost of credit card payments.  
15 New York State merchants will finally be  
16 allowed to add credit card charges to  
17 consumer bills without using the common  
18 discount for cash.

19 The TLC should allow drivers to add  
20 the credit card charges to the metered  
21 fare, independent of a fare increase,  
22 which would not be charged for fare  
23 payments in cash. When a passenger  
24 presents that card, either the TPEG system  
25 would determine the driver category and

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2 the associated processing fee, or there  
3 could be a universal percentage applied to  
4 all of the fares. And that would be  
5 consistent.

6 There are ten states that don't allow  
7 this now, but the Supreme Court has taken  
8 a major step in reversing that. So you  
9 can add the credit card charge to a  
10 consumer bill. And I think a driver  
11 should be able to do that to the taxi  
12 fare.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

15 The next speaker will be Eugene Jano.  
16 He will be followed by Lewis Gudmundsen,  
17 and he will be followed by James Parrott.

18 MR. JANO: Thank you for taking --  
19 letting me speak about these issues.

20 I've been driving for 30 years. I  
21 used to be a Medallion owner up until last  
22 month. What has happened was, what we  
23 learned in business school is economics  
24 101, it's almost the face of cannibalism.  
25 That's the official term in business

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2 school. It means that too many people  
3 enter the industry, and at this point  
4 there's almost not enough business left  
5 for everybody.

6 So Uber, I see a lot of the time,  
7 Uber drivers go back and forth. One day  
8 they work for yellow, then for Uber,  
9 thinking that it's going to be better.

10 My income also dropped about  
11 30 percent. That's why eventually I had  
12 to go bankrupt on the Medallion. And  
13 it's -- the industry is basically in a  
14 spiral. We all try to prop ourselves up,  
15 that there's not a problem, everything is  
16 fine. It's not. Unfortunately there's a  
17 very big problem right now.

18 Also, starting with Mayor Bloomberg,  
19 approximately 25 percent to 30 percent of  
20 the road surface in Manhattan was removed,  
21 was converted to all kind of other uses,  
22 sometimes the lanes were just completely  
23 removed, without any reason, just put pots  
24 and flowers and tables on it.

25 So, basically, that's what's

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2 happening in the car transportation  
3 industry. We went from 14,000 street  
4 hails to about almost 100,000 street  
5 hails. Of course, a little change that  
6 actually the person hails it with a  
7 telephone, so we have a technicality  
8 there, whatever.

9 But at the end of the day, the person  
10 shows up on the street, immediately hails  
11 a cab. And these cars that serve these  
12 people are about 100,000. So there's a  
13 very, very big gridlock all over the City.

14 And so this -- I think in 1937, when  
15 they established the Medallion system, was  
16 to limit the number of cars transporting  
17 people in the City, because otherwise it  
18 becomes a gridlock. Everybody wants to be  
19 in this area south of 96th Street, where  
20 you can make a lot of money versus other  
21 places.

22 And we need to somehow regulate that,  
23 the same way as we regulate the rents.  
24 The owner owns an apartment or an  
25 apartment building, he worked for it, he

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2 bought it with his own money. The City  
3 comes and says, "No, you can charge only  
4 this much."

5 Even dairy farms -- the milk in New  
6 York City is provided by a very specific  
7 number of cows. It's not -- you cannot  
8 just buy cow and sell milk in the city.

9 So the same problem happens when the  
10 cab industry. We have to regulate the  
11 number of cars, because we have a very  
12 limited space. And I think the way to do  
13 it, we should have a Medallion system  
14 bought for Uber and for yellow and for the  
15 premium. Have a specific number of cars  
16 in each segment.

17 (Timer sounding.)

18 MR. JANO: A lot -- have a nice day.

19 (Laughter.)

20 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

21 The next speaker will be Lewis  
22 Gudmundsen, followed by James Parrott, an  
23 economist, and followed by Carlos Isabel.

24 And for the TLC staff, Mr. Isabel has  
25 requested for -- (inaudible).



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2 CHAIR JOSHI: May I make one quick  
3 announcement. My understanding is there  
4 are some -- a number of people that are in  
5 the lobby that would like to testify  
6 today. So again, I urge you, if you've  
7 testified, please make space for someone  
8 else to come into this room and testify.  
9 And if need be, we will have a second day  
10 of hearings, because it's important that  
11 the people that are outside this room also  
12 get a chance to be heard.

13 MR. GUDMUNDSEN: My name is Lewis  
14 Gudmundsen. Mr. Chris Wilson, good to  
15 meet you and the other Commissioners  
16 today, on behalf of all that are present.

17 I'm also here representing the IDG,  
18 Independent Drivers Guild, and I would  
19 request that my time be allotted to their  
20 speaking as a group.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIR JOSHI: Okay. Thank you. And  
23 that can go for the rest of the IDG  
24 members, at some point. They can come up  
25 as a group rather than individually, so

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2 that other people can testify as well.

3 MR. GUDMUNDSEN: The only 15 words I  
4 would say is that I was unaware of the  
5 fact that the for-hire vehicle  
6 applications, if turned off --

7 CHAIR JOSHI: If you gave your time  
8 up, you gave your time up. Okay?

9 MR. GUDMUNDSEN: Okay. Just 15  
10 words. Thank you.

11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Do you mind if I  
12 come up for a second?

13 CHAIR JOSHI: Are most of your  
14 members here now?

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah. We have to  
16 grab everyone, though.

17 CHAIR JOSHI: Okay. So take a few  
18 minutes to do that, and we'll hear from  
19 somebody else while that's happening.

20 MR. WILSON: So the next speaker is  
21 James Parrott. He will be followed by  
22 Carlos Isabel, and then we can take the  
23 IDG group right after that.

24 MR. PARROTT: Good morning. James  
25 Parrott is my name. I'm an economist. I

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2 have studied New York City economy for  
3 over 25 years, working for the City of New  
4 York, the State Comptroller's Office in  
5 New York City, and for a long time the  
6 Fiscal Policy Institute. I've done scores  
7 of reports on wage and income trends for  
8 New York City workers and dozens of sector  
9 studies.

10 In trying to get a handle on taxi  
11 drivers' earnings, I think the best  
12 government public stated source is the  
13 American Community Survey, published  
14 annually by the Census Bureau. You can  
15 look at occupational wages that way.

16 The State Labor Department publishes  
17 a good data source on employees' wages,  
18 but as you know, since many taxi drivers  
19 are either self-employed or independent  
20 contractors, their wages are not reflected  
21 in the Labor Department data.

22 So what did the American Community  
23 Survey data, the ACS data, show for 2015?

24 To get an idea of what the trend is,  
25 I looked at comparisons to 2012. So over

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2 that period, 2012 to '15, the number of  
3 for-hire vehicle licenses issues by the  
4 TLC increased by 62 percent.

5 The ACS data show for the number of  
6 people whose occupations are mainly taxi  
7 drivers rose by 35 percent, from 48,000 in  
8 2012 to almost 65,000 in 2015. The sharp  
9 increase in the number of drivers appears  
10 to be connected to a drop in the annual  
11 hours worked, about 6.2 percent, and a  
12 steep falloff in income.

13 Median annual earnings for taxi  
14 drivers fell by 16 and a half percent over  
15 this three-year period, when adjusted for  
16 consumer price inflation. Annual earnings  
17 appear to have fallen by a similar  
18 magnitude across the board among taxi  
19 drivers. Earnings fell by 14.6 percent at  
20 the 25th percentile, and by 15.7 percent  
21 at the 75th percentile.

22 Median annual taxi driver earnings  
23 were \$25,232 in 2015, Down by almost  
24 \$5,000 from 30,220 in 2012. Twenty-five  
25 percent of full-time taxi drivers reported

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2 2015 earnings of less than \$16,000.

3 In my research, I found that wage --  
4 that while wage gains for many New York  
5 City workers --

6 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much.

7 MR. PARROTT: Can I have one more  
8 minute?

9 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much.

10 MR. PARROTT: Okay.

11 CHAIR JOSHI: We have your written  
12 comments, and they will be -- if you  
13 haven't submitted them, you can submit  
14 them and the Commissioners will each get a  
15 copy.

16 Thank you very much for coming today.

17 MR. PARROTT: Okay. Thank you.

18 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

19 The next speaker is Carlos Isabel.  
20 And the speakers after that will be the  
21 IDG group and then Nicolae Hent.

22 Are you Carlos Isabel?

23 CHAIR JOSHI: We'll get you a Spanish  
24 interpreter.

25 MR. ISABEL (through interpreter): He

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2 was arrested the 18th of September in  
3 2016. I've been a driver for 20 years. I  
4 have a clean license, both licenses.

5 Due to an error my DMV license was on  
6 suspension for two days, but I wasn't  
7 notified by the DMV. The TLC officer  
8 asked me to get out of my vehicle.

9 I was frisked. I checked my pockets,  
10 and all of my documents fell on the floor.  
11 They didn't let me speak. I was taken to  
12 the 72nd precinct in Brooklyn. They never  
13 called the police. And when we arrived at  
14 the precinct, I was processed in a way  
15 that I've never experienced in this  
16 country.

17 The following day I went to small  
18 claims court. I went there with three  
19 individuals. I don't know what they did.

20 Ever since that day, I haven't been  
21 able to work. I'm not driving my cab any  
22 more. It's been a huge trauma in my  
23 life.

24 I have an excellent record in this  
25 country and I was treated very badly. I

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2 think a person with a clean record in this  
3 country, such as myself, should be treated  
4 better. I was treated very badly, and I  
5 have a clean record.

6 I understand my DMV license was on  
7 suspension, but an error can happen to  
8 anyone. The error was due to an issue  
9 I've had with child support. I've paid  
10 child support for my son. But it was a  
11 human error. I was never notified of the  
12 suspension. I went to the hearing. I was  
13 declared guilty.

14 CHAIR JOSHI: We have some staff  
15 members in the back, and I would  
16 appreciate if he could speak with them, as  
17 well as giving them any more details,  
18 including summons number and paperwork, so  
19 we can take a much closer look at what  
20 went on.

21 But thank you very much for coming  
22 today and letting us know.

23 MR. WILSON: The next speaker group  
24 is the IDG group, please. And I would ask  
25 them when they come up to also say all the

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2 names. Thank you.

3 Then they will be followed by Nicolae  
4 Hent and by -- pardon me if I butcher  
5 this -- Namgyae Dorji.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: First of all, thank  
7 you for listening to the for-hire vehicle  
8 workers.

9 CHAIR JOSHI: So, it's great that you  
10 all came up as a group, but it's good for  
11 us as a Commission to know how many people  
12 are behind the position. It's three  
13 minutes, and in giving over your time as a  
14 group for three minutes, you're helping  
15 your fellow drivers also get an  
16 opportunity to get up here and give us  
17 three minutes of testimony. So I  
18 appreciate your cooperation in this, and  
19 look forward to hearing from you.

20 MR. PRICE: Maybe (inaudible) can  
21 give you a number of how many showed.

22 FEMALE SPEAKER: Yes. Over 50 at  
23 this point; some downstairs.

24 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you very much.

25 MR. PRICE: So since we only have





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2 James, Council Member Julissa  
3 Ferreras-Copeland, and Council Member Alan  
4 Maisel.

5 The second recommendation is to  
6 require a mandatory minute and mile pay  
7 compared to a fare. Essentially, what we  
8 imagine here is this pay that's regulated,  
9 when it be touchable, the sales tax and  
10 the Commission and the black car fund  
11 wouldn't be allowed to be taken out of  
12 this pay.

13 So it's something that we can rely on  
14 every trip. We know if we go a certain  
15 distance, if we have a long enough ride,  
16 that we pay a certain amount.

17 The goal with that, what we've  
18 discussed is that in an eight-hour day, we  
19 should be able to make \$250. That's about  
20 the goal that most people have. So if you  
21 want people to not be on the road for  
22 12 hours, that's the goal. That's what's  
23 aimed for.

24 We also ask the TLC to limit the  
25 number of licenses, driver licenses on the

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2 street. The entire goal, since it's all  
3 one license now, that should -- could grow  
4 with the number of trips as a whole, is  
5 our thought.

6 We ask to regulate the luxury  
7 vehicles as a separate class, and limit  
8 the fleet size, because they have a huge  
9 investment. They're investing 80- to  
10 sometimes \$100,000 in a car.

11 (Timer sounding.)

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: One last one?

13 CHAIR JOSHI: We do have your  
14 comments. And before this Commission  
15 meeting, the five points which were given  
16 to us, we actually passed out to all of  
17 the Commissioners. So we are aware of the  
18 five points that you've raised, and  
19 appreciate you appearing as a group. So  
20 thank you very much.

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you.

22 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

23 The next speaker will be Nicolae  
24 Hent. He will be followed by Namgyae  
25 Dorji, and followed by Tahir Isamra

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2 (phonetics).

3 MR. HENT: Thank you, Chairman.

4 Thank you, Commissioners.

5 My name is Nicolae Hent. I'm a cab  
6 driver since 1988. I am an owner since  
7 1990.

8 Why I am here? I supposed to be in  
9 the streets. I am here because of you.

10 And I tell you why. Chairman, you  
11 said about the 35,000 license more.  
12 That's meant for the yellow or the black  
13 cars?

14 You have about \$8 billion, probably,  
15 or maybe more, maybe 9 billion, 8 or 9,  
16 which you share with 50,000 cars, until  
17 2013 or 2014. Now those money you share  
18 with 25,000 cars more.

19 That's why I'm here. You took my  
20 money for (inaudible) rides to hail in New  
21 York City, and now you give it to others  
22 for free. Either all the taxis should be  
23 with the Medallion, or all of them free.  
24 It's your power to do and to make the law.  
25 Make them all free or all of them with

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2 Medallion.

3 You cannot have taxi with a Medallion  
4 and taxi free. Because my investment  
5 is -- I never can compete with people with  
6 a free license. Competition is good for  
7 consumers, but it has to be fair and  
8 square.

9 After 20 years --

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. HENT: Let me speak because they  
12 going to cut me off.

13 After 20 years, I am sick and tired  
14 to have Medallion rules on my back and  
15 others have no rules.

16 Why is that? I am shaking because I  
17 am so mad. I cannot cry. I never cry in  
18 my life, not even when I was six years of  
19 age and my father lose everything he had  
20 in Romania to the communists.

21 We create a new communist here,  
22 protecting the, you know, Silicon Valley,  
23 the Uber, Facebook and others to steal  
24 what other people pay, you know, for the  
25 City.

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2 I was forced, for five cars, to dump  
3 it after five years, not even 200,000  
4 miles, because of your rules of five  
5 years. Now you give me one more extension  
6 a year. For what?

7 Give me my extra civil rights back.  
8 Don't force me to stay 14, 16 hours a day  
9 to recover what other people get it for  
10 free.

11 I'm sorry to do -- and other things  
12 what I had. Mayor Bloomberg said we have  
13 to save the environment. How? With SUV,  
14 which makes seven miles on gallon? And  
15 take --

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. HENT: Let me speak.

18 And others, you know, they have  
19 eight, nine, ten people. Do they pay  
20 insurance for ten people? You supposed to  
21 verify that. You force me to carry the  
22 insurance --

23 (Timer sounding.)

24 MR. HENT: -- you know, with the  
25 policy in the car, and others you take

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2 twelve people.

3 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you for your  
4 testimony.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. WILSON: The next speaker will be  
7 Namgyae Dorji, followed by Tahir Isamra  
8 (phonetics), and followed by Sergio  
9 Cabrera.

10 MR. DORJI: (Inaudible) --

11 CHAIR JOSHI: Quiet, please.

12 MR. DORJI: -- to all black car  
13 drivers are --

14 (Simultaneous speaking.)

15 MR. DORJI: Good morning, Commission.  
16 I came here to TLC. All black cars --

17 CHAIR JOSHI: Excuse me. Could the  
18 people in the front row, could you talk  
19 outside so we can hear the speaker? Thank  
20 you.

21 MR. DORJI: I came here to the  
22 address the Commission because every black  
23 cars are working here under the TLC, but  
24 in city there is no parking space to the  
25 black cars, because they want to buy lunch

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2 and coffee. That time they're giving  
3 something for us, plus the Uber drivers  
4 that pay no income, and how can we pay the  
5 summons. That's the big problem.

6 Thank you.

7 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

8 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

9 The next speaker is Tahere Zombra, to  
10 be followed by Sergio Cabrera, and to be  
11 followed by Mohammed Barlas from the Black  
12 Car Safety Center.

13 Okay. Mr. Zombra isn't here, so the  
14 next speaker would be Sergio Cabrera. And  
15 he will be followed by Mohammed Barlas.  
16 And after that will be Nino Hervias, who I  
17 believe needs a Spanish interpreter.

18 MR. CABRERA: Good morning,  
19 Commissioners. My name is Sergio Cabrera.  
20 I'm a Medallion owner.

21 I'm looking at these numbers that you  
22 have here, and it's kind of pretty easy to  
23 determine what happens when you have  
24 156,000 drivers and 105,000 vehicles. You  
25 bankrupt the whole taxi industry.



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2 The Medallion industry is bankrupt.  
3 The livery bases and the communities are  
4 bankrupt. The app companies are bankrupt.  
5 Uber last year lost \$3 billion. I don't  
6 hear a lot about that, but they lost  
7 \$3 billion. There is -- we have a steady  
8 decline. We are going -- we're all headed  
9 in the same direction.

10 Why? Because this Commission decided  
11 to not cap the livery -- the livery cars,  
12 the for-hire vehicles. But then there's  
13 no control. There doesn't seem to be any  
14 control on the streets of New York.

15 I gave hundreds of thousands of  
16 dollars for the exclusivity of picking up  
17 passengers on street hails. You,  
18 Commissioner, have said this a thousand  
19 times, that we are the sole group of cabs  
20 that are to pick up street hails.

21 We need enforcement. We need zero  
22 tolerance. We are being swamped at the  
23 airports. We are being swamped at the  
24 piers. We are being swamped at the Javits  
25 Center. We are being swamped at the

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2 hotels, and not to mention the illegal  
3 activity that goes on in the streets.

4 If this Commission just takes this  
5 sole issue as something very important,  
6 it's going to shore up our Medallion  
7 system again, because it's going to tell  
8 the FHV drivers and everybody else in the  
9 industry, that's not tolerated.

10 And since most people are immigrants,  
11 they don't want to have trouble with the  
12 police. They don't want to go to jail.  
13 They don't want to have a \$2,000 fine.  
14 They don't want to get in trouble, because  
15 that could give them even more trouble  
16 with Immigration. It opens up a Pandora's  
17 box for them.

18 So we need this Commission to take  
19 the enforcement side of this problem to  
20 heart. We need it to be done  
21 expeditiously. Our industry is collapsing  
22 in front of us. We are just hearing  
23 stories about some Medallion sale for  
24 \$240,000, which it's just beside me how  
25 this Commission, how the City of New York,

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2 how the governor, killed this golden  
3 goose.

4 You were producing -- wasting maybe a  
5 hundred dollars in expenses, and selling  
6 Medallions for \$900,000, and now the mayor  
7 is crying because he doesn't have enough  
8 money for the 2nd Avenue subway.

9 (Timer sounding.)

10 MR. CABRERA: Thank you.

11 CHAIR JOSHI: I would like you to  
12 have a chance to speak with one of our  
13 staff members in the back about your --  
14 the specific areas of enforcement  
15 concerns, so we have your list.

16 MR. CABRERA: Thank you.

17 MR. WILSON: The next speaker will be  
18 Mohammed Barlas. And he will be followed  
19 by Nino Hervias and followed by Jesus  
20 Garay, both who will need Spanish language  
21 interpreter.

22 MR. BARLAS: Good morning,  
23 Commissioners. My name is Mohammed  
24 Barlas, and I'm a safety instructor at  
25 Black Car Safety Center. And the last two

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2 years only, we have trained about 20,000  
3 drivers.

4 I know everybody is speaking on --  
5 about wages and everything, but we feel,  
6 being educators, that it is directly  
7 linked to the livelihood. And if they are  
8 not making the money, they will try to  
9 cheat all the laws, whatever you can  
10 enforce.

11 I know the laws are there. You just  
12 came up with the fatigue law, and the City  
13 has the zero tolerance law as well -- I  
14 mean, vision zero. But there's -- all  
15 laws can be defied, because they're going  
16 to find the ways to cheat the system if  
17 they don't make any money.

18 So basically we are here -- we teach  
19 them fatigue and we teach them working  
20 long hours, that's a danger. And even if  
21 they're not able to work in this industry,  
22 they're going to work somewhere else, and  
23 then they're going to go to come and  
24 drive. So even the fatigue rules are not  
25 going to be effective if they're doing two

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2 jobs.

3 So we are putting our statement from  
4 the director as well, but the main purpose  
5 we are here is to educate that it's  
6 directly connected to fatigue, and it will  
7 be a big, big safety problem if we do not  
8 address the livelihood.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

11 The next speaker is Nino Hervias, and  
12 he will be followed by Jesus Garay, and  
13 then followed by Angel Fernandez.

14 MR. HERVIAS: Madam Commissioner,  
15 Commissioners, thank you very much for  
16 letting me speak up here.

17 Most of the points have been covered  
18 already, so I'm going to address this in a  
19 different way. One of the questions to  
20 you is: It is or it is not a duty for the  
21 TLC to establish and enforce standards for  
22 the well-being of the whole industry?

23 I don't know much of the gravity of  
24 your actions, since I'm not a lawyer, but  
25 I think it's immoral. The two fundamental

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2 principles that set the difference between  
3 yellow cabs and FHV have been compromised,  
4 given away, and that is the hails.

5 Now we have an electronic device. We  
6 call it E-hail. It is also like any other  
7 hail, which service people rate to travel.  
8 It is service on demand. And that should  
9 never have been given away to anybody  
10 else.

11 The other is meters, the use of  
12 meters. It's only -- it's one of the  
13 principles that yellow cab and green cab  
14 has used to have, right now, but have been  
15 given away. And those are the core  
16 problems of this whole nightmare that we  
17 are facing right now.

18 The yellow cab industry for so many  
19 years, for decades, has been a gateway for  
20 immigrants, for us to be able to succeed  
21 in life. This has been our way of life,  
22 and the ability that it gave us to send  
23 our kids to school for better educations,  
24 so they can have the American dream.

25 Our dreams, working 60, 80 hours a

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2 week for years and years, we didn't care.  
3 We were just satisfied because, honestly,  
4 we trust the TLC of the City of New York,  
5 that they will fulfill their commitment,  
6 also.

7 We feel betrayed. We don't know what  
8 is going on, with this so much unfair  
9 competition out there and the lack of  
10 enforcement. It's not only the  
11 consequences I feel that you want to hear  
12 the consequences, the consequences right  
13 now is homes, Medallions, foreclose,  
14 bankruptcy, marriage dissolved;  
15 unthinkable. Equities wiped out.

16 When it comes the time for me to buy  
17 a new car, I don't have the equity,  
18 because most of the time we work at a  
19 loss. No money, even behind on our  
20 payments. Our dreams of retirement have  
21 been shattered.

22 And not only we are suffering as the  
23 drivers, the pain and anxiety now is in  
24 our families. I mean, working now longer  
25 hours and still don't make ends meet. Our

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2 hails getting poorer.

3 So how much longer are we going to  
4 take? Your actions for the good, for the  
5 well-being of the industry, is very  
6 important. And I think we should be  
7 addressing these head on. We cannot live  
8 this way no more.

9 (Timer sounding.)

10 MR. HERVIAS: Thank you very much.

11 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much for  
12 your testimony.

13 MR. WILSON: Thank you. The next  
14 speaker is Jesus Garay, to be followed by  
15 Angel Fernandez, to be followed by David  
16 Pollack from the Taxicab Service  
17 Association.

18 MR. GARAY: Good morning. I would  
19 like to assign my time to the ATU, please.

20 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

21 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

22 The next speaker will be Angel  
23 Fernandez, to be followed by David Pollack  
24 from the Taxicab Service Association, and  
25 followed by Lazkin Ibon.



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2 CHAIR JOSHI: Do you need  
3 interpreting services?

4 MR. FERNANDEZ: No, I don't.

5 CHAIR JOSHI: Okay.

6 MR. FERNANDEZ: Thank you.

7 Good morning. My name is Angel  
8 Fernandez. Try to make it very brief.

9 I started -- I come from the banking  
10 union industry, and I started as a yellow  
11 taxi because I needed the flexibility,  
12 basically -- and the money that, you know,  
13 we're making as a yellow.

14 Uber came. I've been driving for  
15 five years. Then Uber came. I didn't see  
16 Uber as a competition, because basically  
17 it was a door-to-door service, luxury  
18 cars, you know, taxi. It's total  
19 different industry.

20 Then Uber kept recruiting people.  
21 What happens is that now they have to  
22 lower their fare to compete with yellow  
23 taxi.

24 I saw that my income was dropping  
25 30 percent as a yellow taxi, so I became

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2 an Uber driver to meet -- to pay for my  
3 bills basically.

4 So Uber kept recruiting and  
5 recruiting. So what happens is that they  
6 have to lower their fare.

7 Now, I wouldn't mind -- if I'm a  
8 consumer, I wouldn't mind paying a little  
9 extra to have the comfotability (sic) of  
10 being picked up at my house, not go in the  
11 rain, not go out in the snow, the cold,  
12 the heat, you name it.

13 But they kept lowering the fare, and  
14 now what happens is that we -- I see my  
15 income dropping 30 percent again. So now  
16 my income drops 60 percent in the last  
17 five years.

18 This is the only industry that I see  
19 that expenses go up, that inflation go up,  
20 and our income goes down. This is the  
21 only industry that I see that is, in the  
22 future, I see the future in this industry,  
23 that it is going to go bankrupt. There is  
24 not going to be money to be made to even  
25 pay our bills.

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2 Why? Because it's saturated. This  
3 is the only industry that I see that, as  
4 it was told before by one of our fellow  
5 drivers, that it's going to be probably in  
6 the future is going to be more drives than  
7 consumers.

8 And what's going to happen? None of  
9 us is going to be able to make money;  
10 probably a little bit of money, not even  
11 to pay our bills, not even to provide for  
12 our family.

13 So my point is, we should control --  
14 (Timer sounding.)

15 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much for  
16 your testimony.

17 MR. FERNANDEZ: Thank you.

18 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

19 The next speaker is David Pollack, to  
20 be followed by Lazkin Ibon, to be followed  
21 by Ibraheem Ibraheem.

22 MR. POLLACK: Thank you.

23 Good morning, Chairwoman Joshi and  
24 members of the New York City Taxi and  
25 Limousine Commission. I'm David Pollack,

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2 president of the Taxicab Service

3 Association, or the TSA, representing New  
4 York City Medallion holders. Thank you  
5 for the opportunity to discuss leasecap.

6 Since the last leasecap hearing two  
7 years ago, there's been a drastic negative  
8 change in the work force limited around  
9 yellow accessible taxis, even with helpful  
10 measures such as paying the driver 50  
11 cents for the each fare in a WAV vehicle,  
12 and additional fees based on distances to  
13 pick up disabled fares. These measures  
14 have increased WAV drivers income, yet  
15 most WAV taxis still stand idle.

16 Additionally, rates being charges for  
17 WAVs are lower than two years ago. Lower  
18 lease fees and higher driver incentives  
19 should work in theory to replenish the  
20 thousands of yellow drivers who have left  
21 our industry for another segment, but it  
22 is not enough to maintain our work force.

23 That said, I want to thank you,  
24 Chairwoman Joshi and the TLC Commissioners  
25 for supporting intros 1474 and 1475, which

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have helped to stimulate Medallion sales by making it easier for current drivers, other men and women to purchase a Medallion.

All this is still not enough for leasing agents, drivers and owners to earn enough to earn a living, inclusive of paying their Medallion loans.

I ask this Commission to look into wheelchair accessible vehicle equality, and consider mandating that all bases with 85 percent of fares that are app-based replace each retired vehicle with an accessible vehicle, until 50 percent of all app-based FHVs are wheelchair accessible vehicles.

If the yellow taxi industry has to be 50 percent -- has a 50 percent mandate to become accessible by 2020, so should app-based FHVs. This vehicle equality will definitely help the disabled community and somewhat level the playing field when drivers search for the best driving opportunities.

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2 We also support an alternative  
3 suggestion made by the Committee for Taxi  
4 Safety that adds a fee to app-based  
5 vehicles, to create an accessibility fund  
6 to be used primarily to increase the  
7 income of drivers of accessible taxi  
8 vehicles.

9 Thank you.

10 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

11 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

12 The next speaker is Lazkin Ibon, to  
13 be followed by Ibraheem Ibraheem, to be  
14 followed by Patrick Lorquet. The last one  
15 may need Spanish language assistance.

16 MR. IBON: Good morning. I have a  
17 green car. And one of the biggest problem  
18 we had, we have to come to City almost  
19 40 percent of our ride, and we have to  
20 come back empty. And that's a lot waste  
21 of gas and time, pollution.

22 And we didn't have income, stable  
23 income. And once I get, as a driver,  
24 also, my own car, I get seven points on my  
25 license. The insurance company wouldn't

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2 take me. So I had to stop my own car.

3 And because I can't have insurance, the

4 insurance company like only three, four

5 companies, and they all like monopoly.

6 They don't want to take you.

7 And then I have to lose from my car,

8 my home, I bought a \$25,000. Now it's

9 worth nothing, almost like six, seven

10 thousand dollars, they give me.

11 So my car is like, is supposed to be,

12 like add value, but now opposite. I lost

13 more money. And I'm not working on my own

14 car.

15 So I don't know if you guys put the

16 rule, but you don't consider in the future

17 how it will work.

18 So I appreciate like maybe change

19 something about the green car.

20 Thank you.

21 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

22 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

23 So the next speaker will be Ibraheem

24 Ibraheem, to be followed by Patrick

25 Lorquet, to be followed by David Beier.

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MR. IBRAHEEM: Good morning. My name is Ibraheem Ibraheem. I have been a license for-hire vehicle driver for about two and a half years.

The for-hire vehicle industry has been a source of opportunity for many new immigrants who call New York City home. Over the past several years the for-hire vehicle industry has seen an explosive growth in the number of drivers with the entry of the e-mail or app-based service providers.

The promise of good pay and flexibility has attracted many. Unfortunately, the fierce competition for market share between the app-based service providers has turned into a rapid race to the bottom.

The industry has quickly become oversaturated. The steady decline of fares year after year is putting many families in serious economic jeopardy.

As I have detailed in the appendix, my income, personally, per hour per mile



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2 and per year has declined by 11 percent,  
3 10 percent and 8 percent respectively  
4 between the years 2015 and 2016. And I am  
5 the best-case scenario. I am a single  
6 male and I own my own hybrid car.

7 As more miles are driven on my car, I  
8 can only expect maintenance costs to  
9 increase and adversely affecting my income  
10 even more.

11 I am hear today to urge the Taxi and  
12 Limousine Commission to take the brave  
13 steps necessary to ensure that drivers and  
14 their families are not at the mercy of  
15 service providers who do not seem to have  
16 a sense of morality in their pursuit of  
17 market domination.

18 And the primary tool for these  
19 service providers in maintaining or  
20 growing their market share is the  
21 reduction of fares.

22 Ensuring that drivers are fairly  
23 compensated has several advantages. I  
24 would like to mention just two, the most  
25 important of which is the safety of New

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2 Yorkers. An underpaid driver is more  
3 likely to be aggressive, is less likely to  
4 yield to a crossing pedestrian, and is  
5 less likely to drive cautiously in a  
6 school zone.

7 It is now the time for the Taxi and  
8 Limousine Commission to install the  
9 necessary rules for regulating fares and  
10 tips, market cap, base Commission,  
11 including how that base Commission is  
12 calculated.

13 Thank you very much.

14 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

15 And I do want to make a general  
16 request. Anybody who has itemized driver  
17 income statements, if you want to hand  
18 them in to us or give them to us at a  
19 later date, either anonymously or with  
20 your name, it's extremely helpful for us  
21 to see the exact numbers on how much  
22 people are making and how much their  
23 expenses are. So we appreciate it.

24 And, ironically, you mentioned  
25 safety. The reason why the lease caps were

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2 put into place in 1996 actually was  
3 because of the fear that underpaid drivers  
4 were also unsafe drivers. So things come  
5 full circle.

6 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
7 Patrick Lorquet, to be followed by David  
8 Beier, to be followed by Miah Golam, who I  
9 believe needs an interpreter.

10 Mr. LORQUET: Good morning.

11 Good morning, Commissioner Joshi and  
12 your staff. This is a followup after the  
13 meeting we have with you on March 27th.  
14 We bring a few points as far as the  
15 union's standpoint. And I have a  
16 statement here -- and then I have the  
17 three minute from the other persons that  
18 yield to us, and I'm going to try and make  
19 it brief.

20 My name is --

21 CHAIR JOSHI: What group do you  
22 represent?

23 MR. LORQUET: ATU.

24 CHAIR JOSHI: Okay.

25 MR. LORQUET: The local --

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2 (inaudible).

3 CHAIR JOSHI: Are there other members  
4 of your group here? You can all stand  
5 together. That way other people get a  
6 chance to speak.

7 MR. LORQUET: We have a few, but we  
8 didn't bring a whole army here.

9 CHAIR JOSHI: Okay. So I'm going to  
10 take your testimony as a representative of  
11 your group.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you.

13 My name is Patrick Lorquet. I was  
14 fortunate to be primary contact person for  
15 ATU to meet firsthand with a group of  
16 drivers who have concern about looking for  
17 union support in New York City back in  
18 2014.

19 I got in Transit Union Local 1181 --  
20 has been involved in the last 14 months on  
21 organizing drive to support the movement.  
22 So far, more than 16,000 drivers have  
23 signed up with the ATU local 1181, the  
24 largest (inaudible) transportation union  
25 in the US, representing also the MTA bus

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2 and Access-a-Ride in New York City.

3 From Albany to City Hall, the union  
4 is informed and committed in the fight for  
5 driver to bring justice and equality and a  
6 fair system for all TLC drivers. So with  
7 us, you are to join us in this effort.

8 In my humble opinion, this public  
9 hearing held by the TLC as regulatory city  
10 agency, this event should be a turning  
11 point to act and make possible (inaudible)  
12 to the driver dilemma, and New York City,  
13 street hail (inaudible) for consideration  
14 to follow.

15 Organized multiple hearing in the  
16 five boroughs and the open forum  
17 (inaudible) driver employer have to be  
18 considered.

19 We have TLC New York City DOT  
20 department, and New York and New Jersey  
21 Port Authority, to work on a plan to  
22 provide parking and bathrooms, and  
23 designate relief area for drivers in the  
24 City with a sense of urgency.

25 We are continuing to drop,

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2 effectively, drivers' earnings, and  
3 drivers want a union.

4 I have here some exhibit based on a  
5 survey. We went among the 16,000 drivers  
6 that signed up with us, and I would like  
7 to -- one of the question on the survey:  
8 I would like to be called about a union  
9 contract with Uber and other ride-share  
10 companies, so I could earn more money and  
11 be treated fairly.

12 And that, we got 82.19 percent  
13 strongly agree with us. And I will show  
14 you this exhibit.

15 There's an urgency and a need for  
16 union representation in the system, based  
17 on the survey that we sent to the drivers  
18 that signed with us.

19 One of the other questions that:  
20 Have you ever been paid less than what you  
21 were entitled, by Uber or any other share  
22 company?

23 Answer is, 77.62 percent say yes,  
24 which is an exhibit.

25 (Timer sounding.)

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2 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you for your  
3 testimony. We're also going to take  
4 pictures of those exhibits for our  
5 records.

6 MR. LORQUET: No problem.

7 CHAIR JOSHI: I would like to  
8 reiterate, if you've spoken, please make  
9 space for other people. We have 60 people  
10 waiting to get in to testify today. So we  
11 all have to give up a little time and  
12 space in order for them to come in and  
13 have their voices heard as well.

14 So thank you.

15 MR. LORQUET: You're welcome.

16 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
17 David Beier, Committee for Taxi Safety, to  
18 be followed by Miah Golam, followed by  
19 Mohammed Zahrel Islam.

20 MR. BEIER: Good morning. My name is  
21 David Beier and I'm president of the  
22 Committee for Taxi Safety, which is  
23 comprised of licensed lease agents.

24 CTS manages approximately 20 percent  
25 of New York taxi Medallions, along with

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2 the men and women who drive those  
3 vehicles. Together we work to provide  
4 transportation to 400,000 people every  
5 day.

6 Thank you for the opportunity to  
7 offer comments to the TLC on the economics  
8 of operating taxis and for-hire vehicles  
9 in New York City.

10 We cannot separate the conversation  
11 of the economics of operating taxis  
12 without first reviewing the imbalance of  
13 rules and regulations between taxis and  
14 ride-share vehicles.

15 The simple fact of the matter is that  
16 the taxi industry has been the only  
17 private transportation provider required  
18 to pay the bulk of all taxes, fees and  
19 regulations, as well as have a 50 percent  
20 accessibility vehicle requirement.

21 Many of these fees and regulations  
22 were put into place by prior  
23 administrations without regard to their  
24 impact on operating a business to provide  
25 transportation in a much more competitive



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2 market.

3 As stated in multiple hearings and  
4 meetings, the Committee for Taxi Safety  
5 and others have consistently addressed  
6 these (inaudible) and regulations, but the  
7 City has been unwilling to address the  
8 heart of the matter, which in large part  
9 is that it is impossible for taxis to  
10 compete in a competitive marketplace while  
11 being mandated to use only vehicles and  
12 technologies that are not popular with  
13 drivers or the public.

14 Many Medallion owners, which would be  
15 drivers owning only single Medallions,  
16 came into this industry because it  
17 traditionally made a good living. Its  
18 history has been a career path of its own,  
19 where drivers became Medallion owners and  
20 had an ability to create a middle-class  
21 living, where they could finance a home  
22 and finance their children's education.

23 However, we are all watching the  
24 value of the Medallions continue to  
25 decrease. A New York City taxi Medallion

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just sold for \$240,000, which is less than one-fifth of what Medallions were selling for just four years ago.

As we testified at the City Council Transportation Preliminary Budget Hearing in March, the continuous decline of the value of Medallions is creating an impact on our own City budget.

As a previously, stated the accessibility requirement of converting 50 percent of all taxis has been a failing program, resulting in a detrimental effect on the taxi industry. From the start, the previous administration never worked with the broader transportation and the disability advocates to implement a shared responsible and fact-based approach to provide a greater access in the competitive marketplace.

The toxic mix of an ill-conceived Taxi of Tomorrow program mandating the use of a new MB200, a car not designed to be accessible, along with the prior administration's settlement in federal

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2 court utilizing an arbitrary number of  
3 50 percent of taxi vehicles to be  
4 accessible, was all done without  
5 consultation with the industry or with the  
6 maker of the Taxi of Tomorrow about the  
7 viability of such approach.

8 A better resolution surely could have  
9 and should have been reached. The Taxi of  
10 Tomorrow vehicle and accessible vehicles  
11 require much more gas than a hybrid, which  
12 is severely cutting into a driver's  
13 earnings. Hybrids predominate the taxi  
14 industry as they currently predominate the  
15 for-hire industry, and that means that  
16 drivers can earn more money, as it costs  
17 less to fill up their vehicles.

18 Today, as a result of these  
19 administrative decisions, drivers have  
20 left the industry, resulting in over 600  
21 fully financed Medallions --

22 (Timer sounding.)

23 MR. BEIER: -- currently sitting on  
24 TLC shelves, and over 1,000 --

25 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much for

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2 your testimony.

3 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is Miah  
4 Golam, to be followed by Mohammed Zahrel  
5 Islam, to be followed by Mustak Rahman.

6 Do you need a translator?

7 MR. GOLAM: No, I'm okay. A few  
8 words.

9 The Taxi & Limousine Commission, I  
10 know of others, and our drivers. From  
11 Bangladesh, I come 35 years. And I have  
12 driving for more than 35. But I have  
13 bought this Medallion 2003. And I have  
14 two daughters. I bought it 195. It's  
15 coming 1.50 thousand up to.

16 Now I am in big trouble. I cannot  
17 pay my daughter's college because of the  
18 industries falling.

19 There's one question I have. How  
20 many Uber driver in a small amount of  
21 Manhattan land, I want to know, there is  
22 any hotel we line up that is limousine  
23 taking our job. Nobody is to check that,  
24 who is this guys calling up, or he just  
25 grab our job from the hotel.

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2 We pick up from the street. They  
3 pick up from the street. We crossing same  
4 red light in the black cars. Your Honor,  
5 figure out who get pulled over. I get  
6 pulled over because I am the yellow.

7 So industry down to the drain right  
8 now, 15,500 or '800 Medallion taxi in this  
9 City. How many Uber TLC give a permission  
10 to the City to work? I think over 60,000  
11 Uber car only in this City.

12 So years ago we have the  
13 Environmental Protection Department. They  
14 give it to the City permission to  
15 Medallion production, not to pollute it.  
16 This much cars are supposed to be in the  
17 City.

18 But that law is not enforcing,  
19 because anybody goes, give it for TLC  
20 permission, give it to the guy. You  
21 supposed to make it that law that this  
22 much car you allow to the City.

23 Because you have another companies.  
24 There another black cars. There is a van.  
25 There is, you know, a Lyft, any other

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2 apps, so many things.

3 But my question, take care of that --  
4 how many cars you allow to give it to the  
5 permission to the City to pick up a  
6 customer.

7 Another question, your Honor -- your  
8 Commissioner, when I bought this Medallion  
9 in 2003 --

10 (Timer sounding.)

11 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much for  
12 your testimony.

13 MR. GOLAM: And --

14 CHAIR JOSHI: Please allow someone  
15 else to testify.

16 MR. GOLAM: Okay. Thank you.

17 CHAIR JOSHI: Two things. One, can  
18 you meet with someone in the back to give  
19 us the names of the hotels you're  
20 concerned about?

21 And number two, you asked when we  
22 would limit the number of vehicles. This  
23 Commission does not have the authority to  
24 limit the number of vehicles pursuant to  
25 state law. It has to be done by state law

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2 or by City Council.

3 In 2015, City Council proposed a rule  
4 to cap the number of vehicles, but did not  
5 end up approving that law. So that's who  
6 has the authority to cap the number of FHV  
7 vehicles on the street.

8 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

9 The next speaker is Mohammed Zahrel  
10 Islam, to be followed by Mustak Rahman, to  
11 be followed by Leeor Sillman.

12 MR. ISLAM: Good morning, respectable  
13 Commissioner of TLC. My name is Mohammed  
14 Islam. I'm the owner of (inaudible).

15 I'm involved with the TLC since 1997.  
16 At that time, I also happy. Now I am  
17 crying. Why I am crying?

18 Number one, drivers, we make an  
19 agreement, do not pick up any person from  
20 unauthorized area. If they pick up  
21 passenger, and TLC give it to owner,  
22 ticket to owner of the vehicle, owner  
23 never is to be (inaudible) driver, like 25  
24 car.

25 Now -- last week I got ticket, \$750.

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2 Why?

3 Because Uber driver looking the  
4 passenger in outside area. How he knew my  
5 driver looking unauthorized area? How am  
6 I supposed to pay \$750?

7 And then last week, TLC send a letter  
8 to me. We offer 350 pay to get dismissed.  
9 750 for City ticket, and TLC send offer of  
10 350.

11 Number two, why (inaudible) car  
12 fares, they take out inspection  
13 (inaudible). Uber fail. Then you go to  
14 mechanic shop (inaudible) give it someone,  
15 new sticker on the car. This is a  
16 discrimination.

17 Okay. Now we go to mechanic shop,  
18 and mechanic said (inaudible) we have to  
19 drive 100 mile. We drive 100 mile, they  
20 (inaudible) give a ticket again.

21 Why they take out the (inaudible)  
22 give the inspection sticker on the  
23 windshield? Then we can drive and make  
24 (inaudible).

25 Number three, if, in the six-month



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2 TLC inspection for green car, and then,  
3 you know (inaudible) this color, the color  
4 no match, whole car has to be paint. And  
5 whole car has to be paint, and we then  
6 tack on 350, we pay (inaudible) we pay  
7 mechanic, how is that business?

8 I have 50 car, \$2,500 (inaudible) now  
9 25 car (inaudible).

10 Why they give (inaudible) like this?  
11 How is the business like this?

12 And number four, the TLC -- all the  
13 time they go to JFK Airport, drop the  
14 passengers, and they have the two  
15 luggage (inaudible). "Please, please,  
16 help me drop off the two blocks."

17 (Inaudible) -- as a human being, they  
18 pick up, they give someone to them like  
19 \$1,000 to pick up the passengers, why  
20 (inaudible) an outside area? They don't  
21 have reason to pick up, but (inaudible)  
22 like old people with two luggage, and they  
23 help them and they give some to driver and  
24 owner of the vehicle of company.

25 Now, Commissioner, please amend the

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2 policy for TLC. Otherwise, very soon all  
3 the owner of vehicle in terms of --

4 (Timer sounding.)

5 MR. ISLAM: -- they go somewhere  
6 else.

7 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you very much.

8 MR. ISLAM: Thank you.

9 CHAIR JOSHI: I would also like you  
10 to speak to one of our staff members in  
11 the back about your particular summonses.

12 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
13 Mustak Rahman, to be followed by Leor  
14 Sillman, to be followed by Carolyn Protz.

15 MR. RAHMAN: Hi, Commissioner. I'm a  
16 TLC driver. I will bring points of  
17 evaluation and management.

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Excuse me. Could  
19 you adjust the microphone?

20 MR. RAHMAN: I'm sorry?

21 CHAIR JOSHI: If you would speaker  
22 closer to the microphone.

23 MR. RAHMAN: When I (inaudible)  
24 mistakes, when I do some -- there are  
25 mistakes, my job is done by somebody, I

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2 never saw there's no customer here, so I  
3 sent the e-mails. They come back up  
4 (inaudible) to two hours from offshore by  
5 name (inaudible) I don't know.

6 So the thing is, I got (inaudible) it  
7 takes two minutes extra time to route the  
8 passenger for (inaudible) in Manhattan.  
9 And I got an e-mail from the -- from  
10 offshore, that you need (inaudible) took a  
11 long time to drop the passengers. Your  
12 account is blocked.

13 So my point is, TLC (inaudible).  
14 They can evaluate my performance, my job.  
15 But Uber, offshore, honors no contact.  
16 They cannot instruct me, my earnings.  
17 They cannot.

18 So is (inaudible) all the options  
19 from (inaudible) A to G, A to G operation  
20 for HRC, that means (inaudible) company,  
21 should be done from here for our safety,  
22 for our evaluation, not from the offshore,  
23 who in one hour said: Okay, you cannot  
24 drive any more.

25 Second thing, TLC will be my parents,

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2 my guardians, not offshore company who  
3 will tell me, do this, don't do that. You  
4 cannot drive here or there. A lot of  
5 rules, you know, they are putting. We  
6 want TLC should do that.

7 And there is no customer service. I  
8 have lot of trouble with the ride-sharing  
9 company. They stole my money, I am  
10 telling you. They stole my money.

11 I try to -- I say to them a lot of  
12 times. They don't respond. There is no  
13 customer service. I go into their office,  
14 they say: Oh, I don't deal with that. I  
15 just enroll you to start driving  
16 (inaudible).

17 I say: Who install this? They send  
18 an e-mail (inaudible).

19 I will show if. I get chance, I will  
20 show all of it. Pay (inaudible) is bad.  
21 They stole my money.

22 Again, the discipline be -- they put  
23 the ratings down with the (inaudible)  
24 complete, with the simple complaint. They  
25 don't know what's going on in Manhattan.

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2 (Timer sounding.)

3 MR. RAHMAN: That ten-minute ride --

4 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much.

5 I would like to take you up on your  
6 offer, if you could meet with a staff  
7 member to -- if you're comfortable sharing  
8 your financials, so we can have a better  
9 understanding of some of the issues you're  
10 facing.

11 MR. RAHMAN: Yes, I will.

12 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

13 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
14 Leeor Sillman, to be followed by Carolyn  
15 Protz, to be followed by Mustafa Altan.

16 MR. SILLMAN: Good morning. My name  
17 is Leeor Sillman.

18 My father drove a yellow cab for  
19 30-plus years, and along the way was able  
20 to purchase two Medallions and,  
21 thankfully, pay them off.

22 A couple years ago he got sick and  
23 passed away. But before he did he said  
24 one of his proudest achievements was the  
25 fact that he was leaving a strong

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2 financial future for my mother. And, you  
3 know, thank God he is not alive to see  
4 what's happening now.

5 At the time, my -- when he passed  
6 away, my mother was getting about \$3,500  
7 leasing her -- each Medallion out, you  
8 know, so a total of \$7,000.

9 Just a couple months ago --

10 CHAIR JOSHI: \$3,500, how often?

11 MR. SILLMAN: I'm sorry. A month.

12 And then just, you know, just earlier  
13 this month she got a letter from the  
14 leasing agent saying they were lowering  
15 the payment again, and now she's get  
16 \$1,000 a month per Medallion.

17 So, you know, imagine any of  
18 yourselves being retired and on your own,  
19 and having your income drop from 7,000 to  
20 2,000. Clearly, that's more than a  
21 30 percent drop that -- I've heard  
22 30 percent up here a lot. Clearly that's  
23 more than a 30 percent drop.

24 I think, you know, I think we all  
25 pretty much know the causes of the issues,

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2 so, you know, I'll say that yesterday I  
3 was coaching my son's baseball team, a  
4 bunch of five-year-olds. And the ball  
5 came, and everyone ran to the ball and  
6 everyone knocked into each other and  
7 nobody got the ball.

8 I think we're facing the same  
9 situation here in the City. As you  
10 mentioned, there is 150,000 licensed  
11 drivers, and everyone is going for the  
12 same fares, and the result is just  
13 destruction across the industry.

14 Obviously, as you mentioned, you are  
15 not -- you don't have the authority to  
16 limit the number of licenses out there or  
17 the number of cars out there, but there  
18 are other solutions that may help.

19 I'm sure other people who are move  
20 involved in the industry have a better  
21 idea of what some of those solutions are,  
22 but some that come to the top of my mind  
23 are, obviously, fare increases that are  
24 equitable for both the drivers and the  
25 owners.

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2 You know, I know drivers often  
3 complain that the fare increases go only  
4 to the owners. As an owner or owner's  
5 son, okay, you know, I think all owners  
6 would agree at this point, you know, to  
7 make those increases equitable.

8 And then also the regulation that the  
9 yellow taxi industry has to abide by,  
10 which -- including the accessible vehicles  
11 and other sorts of surcharges, the MTA tax  
12 and things like that, you know, they are  
13 just at a competitive disadvantage. Even  
14 if, you know, you can't eliminate all the  
15 cars on the street, at least let's not  
16 have the yellow cab drivers and owners be  
17 at a competitive disadvantages.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
20 Carolyn Protz, to be followed by Mustafa  
21 Altan, to be followed by Mohamad Tipu  
22 Sultan.

23 MS. PROTZ: Good morning,  
24 Commissioners. My name is Carolyn Protz.  
25 I'm an individual Medallion owner.



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2 I won't go into the details of the  
3 losses in trip numbers, revenues,  
4 Medallion value, rental income received by  
5 Medallion owners, foreclosures. I'm sure  
6 you're family with all of the numbers.  
7 It's all on your website and in the news.

8 I've listened most attentively to  
9 Commissioner Joshi's frequent refrain  
10 regarding the primary goals of the TLC.  
11 They are safety, consumer protection,  
12 driver welfare and accessibility.

13 It's telling that no mention is ever  
14 made of the orphaned stepchildren of the  
15 for-hire vehicle world; in short, the  
16 individual Medallion owners.

17 Together with their families, they  
18 comprise approximately 30,000 people,  
19 30,000 people whose rights have been  
20 trampled under the guise of competition.

21 Commissioner, whenever you're asked  
22 about this segment, the response is  
23 something about the free market. Yes, I  
24 read Ayn Rand, too, in junior high school.  
25 There is no free market. There is no free

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2 market because New York City already sold  
3 the franchise to us, the yellow taxi  
4 owners, for \$9 billion over the last  
5 20 years.

6 And then you proceeded to give it  
7 away, that which we had already paid for.

8 Why do you think unsuspecting  
9 immigrants were willing to give you over a  
10 million dollars for the right to transport  
11 passengers on demand? They expected that  
12 you would enforce your own rules. They  
13 have been sadly disappointed.

14 It's interesting that mileage by all  
15 for-hire vehicles is up 28 percent between  
16 2014 and '16. How on Earth can that be in  
17 keeping with New York City and Department  
18 of Transportation's vision zero goals of  
19 lessening congestion, accidents,  
20 fatalities, pollution and encouraging  
21 people to use public transportation?

22 You have let loose a tsunami that you  
23 cannot control. With all the excess  
24 vehicles chasing too few trips, you have  
25 forced --

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2 (Applause.)

3 MS. PROTZ: -- drivers to pick up  
4 illegally, just so they can survive. And  
5 you know it, you said yourself, it's too  
6 lucrative to stop them.

7 This situation, unaddressed, will  
8 only worsen. It's not an act of God.  
9 It's not a hurricane. It's not an  
10 earthquake. The problem was created  
11 either by design or default by New York  
12 City government, and the solution lies  
13 with you.

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. PROTZ: Thank you.

16 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
17 Mustafa Altan, to be followed by Mohamad  
18 Tipu Sultan, to be followed by Aveshik  
19 Chadromali (phonetic).

20 MR. ALTAN: Good morning,  
21 Commissioner. My name is Mustafa Altan.  
22 I am service-related disabled Vietnam  
23 veteran. I am proud that I served my  
24 country, in spite of serious medical  
25 problems I suffered, and continue to

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2 suffer for 25 years.

3 I don't look for sympathy. I look  
4 for justice. Yeah, I have to sell my  
5 business --

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. ALTAN: -- due to my health issue  
8 and purchase 1 million accessible taxi  
9 Medallion 2004, from an auction for  
10 \$535,000. I paid New York over half a  
11 million dollars for my Medallions.

12 Since Uber, unrestricted growth in  
13 New York City negatively affected taxi  
14 Medallion owners' income. In May -- in  
15 2014, my average monthly income from  
16 rental of two taxi Medallions was \$5,616.  
17 So far in 2017, it dropped to \$2,800.  
18 This is over 50 percent drop, a little  
19 over three years. This is not fair.

20 I am a New York State resident,  
21 paying my taxes here. My broker/driver  
22 are New York residents as well. All the  
23 income we generate stays in New York and  
24 we generate revenue for New York.

25 On the other hand, Uber is owned by

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2 billionaires from out of town. They are  
3 collecting profits and take them out of  
4 state.

5 Uber has --

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. ALTAN: Uber has false  
8 advertised and ruined so many licenses  
9 taxi drivers to drive Uber with false  
10 promises.

11 I personally met and spoke with  
12 several Uber drivers. They are not happy  
13 with Uber's promises and constantly  
14 changes fares --

15 (Applause.)

16 MR. ALTAN: Due to my medical  
17 condition, I visit several doctors and  
18 hospitals in New York City. I used to  
19 take -- it used to take me hour, hour and  
20 a half to get there. Now it takes me  
21 about two and a half hours.

22 Manhattan traffic is unbearable. I  
23 don't trust those reports saying  
24 otherwise. Time after time I counted TLC  
25 plates on for-hire vehicles, and I noticed

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2 that seven out of ten cars had TLC plates.  
3 This does not include yellow Medallion  
4 taxis.

5 Many times I came up with the same  
6 results in Midtown Tunnel as well.  
7 Manhattan's unbearable traffic is caused  
8 by Uber's unlimited growth. This has to  
9 be stopped and corrected immediately.

10 I made my investment in New York with  
11 TLC --

12 (Timer sounding.)

13 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much for  
14 your testimony.

15 MR. ALTAN: I have a piece of paper.

16 CHAIR JOSHI: If you have it in  
17 writing, you can either hand it to us or  
18 e-mail it to us. We can make copies, if  
19 you would like to retain a copy as well.

20 MR. ALTAN: I would like to retain.

21 CHAIR JOSHI: Okay. So we will make  
22 copies, and each commissioner will get a  
23 copy.

24 MR. ALTAN: Thank you.

25 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

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2 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

3 The next speaker is Mohamad Tipu  
4 Sultan, to be followed by Ashevik  
5 Chadromali (phonetic), to be followed by  
6 Muhammad Ijaz.

7 MR. SULTAN: Hi. Good afternoon. My  
8 name is Mohamad Tipu Sultan, driving since  
9 2004, after I quit college.

10 The reason I came to the taxi  
11 industry I see the bright -- and living  
12 with little, little -- under (inaudible) I  
13 knew about the taxi industry, what it is.  
14 But I still try to survive. That's why I  
15 come to the taxi industry and try to  
16 continue my education.

17 But then I have a family -- I  
18 married. The plan changed, and I have  
19 three children and my wife living in  
20 Brooklyn, and currently still I'm driving  
21 a taxi and participating two class in  
22 Brooklyn College, American dream.

23 So American dream is education, is  
24 almost fail. American dream with the  
25 surviving with the minimum wage, is also

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2 fail. And the dream I see the TLC is also  
3 fail.

4 The reason how I can say it --  
5 (Applause.)

6 MR. SULTAN: -- there is 150,000 taxi  
7 driver, they are driving yellow, green,  
8 livery, Uber, Lyft, they're all drivers.  
9 Currently, around 90,000 cab in the city,  
10 yellow, green, Uber, Lyft. None of the  
11 driver are living with the minimum wage  
12 limit. And I believe that you -- are the  
13 Commissioners, are the responsible for  
14 this current situation.

15 (Applause.)

16 MR. SULTAN: Where is the Uber  
17 closing all over the world? Business  
18 policy closing. Business policy fail,  
19 anti-labor, anti-minimum wage,  
20 anti-people, anti-people rules and  
21 regulations. Everywhere in the world  
22 where Uber is crushing them because of  
23 anti-labor, how come they are in New York  
24 City, I have no idea.

25 (Applause.)



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2 MR. SULOTAN: Everywhere we see that  
3 ad, app-based car ad, they say: You have  
4 a TLC license, and come in there. When  
5 the TLC license goes there and say what  
6 they say with the minimum wage, not even  
7 the minimum wage.

8 I'm driving Friday, Saturday night,  
9 the best night, two-hour shift. Believe  
10 me, if I can make hundred dollars for me,  
11 thanks God.

12 And think about it. There are no  
13 cash even. Goes to the seven days in the  
14 hand of the garage. And last Saturday I  
15 drive, everyone is double-shift, I drive.  
16 I have \$100 only cash.

17 Your commissioner, that is also need  
18 to be touched about the minimum wage. And  
19 all over the minimum is going up, and TLC  
20 should think about the improvement of the  
21 taxi driver. I'm in labor Uber, Lyft, and  
22 we do not want any special company, any  
23 special organization, get the people to  
24 use driver back.

25 (Timer sounding.)

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MR. SULTAN: Thank you.

CHAIR JOSHI: We have to give everybody --

MR. SULTAN: I'm a taxi driver. I'm a taxi driver.

CHAIR JOSHI: You're in contact with us a lot, so please do so after the hearing and we are happy to hear the rest of your statement.

MR. SULTAN: Thank you all of you. How the taxi driver --

(Simultaneous speaking.)

MR. WILSON: The next speaker --

MR. SULTAN: Thank you.

MR. WILSON: -- is Mr. -- is Mr. Aveshik Chadromali (phonetic), to be followed by Muhammad Ijaz, to be followed by Suves Baiagi.

(No response.)

MR. WILSON: Okay. Muhammad Ijaz.

CHAIR JOSHI: And I am going to ask again for people to rotate out of the room. There are a lot of people that would like an opportunity to speak. And

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2 everyone who has spoken and remains in the  
3 room is taking that opportunity away from  
4 another driver.

5 MR. WILSON: And Mr. Ijaz will be  
6 followed by Suves Baiagi and Carlos  
7 Adames.

8 MR. IJAZ. Hi Commissioners. My name  
9 is Muhammad Ijaz. One of the reasons I  
10 came here to testify, like, there is, like  
11 TLC cops. This is one of my main concern,  
12 like there isn't any standing or parking  
13 area for livery guys or for taxis or  
14 whatever, but they come over and treat you  
15 or humiliate you, like they busted a  
16 pretty big drug deal.

17 Like there was another person who is  
18 not able to work because of that  
19 humiliation. Like I forgot the name of  
20 that person. He was testifying, like how  
21 they treat them, and since that day he is  
22 unable to work. And this is one of the  
23 reason, like they give you no standing.  
24 And wherever you go in Manhattan,  
25 everywhere is no standing.

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2 And when you are issuing license  
3 plates for TLC or whatever, you guys are  
4 well aware how many plates are issued,  
5 then you try to probably please keep in  
6 mind, like these people, they need to go  
7 to maybe restrooms or all those areas, and  
8 they don't need a parking space.

9 And one of them, like wherever you  
10 pick up, it's a no standing area, and you  
11 sometimes are tolerated by parking  
12 authority guys, they give you a chance.  
13 But these TLC cops, they don't give you  
14 any chance.

15 And a lot of the summons they  
16 relate -- like if you come to -- they  
17 offer you a settlement. If you come to  
18 the TLC, it's going to be this much fine.  
19 If you pay fine in the mail, it's going to  
20 be this much fine.

21 And a lot of like drivers that don't  
22 want to go to TLC and go through that  
23 hassle, like parking your car, see a  
24 judge, and wind up wasting like four hours  
25 or whatnot. And they think, I'll just

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2 mail them \$100 or whatnot, which I think  
3 is pretty unjustified.

4 And secondly, like a -- like a lot of  
5 other drivers are, like their concern  
6 is -- like I've been driving since 2009,  
7 and like earning or whatever, it's going  
8 down every single day.

9 And like there's another fellow who  
10 mentioned like a lot of e-mails or  
11 whatever, like offshore, they go offshore  
12 or whatnot, they don't really know what's  
13 going on in the city. And because of  
14 those rating system or whatever, they can  
15 terminate you any time without telling  
16 you.

17 And when Uber launch here in the  
18 city, what was the minimum wage or their  
19 starting fare, and today it's a  
20 significant difference.

21 And I'm definitely -- like a lot of  
22 their ads are like gimmicks. It's just  
23 like a beehive or something like that,  
24 that tells you like you're going to make  
25 this much money or whatnot, and then when

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2 you finally see -- like after when your  
3 investment in your car and whatnot, and it  
4 goes down. You don't make the same amount  
5 of money --

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. IJAZ: (Inaudible) you were  
8 making two weeks ago, and these are.

9 (Timer sounding.)

10 MR. IJAZ: Thank you.

11 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you for your  
12 time.

13 We have members of our staff in the  
14 back that I would like you to, if you have  
15 a moment, speak with about your  
16 experiences with our inspectors. Thank  
17 you.

18 MR. WILSON: And the next speaker is  
19 Sueves Baiagi, to be followed by Luiny  
20 Tavares, to be follow by Christian  
21 Libramonte.

22 MR. BAIAGI: Thank you for offering  
23 me. My name is Sueves Baiagi.

24 I am driving a handicap taxi.

25 Actually, well, I -- before I drive from

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2 lease or make (inaudible). So at the time  
3 when I go to the Omega to lease money  
4 from -- Omega told me you can buy own  
5 Medallion. So Omega, owner of Omega told  
6 me you can fill out the form, at least  
7 800, 800 to 900, you can get it.

8 So I was expecting below 700,000.  
9 But they told me you can -- you cannot get  
10 it.

11 But now business is so down, I cannot  
12 ever -- I have no driver. I am a  
13 (inaudible) three years driving. I am  
14 killing myself. I cannot afford. My  
15 family every day crying, before you drive  
16 (inaudible). So now you drive every day.

17 I am proud of my family. My two  
18 children going to the Stuyvesant High  
19 School. My children (inaudible). Every  
20 day I go to them, I tell them (inaudible)  
21 every day I was playing with them.

22 So, and now, I request my Omega  
23 brokers, I cannot drive any more. You can  
24 take it.

25 So they told me: You are losing your

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2 home. I bought my house 2004. So I am  
3 crying. My family crying. I cannot  
4 ever -- so I am lucky. I came here. I  
5 have great opportunity to come here.

6 So I want to give your Medallion, so  
7 I can -- because I cannot afford. I have  
8 no driver. Three years I am driving with  
9 no driver. Every day I go to the -- I  
10 request a driver. I drive both my car to  
11 the the airport, no driver, no coming  
12 anybody.

13 So I am very, very upset. My family  
14 every day crying --

15 (Timer sounding.)

16 MR. BAIAGI: -- why are you driving?

17 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much for  
18 your testimony. I would like you to talk  
19 to somebody in the back who worked in the  
20 accessible dispatch program --

21 MR. BAIAGI: Thank you. Thank you.  
22 Thank you.

23 CHAIR JOSHI: -- and talk about some  
24 of the incentives we can give for  
25 accessible drivers.



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2 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

3 I've been asked to ask people who may  
4 need Bengali translation assistance to  
5 see someone in the back of the room.

6 And the next speaker is Luiny  
7 Tavares, to be followed by Christian  
8 Libramonte, to be followed by Doucouve  
9 Mamadou.

10 MS. MARINO: I would like to say,  
11 also, I know we have a lot to talk about,  
12 but if we could all just show each speaker  
13 the respect that we all want, and try to  
14 not talk when people are speaking. It's  
15 disruptive.

16 MR. WILSON: Mr. Tavares is not here.  
17 The next speaker is Christian Libramonte.

18 MR. LIBRAMONTE: Hi everybody. My  
19 name is Christian Libramonte. I'm here on  
20 behalf of New Yorkers for Access, as well  
21 as Gotham Government Relations.

22 Now today's hearing is about industry  
23 economics. As noted by the TLC, the  
24 for-hire industry has been expanding  
25 exponentially in such a short time.

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2 Significantly, the Commission is  
3 soliciting testimony about the effects of  
4 this growth in the industry.

5 The growth of the for-hire industry  
6 has had a horrific impact on the  
7 Medallions. One of the biggest effects of  
8 this growth is the illegal actions taken  
9 by black car drivers.

10 I have footage on this computer of  
11 mine, on video, of illegal actions taken  
12 by black car drivers, and I will show this  
13 to you really quickly.

14 CHAIR JOSHI: We can also take a copy  
15 of that. Feel free to e-mail it to us.  
16 We will make sure you get a contact in the  
17 back to do that.

18 MR. LIBRAMONTE: Okay. So, a few  
19 more things. So I like to do some points  
20 here.

21 One the price of Medallions has  
22 dropped 70 percent in spite of the TLC  
23 statutory requirements to protect taxi  
24 Medallions.

25 For-hire vehicle crashes have

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2 increased as the TLC changed rules to  
3 allow app drivers to interact with apps  
4 while driving, which is prohibited for  
5 taxi drivers.

6 Accessible cabs have increased no  
7 accessibility mandated to TLC, like taxis.  
8 Congestion in the streets has increased  
9 because of failure to perform required  
10 environmental reviews, full EIS for adding  
11 2,000 accessibly taxis in 2012.

12 Non-hybrid cars have increased.  
13 TNCs, unlike taxis, can choose whatever  
14 car they like. Safety and cab decrease  
15 (inaudible) monitors.

16 Safety in cabs has decreased,  
17 electronically monitored by taxis.

18 Illegal payoffs have increased.  
19 Illegal cab activity at the airports has  
20 increased. Driver welfare, undermined  
21 city and MTA revenue have suffered huge  
22 losses. And no accountability or  
23 regulatory scheme to track dangerous  
24 drivers.

25 Now what I want to go into was the

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2 footage I took. One was at Pier 88 on  
3 48th Street and Tenth Avenue. There were  
4 solicitors taking rides and poaching rides  
5 from taxicabs.

6 Now when I went back a second time,  
7 there was an officer enforcing the yellow  
8 cabs only. And that was perfect, because  
9 there was only yellow cabs. There was no  
10 solicitors taking rides from yellow cabs.

11 I also went to 59th Street, between  
12 Fifth and Sixth, and there were black cars  
13 lining the taxi stands. And that's not  
14 supposed to happen because it's for taxis  
15 only. So they were just there lining the  
16 whole stand, not supposed to be there at  
17 all.

18 Also, on 230th Street, off the One  
19 Train -- Two Train, actually, they have a  
20 taxi stand as well, a taxi relief stand,  
21 and that was also lined with black cars.

22 Now a police car did pass by. They  
23 talked to the drivers for a second, and  
24 then they drove off and nothing happened.

25 So those are the points I want to

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2 bring up, and thank you for your time.

3 CHAIR JOSHI: You can send us your  
4 written comments as well as the video, so  
5 the Commissioners can each -- or you can  
6 hand them in now, if you like.

7 MR. LIBRAMONTE: Yes, thank you.

8 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
9 Doucouve Mamadou, to be followed by Nina  
10 Godashi, to be followed by Debra Monte.

11 MR. MAMADOU: Good afternoon. Since  
12 I only have three minutes, let me go  
13 straight to the rules.

14 I just want to know how many members  
15 of the Commission are former taxi drivers.  
16 Is that a possible question? How many  
17 members of Commission that is a former  
18 taxi driver, ever drove before?

19 (Commissioners indicating.)

20 MR. MAMADOU: None. Okay.

21 The rules of TLC is that actually one  
22 that taxi drivers are suffering with.  
23 It's not so much of the, you know -- I'm  
24 sure there's a lot of other things about  
25 the rules.

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2 One example is that MTA fees that you  
3 post. We collect 80 cents for MTA instead  
4 of New York.

5 Our own vehicle, as independent taxi  
6 drivers, we are not allowed to charge a 20  
7 percent to collect that money to go  
8 towards the vehicle maintenance.

9 It cost us money to collect that  
10 money, why? If a passengers come in the  
11 car and pay you with the credit card,  
12 Veriphone and CFT will charge you five  
13 percent of that money. And when you give  
14 that money back to TLC, you cannot put it  
15 in a paper bag, hand it to them. They say  
16 pay it online.

17 When you pay it online, they charge  
18 you a convenience fee of three percent.  
19 So we are talking about a ten percent of  
20 your money that you're collecting free of  
21 charge, not towards your vehicle, but you  
22 have to pay ten percent to hand that money  
23 back to them.

24 That must be immediately --

25 (Applause.)

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2 MR. MAMADOU: -- that must be  
3 immediately eliminated. Allow us to  
4 collect the money direct to Veriphone,  
5 don't charge us five percent or 80 cents,  
6 and the TLC also must allow, either bring  
7 the money in the paper bag, or if we pay  
8 online, it should say zero payment percent  
9 of convenience or not. One.

10 How do we find out if your taillight  
11 is not working on the vehicle?

12 You can go to inspection. You will  
13 pass it with a taillight is not working.

14 If NYPD stop you, they give you a  
15 ticket. They say you have a 24 hours to  
16 go and fix it and come back.

17 When TLC stop you, they send (sic)  
18 you \$200. You must pay --

19 (Applause, whistling.)

20 MR. MAMADOU: -- immediately.

21 Until that cost 199 at the Autozone,  
22 most taxi drivers can check themselves.

23 So those rules are the one.

24 If I pick up someone at 96th Street  
25 to the West Side, and the same person at

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2 96 East Side -- West Side -- I say, no,  
3 no, I'm not allowed to pick up, you have  
4 to walk to 110.

5 You divide the City and the poverty  
6 lines, which means Spanish Harlem and  
7 each -- you can pick up there, or you go  
8 to West Side, where there's Columbia  
9 University.

10 So --

11 (Simultaneous speaking with  
12 applause.)

13 MR. MAMADOU: (Inaudible)

14 I mean most of us, you see we have a  
15 hard time explaining.

16 It's very important, because  
17 customers ask us, why you cannot pick me  
18 up here, you pick me up in the East Side?  
19 All we say is TLC rules. What kind of  
20 rule can you have --

21 (Timer sounding.)

22 MR. MAMADOU: Okay.

23 CHAIR JOSHI: It is a rule, it's a  
24 state law called the Hail Act, that is  
25 signed by the governor in 2012.



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2 (Simultaneous speaking.)

3 MR. MAMADOU: It's not the governor.

4 CHAIR JOSHI: For the green taxis?

5 MR. MAMADOU: Yes, I know. It's  
6 signed by the governor, but we have a lot  
7 of problems explaining to people, because  
8 we cannot tell the same person we take  
9 away, why we cannot pick you up in the  
10 east the same --

11 CHAIR JOSHI: Right. And what I  
12 would like to do, then, is for, also, our  
13 External Affairs Team to talk to you,  
14 because we do some work out in those  
15 neighborhoods, explaining what the green  
16 taxis can do and can't do, and it would be  
17 helpful to get your input so we can  
18 improve that.

19 MR. MAMADOU: I would love to do  
20 that. And, you know, if you look at most  
21 of the rules again, they allow you to pick  
22 up Queens, but if you go in the airport  
23 you must walk outside to go pick up  
24 elsewhere.

25 So who's actually the one that

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2 costing taxi industry?

3 Remember, 150,000 -- I'm leaving.

4 I'm leaving.

5 CHAIR JOSHI: Yes.

6 (Simultaneous speaking.)

7 MR. MAMADOU: -- taxi licenses, they  
8 are not driving.

9 MR. WILSON: The next speaker --

10 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

11 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is Nina  
12 Godashi, to be followed by Steven Savader,  
13 to be followed by Nancy Reynoso.

14 MS. GODASHI: Hi, Commissioners.

15 Good morning.

16 (Simultaneous speaking.)

17 CHAIR JOSHI: Quiet, please. Quiet.

18 MS. GODASHI: I am a yellow taxi  
19 driver. And you heard everybody, all the  
20 yellow cabs complaining, they are not  
21 making money, we are not making enough.  
22 We cannot pay the mortgage. We have  
23 problems in the house with the kids, with  
24 everybody. We have a big problem. And  
25 nobody is helping us. Nobody.

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2 Like you heard a lot of people, they  
3 losing the Medallion, they losing the  
4 money, and this has to stop. And Uber is  
5 making everybody slaves. I knew it one  
6 day it's going to come this day. When I  
7 start this job, when Uber came out,  
8 everybody was happy, because they were  
9 thinking they were going to make a lot of  
10 money.

11 (Applause).

12 MS. GODASHI: But today, after five  
13 years, you see these people, they not even  
14 talk to you, they are so mad, all of them,  
15 because none of them is making money  
16 today. And worse days is coming.

17 Now it's the beginning, but the worse  
18 days, as more drivers is coming in this  
19 business, low income they going to make.  
20 And you can see that. Everybody can see  
21 that and can feel it today.

22 But you are here to help us, and  
23 someone has to stop this. The streets in  
24 Manhattan is getting like parking lots.  
25 It's getting dangerous for emergency

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2 vehicles, for the police. Nobody can  
3 drive.

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. GODASH: And everybody know, all  
6 these drivers that are sitting here today,  
7 they know that, and they feel every day.  
8 We're like slaves sitting over there for  
9 12 hours in the streets and not making  
10 money enough to pay our mortgage and  
11 whatever we have to do.

12 So you are here to help us. You have  
13 to do something and stop that. You have  
14 to stop these people getting blood from  
15 this drivers, even they are Uber or  
16 whatever they are, doesn't matter.

17 (Applause.)

18 MS. GODASHI: They taking the money.  
19 I work. I start working. I said, let me  
20 switch from the yellow to the Uber. I  
21 want to work for them. And I was making  
22 worse than the yellow. Everybody was  
23 saying that yellow is not good. Today  
24 they have the different opinion, because  
25 the yellow is much better than them.

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2 They getting your money, they steal  
3 your money. I realize that. I had a fare  
4 I sold the lady, \$58 in her phone. She  
5 show me the phone. And they -- they keep  
6 the 36 percent, whatever, 25 percent. And  
7 then text to them, I said: Excuse me.  
8 You give me \$25, \$30 for this fare. And I  
9 saw. So I text to them and I said, this  
10 is not fair. So they give me \$10 back.

11 My son is driving Uber today to pay  
12 his college, because I cannot afford to  
13 help him any more. So he's driving the  
14 same. He's doing the same. They taking  
15 his money.

16 Plenty time he has to text them to  
17 get \$10 more back. Like they call --  
18 how -- like they give you money back,  
19 like --

20 CHAIR JOSHI: Rebate.

21 MS. GODASHI: That's not fair.  
22 You're stealing my money and you give it  
23 to me, the money back, after ten days,  
24 when I text you.

25 So someone has to stop, to do

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2 something in this. Everybody is going  
3 down. The business is going down.

4 (Timer sounding.)

5 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much for  
6 your --

7 MS. GODASHI: Thank you.

8 CHAIR JOSHI: -- testimony.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
11 Steven Savader, to be followed by Nancy  
12 Reynoso, to be followed by Syed Mantar.

13 CHAIR JOSHI: And I just want to say  
14 the time -- the time now is 12:26. We  
15 will take a break at 1:00 o'clock for 45  
16 minutes, but 45 minutes only, and resume  
17 at 1:45.

18 MR. SAVADER: Good morning, TLC. As  
19 a TLC driver, I wanted -- I want some  
20 information because I'm a little nervous.  
21 I'm complaining about the industry in  
22 general. I could say, when they first  
23 started Uber and other taxi-based apps, I  
24 was making okay money. Now it's less,  
25 it's much less, and all of us drivers are

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2 saying the same thing.

3 Because of Uber and other apps like  
4 that, it made us earn less money. We earn  
5 minimum wage and less minimum wage in the  
6 City, other apps, and other cities as  
7 well.

8 I have submitted to you guys proof  
9 that the we are making less than minimum  
10 wage, factoring expenses. It's tough to  
11 drive. And we're providing a public  
12 service, but we're not treated as such.

13 My experiences from this, it is  
14 really hard for me and providing for  
15 myself and my family as well.

16 I did some research, and you guys  
17 have a Medallion cap. I don't know if you  
18 can put a cap on for-hire, but that would  
19 be a very good start.

20 Taxi and TLC apps like Uber, Lyft,  
21 whatever you call it, doesn't matter, they  
22 treat us bad, and Uber was the start of  
23 it, to blame.

24 I have gotten to the point where  
25 people -- I talk to drivers, other

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2 drivers, they can't apply for Medicaid,  
3 driving. That doesn't seem right. Why  
4 should I be able to get government help to  
5 drive, to make very little income? It  
6 just makes no sense.

7 Multiple drivers have told me they  
8 could apply for Medicaid, and show me they  
9 have a Medicaid card, working. What the  
10 heck is going on?

11 I should be able to make a decent  
12 income, pay my taxes and make a living. I  
13 don't know why I can't any more. It's  
14 really tough.

15 Because of the -- all the drivers in  
16 the industry, hundreds of thousands of  
17 drivers that are coming on board, Uber  
18 wants your grandma, your grandpa to drive,  
19 your friend to drive. They don't care.  
20 They just want to put more drivers on the  
21 street.

22 The congestion report in New York  
23 City about leasecap, the industry. The  
24 (inaudible) proposed a 250 net income, not  
25 counting all fees, tipping and stuff,



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2 that's a good start; perhaps even going  
3 further to regulate fares -- you guys make  
4 a taxi app for the City. Maybe that would  
5 be a good idea, something that could  
6 regulate complaints like this, because we  
7 have a lot of complaints.

8 Thank you so much, guys.

9 (Applause.)

10 CHAIR JOSHI: And we do have people  
11 in the back, so if you have specific  
12 financial points that you can share with  
13 us, that would be extremely helpful for us  
14 understanding the issues you're facing.

15 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
16 Nancy Reynoso, to be followed by Syed  
17 Mantar, to be followed by Rafael Rosenio.

18 MS. REYNOSO: Good afternoon,  
19 Commissioners. Hi. My name is Nancy  
20 Reynoso. I am a TLC licensee for eight  
21 years, and a borough taxi for four years,  
22 proudly.

23 My concern is how can we make at  
24 least my industry, the one I represent,  
25 borough taxi, thrive?

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2 We became owners after learning that  
3 as a green cab because we street-hailed  
4 legally in areas that were already  
5 underserved, and serve in legal ways.

6 Also a chance to hopefully have an  
7 investment for the future, sometime along  
8 the way, something that has almost  
9 demolished for all of us.

10 While many of us put our savings,  
11 others took out loans towards this new  
12 initiative.

13 And the first 18 to 20 months were  
14 the most productful (sic). That the slow  
15 introduction of TNC's limits, we started  
16 feeling the difference. Our incomes were  
17 reduced -- or are reduced while the FHV  
18 industry grows at astonishing rates. With  
19 this lack of enforcing the rules on behalf  
20 of the TLC, illegal street-hails have also  
21 grown in proportion with the influx of  
22 these new vehicles.

23 I ask all of you to find a solution  
24 for the many men and women who are trying  
25 hard to survive as borough taxi drivers.

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2 How many more TLC licensed vehicles do we  
3 actually need in New York City?

4 Also, I suggest a balanced equal  
5 system in pricing. The pricing should be  
6 all or for none. They should end the  
7 undercutting of other segments of the  
8 industry, letting passengers pick their  
9 preference in car service, and not by  
10 pricing. This I ask not own in my name,  
11 but for all my green taxi drivers and  
12 owners.

13 Thank you.

14 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

15 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

16 The next speaker is Syed Mantar, to  
17 be followed by Rafael Rosenio, and a  
18 speaker who gave only his last name,  
19 Mr. Rahman could you identify who you are.

20 MR. MANTAR: My first question is --  
21 I know it's very strange question to you  
22 guys, TLC Department: Does anyone in TLC  
23 Department has any investment or shares in  
24 Uber, Lyft or any ride-share company?

25 (Applause.)

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2 MR. MANTAR: The reason is, why I'm  
3 asking this question, Uber is charging  
4 high Commission, very low fares for  
5 drivers. Uber is stealing drivers' money,  
6 as everybody said that -- money by  
7 charging different prices to the  
8 passengers and paying low price to the  
9 driver, which is very true.

10 Uber pool is not Uber pool; it's like  
11 Uber poop for us.

12 (Laughter/applause.)

13 MR. MANTAR: I give you one example.  
14 I pick a passengers from Brooklyn to  
15 Manhattan. I asked my passenger, how much  
16 you paying -- how much the Uber charging  
17 you?

18 He said, \$2.99.

19 Imagine how much Uber drivers are  
20 suffering with this low fares, \$2.99 from  
21 Brooklyn to Manhattan, Uber pool. That's  
22 why I said Uber poop.

23 I said it's more than slavery going  
24 on in this industry. Drivers need inquiry  
25 about it. Please do it.

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2 And my second question is -- I mean  
3 the third one is: Since Mario Cuomo,  
4 Albany, passed the legislation in anyone  
5 in -- anyone in Westchester, upstate, Long  
6 Island, the drivers can drive their  
7 private cars. Today they are -- they are  
8 in our neighbor, tomorrow they're going to  
9 be in City. My question is: What  
10 precaution TLC Department taking about it?

11 Thank you so much.

12 CHAIR JOSHI: Can I ask you a  
13 question about -- you mentioned something  
14 about a passenger fare being different  
15 than a driver share.

16 MR. MANTAR: Right.

17 CHAIR JOSHI: And prior to this  
18 hearing we were sent some examples of  
19 instances where the driver's fare is  
20 different than the passenger's fare. So  
21 can you just tell me a little about your  
22 experience, and whether -- which one is  
23 more, which one is less, and what are the  
24 taxes based on, and what is the Commission  
25 taken out of?

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2 MR. MANTAR: Okay. Thanks for asking  
3 this.

4 I picked one passengers from the JFK  
5 and I took to the Newark Airport, and I  
6 asked the passenger: How much Uber charge  
7 you?

8 She said: Uber charge \$127.

9 I said: Can you show me?

10 She show me, and I took the picture.  
11 Can I take picture?

12 I did take the picture, and it was  
13 \$127.

14 What I get paid from when I check my,  
15 what you call, the amount, it was \$59,  
16 which is including bridge and the tunnel,  
17 Holland Tunnel.

18 CHAIR JOSHI: So that's adding those  
19 tolls back into your pay?

20 MR. MANTAR: Yeah, was \$59, including  
21 toll in my fare.

22 CHAIR JOSHI: So those tolls add up  
23 to 20-some dollars?

24 MR. MANTAR: Yeah, about \$20 and  
25 change.

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2 CHAIR JOSHI: So minus those tolls,  
3 you're talking about \$39 --

4 MR. MANTAR: Exactly.

5 CHAIR JOSHI: -- conservatively.

6 MR. MANTAR: Exactly, out of \$127.

7 And the other day I pick up -- if she  
8 would have Uber pool from --

9 CHAIR JOSHI: Do you know what the  
10 total -- what your total that they were --  
11 that deductions were taken out of on your  
12 side?

13 Because the examples we got, the  
14 passenger paid say 127, but the driver's  
15 total earnings are a smaller amount, say  
16 \$90, and then the deductions are taken  
17 from that \$90.

18 MR. MANTAR: Yeah, after deduction,  
19 what I got, \$59.

20 CHAIR JOSHI: So \$59 was the total,  
21 and then taxes were taken out of that?

22 MR. MANTAR: Exactly.

23 CHAIR JOSHI: And the Commission was  
24 taken out of that?

25 MR. MANTAR: That's true.

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2 CHAIR JOSHI: So there was a  
3 difference between \$59 and \$127.

4 MR. MANTAR: -- and 27 dollars, big  
5 difference. Exactly.

6 And the other day there was JFK,  
7 actually picked up JFK pool, anyone you  
8 want to pick up JFK pool, they charge \$35  
9 for each passenger.

10 I pick up three passenger, three  
11 pools, and I drove one in Brooklyn and two  
12 in Manhattan. I ask each of them. They  
13 charge \$35. What I got after pay off all  
14 my Commission and everything, I got paid  
15 off \$39 out of \$105.

16 (Simultaneous speaking from  
17 audience.)

18 MR. MANTAR: And I tell you one  
19 thing. I understand you talking about  
20 there's not the TLC jobs to get on the  
21 number --

22 CHAIR JOSHI: It's not that it's not  
23 our job. We have a certain amount of  
24 legal jurisdiction, and it's a state law  
25 that says either a state entity or City



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2 Council is allowed to cap the number of  
3 licensed vehicles.

4 MR. MANTAR: I got that point.

5 But what TLC can do is to cap on the  
6 TLC license on it itself. The more you  
7 give the license, the more they going to  
8 drive with the company.

9 I'm not against all the ride-share  
10 company, but it has to be doing something  
11 about it, because they are abusing and  
12 they are using us as a slave. It's modern  
13 slavey.

14 CHAIR JOSHI: What I would like is,  
15 so we can get to the next person, if you  
16 don't mind meeting with someone -- if have  
17 you some more information on the  
18 difference between the driver and  
19 passenger fare, that's something we would  
20 like to look into.

21 MR. MANTAR: Yes. No problem.

22 CHAIR JOSHI: And anybody else who  
23 has those types of examples, there's  
24 people in the back with polo shirts. If  
25 you could share them with us, that would

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2 be helpful.

3 MR. MANTAR: All right. Thank you so  
4 much, Commissioner and everyone. Have a  
5 nice day.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

8 The next speaker is Rafael Rosenio,  
9 to be followed by Mr. Rahman from GETT, to  
10 be followed by Edith Prentiss.

11 MR. ROSENIO (through interpreter):  
12 Good morning. I drive a green cab in New  
13 York. Good morning, Commissioners of Taxi  
14 and Limousine Commission of New York.  
15 Good morning, taxi drivers and the public.

16 My name is Rafael Rosenio from the  
17 Green Taxi of New York. This is a group  
18 that was made by drivers for green taxis  
19 of New York. This group feels that Green  
20 Taxi of New York has not met their  
21 requirements, because we feel like the  
22 Taxi and Limousine does not support us in  
23 what we were promised.

24 We have the rights to street hail as  
25 green taxis in the streets, but we're not

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2 being able to do so. They insult us and  
3 they accuse us and they turn against us  
4 just for trying to do our jobs with  
5 dignity and sacrifice.

6 With all due respect, we like to  
7 demand that we get our rights as well as  
8 the green cab drivers, and support us. We  
9 pay for permit that is really costly, but  
10 the benefits of it is low compared to what  
11 we pay for the permits.

12 Thank you.

13 CHAIR JOSHI: I just want to make  
14 sure I understand. One of your primary  
15 points was enforcement, so that's  
16 competition with illegal street-hails?

17 THE INTERPRETER: Correct.

18 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

19 And there are some people in the back  
20 that I would like you to speak to, if you  
21 can, to give us some specific areas of  
22 concern.

23 MR. ROSENIO: Thank you.

24 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

25 The next speaker will be Mr. Rahman,

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2 who works for GETT.

3 He's not here?

4 The next speaker is Edith Prentiss  
5 from Taxis for All, to be followed by Atta  
6 Syed and Hildu Wolf.

7 MS. PRENTISS: Hi. My name is Edith  
8 Prentiss. I'm the chair of the Taxis for  
9 All campaign.

10 I'd like to say first of all, the  
11 problem with enforcement is a major issue.  
12 I've been in Washington Heights for almost  
13 40 years, and every time I've testified on  
14 this topic, I've pointed it out. I know  
15 of only two occasions when I saw TLC  
16 inspectors in the Heights, one being the  
17 187th Street Triangle between Dabriny  
18 (phonetic) and whatever, all the way over  
19 on the West Side, where drivers were  
20 eating lunch at the lower park; and  
21 secondly at the GW Bridge before you put  
22 up signs for the taxis.

23 What's going to come back after the  
24 reconstruction will be a surprise to  
25 everyone.

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2 The issue for the disability  
3 community is very concerning in the number  
4 of green waves that have come off, how  
5 we've lost this number of green waves,  
6 because the bottom line is Central  
7 Dispatch will not function if we continue  
8 to lose green waves.

9 When you start talking about serving  
10 all five boroughs, both in and out of  
11 Manhattan, it hearkens back to those of us  
12 are old enough, the Ride for All, which  
13 had, at various time, between three and  
14 five vehicles, and did supposedly serve  
15 the five boroughs, and did not.

16 You would call for a trip: "Oh, we  
17 can give you one tomorrow."

18 "Well, I don't need the trip  
19 tomorrow. I need it today."

20 And I think many of us who are of  
21 that generation are very concerning (sic).

22 You know, the issue about  
23 enforcement, which many people have spoken  
24 about, has never been addressed. Never.  
25 I mean, we are used to street liveries,

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2 and now the Ubers doing exactly the same  
3 thing. They ride down the street beeping  
4 their horns at every corner.

5 Come on. This is ridiculous. Why  
6 are they allowed to do that?

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: It's everybody.

8 MS. PRENTISS: Yes, it's everybody,  
9 even without plates.

10 Thank you very much.

11 (Applause.)

12 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

13 MR. WILSON: Thank you. The next  
14 speaker is Atta Syed, followed by Hildu  
15 Wolf, followed by Eric Gyasi.

16 (No response.)

17 MR. WILSON: Ms. Atta Syed is not  
18 here.

19 Hildu Wolf.

20 MS. WOLF: Hi, good afternoon. My  
21 name is Hildu Wolf. I represent and work  
22 for 450 green SHL WAV vehicles that were  
23 in distress over a year ago. They were  
24 off the road or they were on the road with  
25 tremendous fines and violations due to

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2 very bad mismanagement from the management  
3 company that is now defunct.

4 With TLC's help over a year ago, we  
5 very slowly were asked: Please, put these  
6 vehicles back on the road.

7 The investors who own these vehicles  
8 are outside investors. They are not  
9 owner/operators. They are businessmen who  
10 wanted to invest and believed that they  
11 could, A, make a nice passive income from  
12 this to -- you know, and they wanted to  
13 also help, with a very interesting kind  
14 of endeavor, where you can also actually  
15 be charitable at the same time.

16 We put the cars back on the road,  
17 most of them, about 300, back in  
18 September. I got them all new plates. We  
19 paid off fines, violations, tips. We had  
20 a tremendous help from the Licensing  
21 Department, and I'll thank them at the end  
22 of my little speech here.

23 Six months later, unfortunately,  
24 almost all my vehicle owners have told me  
25 that we now have to take the cars off the

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2 road. And most of these cars are now  
3 sitting in an underground lot in Linden  
4 Boulevard and Brooklyn, beautiful cars,  
5 brand new, 2015s, 2016s, under, you know,  
6 new cars, what you call new vehicles,  
7 under a thousand vehicles.

8 The ones that are on the road, a lot  
9 of them are no longer eligible for the  
10 grants, because we put these cars, at  
11 first inspection, in the latter part of  
12 2016. You changed the grant program, you  
13 increased it. It was wonderful.

14 However, you said that any vehicle  
15 that's over a thousand miles can no longer  
16 get a grant, not even the \$10,000, which  
17 had -- you know, which was in the old  
18 grant program.

19 So my cars that came in the latter  
20 part of 2016, when they go to inspection,  
21 for those inspections, which was in  
22 February, March, April, May, they don't  
23 even own their permits. At the time when  
24 they came in, they didn't have to own  
25 their permits.



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2 So I would have to transfer their  
3 permits and get that done so that they can  
4 get actually their grants. But we don't  
5 have time for that.

6 In fact, in five weeks, in the month  
7 of February, you couldn't even get in a  
8 grant application.

9 But also, the economics of really  
10 driving or keeping these cars on the road  
11 just does not work, between insurance,  
12 full coverage, which includes comp and  
13 collision, liability -- liability, which  
14 is only --

15 (Timer sounding.)

16 MS. WOLF: I'm sorry.

17 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

18 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

19 The next speaker is Eric Gyasi,  
20 followed by Roger Portella, followed by  
21 Jose Aguagallo.

22 Mr. GYASI: Good afternoon. Thank  
23 you for having me.

24 I think at the end of the day the  
25 reason why these green taxis aren't doing

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2 very well is it's not a level playing  
3 field.

4 Many people have talked about the  
5 difference between Uber and the green  
6 taxis. I would like to point out five  
7 specific areas in which it's not a level  
8 playing field.

9 First, with respect to TLC paperwork,  
10 as a stands now green taxis have a higher  
11 inspection burden than the Uber taxis do.  
12 So I'm a green taxi owner. My guys have  
13 to take their cars in twice yearly; Uber  
14 guys, once a year.

15 And everyone in here knows, once you  
16 go in for an inspection, they'll find one  
17 thing or another, such as a taillight, the  
18 trunk of the car, which puts the car out  
19 of Commission for a day or two to be  
20 corrected.

21 Also, there's a lack of communication  
22 at the TLC office. You'll have a car go  
23 to (inaudible), it will pass inspection,  
24 and you'll show up at the LIC TLC office,  
25 and yet you will be told: Actually, your

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2 license -- your car is suspended.

3 And they'll say, "Well, we haven't  
4 heard from Woodside," and as a matter of  
5 fact, Woodside system and the TLC system  
6 doesn't actually talk to one another.

7 So you even, as the owner or the  
8 driver, to go down to the Woodside and  
9 then pick up paperwork, which may or may  
10 not be given to you, to prove that, in  
11 fact, your car has passed inspection.

12 The next point is also with respect  
13 to pricing. The economics of the green  
14 taxi is quite difficult. As it stands  
15 now, Uber can have the best of both  
16 worlds.

17 On days like today, when it's raining  
18 or it's poor weather, they can surge  
19 price. So then they are making more money  
20 by charging the customer or consumer more  
21 for rides on a rainy day.

22 As a green taxi owner, you can't.  
23 You are on the meter. So you can only  
24 charge one set fare every single day. So  
25 on a day like today, you lose out on the

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2 upside.

3 However, Uber then can also undercut  
4 the market. So with products like Uber  
5 pool, with Uber special airport fares,  
6 they can -- a rider can pay \$32 to get  
7 from Central District Manhattan to JFK.  
8 That same trip, either from an outer  
9 borough or from a yellow taxi, would cost  
10 you \$52.

11 So, frankly, why would a consumer pay  
12 money for either a yellow or a green in  
13 that context? The fact that Uber's  
14 pricing is controlled by them, as a  
15 private actor, while greens and yellows  
16 are stuck to the meter, is another reason  
17 why there's a vast difference between the  
18 two programs.

19 Finally, with respect to the  
20 wheelchair and the Uber pool requirements,  
21 green taxis, we have to have a wheelchair,  
22 because we're mandated by the state to  
23 have 50 percent wheelchair accessible  
24 fleet. So we as the owners have put the  
25 money and the time into creating these

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2 fleets.

3 However, you turn around with a  
4 minivan -- I have Dodge Grand Caravans,  
5 and my drivers can't do an Uber pool. But  
6 once again, an Uber driver can turn around  
7 and take that same car and take more than  
8 one or two passengers, once again creating  
9 an economic disincentive to be in the  
10 green taxi business.

11 The other point I bring up very  
12 quickly -- with 20 seconds left -- is also  
13 on insurance. There's again a difference  
14 between what a Uber driver has to pay for  
15 insurance and what a green taxi WAV owner  
16 has to pay for insurance.

17 These points -- pricing, coverage,  
18 insurance, taken together, leaves it  
19 economically not viable to run the green  
20 taxi business, notwithstanding --

21 (Timer sounds.)

22 MR. GYASI: -- what the government  
23 would love for us to do.

24 Thank you.

25 (Applause.)

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2 MS. MARINO: Are your comments  
3 written?

4 MR. GYASI: What's that?

5 MS. MARINO: Are your comments  
6 written down?

7 MR. GYASI: No. These are just my  
8 notes.

9 CHAIR JOSHI: But if you can, to get  
10 some e-mail contact, if you can e-mail  
11 them to us and we will make sure all the  
12 Commissioners get them.

13 MR. GYASI: Very well.

14 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

15 MR. GYASI: Thank you. Appreciate  
16 it.

17 MS. MARINO: And what was your name?

18 MR. GYASI: My name is Eric, Eric  
19 Gyasi.

20 MR. WILSON: Thank you very much.

21 MR. GYASI: Thank you.

22 MR. WILSON: And the next speaker is  
23 Roger Portella, followed by Jose  
24 Aguagallo, followed by Muhammad Nawar.

25 MR. PORTELLA: I work for Uber, but

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2 before Uber I used to own a base. I sold  
3 the license to Uber. Since then, I work  
4 for Uber. So far it's two years and a  
5 half.

6 In two hears and a half, the first  
7 year was good. The second year is bad.  
8 And this next half year is getting  
9 garbage --

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. PORTELLA: -- getting worse and  
12 worse.

13 Whatever the drivers trying to  
14 explain, is very hard to explain. But  
15 basically we're going to tell something  
16 about you guys.

17 With Uber, a big corporation, make a  
18 lot of money. The second company who make  
19 a lot of money from us is Taxi & Limousine  
20 Commission, because the 150,000 --

21 (Applause.)

22 MR. PORTELLA: -- 150,000 drivers,  
23 plus 100 cars -- 100,000 cars, all those  
24 people is paying for these light, for this  
25 office, and we paying you salary, and you

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2 guys are not doing nothing.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. PORTELLA: Let me explain to you  
5 why. TLC milking and the drivers. All  
6 the City is no standing, no parking. When  
7 TLC inspector come, they stop you, they  
8 give you ticket.

9 Who has to pay? The driver.

10 The police, NYPD, any mistake, NYPD  
11 give you a ticket.

12 They all think you don't speak  
13 English. But when some American, who has  
14 police car, they show they speak good  
15 English, they get away with tickets. But  
16 the stupid immigrant who doesn't speak  
17 English, they get a ticket. That money  
18 goes to New York City.

19 The next milking, milking on the  
20 driver. Okay. We're talking TLC traffic  
21 agents. The things -- all the streets say  
22 no parking, no standing. You stay in some  
23 place waiting for passenger.

24 At the inspec- -- and I call them  
25 strident animals. They are



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2 animals strident by New York City. They  
3 stand behind the car. They took your  
4 plate. After 30 days, you get ticket, not  
5 to Broadway show. You have to pay \$115.

6 And that's you guys is milking in the  
7 drivers. And now what? What is the last?  
8 The last thing was milking is those  
9 arrogant and selfish New Yorkers. Because  
10 any mistake when the driver make, they  
11 complain.

12 When they complain, what happen with  
13 Uber? You go in the pothole and the  
14 stupid -- the rider complain about the  
15 driver went to the pothole, whatever,  
16 blah, blah, blah, and they claim the money  
17 back.

18 (Timer sounding.)

19 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much for  
20 your testimony.

21 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is Jose  
22 Aguagallo, followed by Muhammad Nawar,  
23 followed by Chris Demergis.

24 MR. AGUAGALLO: Hi. Good afternoon.  
25 Commissioners. My name is Jose Aguagallo.

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2 Members and other drivers.

3 A couple points, hopefully, can help  
4 us. We start with the wheelchair  
5 accessible situation, which really is  
6 destroying the industry and myself. As  
7 you know, TLC forced the regular owners to  
8 become wheelchair accessible vehicles.

9 So the same we have with the existing  
10 wheelchair vehicles, where we, as a  
11 wheelchair vehicles, we are happy to serve  
12 the wheelchair community, unlike the  
13 companies like Uber, Lyft, they give a  
14 damn, the community.

15 But we as owners of the -- have  
16 become wheelchair Medallions, have been  
17 punished by your Commission. And very  
18 hard to make payments, and all expenses  
19 that come with this. And that costs  
20 hundreds of Medallions, wheelchair  
21 Medallions. And you know that. They're  
22 in your shelves, TLC shelf.

23 And there you go. With those  
24 Medallions, burning the retirements of  
25 many peoples, my own retirement, which I

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2 worked so hard for it, and the American  
3 dream.

4 My suggestion is very simple. As you  
5 had the power to change (inaudible)  
6 Medallion to a wheelchair Medallion, you  
7 should also exercise the power to put the  
8 drivers, regular drivers, to drive  
9 wheelchair Medallions. Put in your time.  
10 That has to be forever.

11 You put us to hold four years in  
12 wheelchair vehicle, so at the same time  
13 you have the power to change and put all  
14 the drivers, every driver, that has a TLC  
15 license should be able to drive  
16 wheelchair. I don't know why you can't  
17 solve that problem.

18 Also, this meeting I think is very  
19 important to express our situations and  
20 our problems, but I think why not every  
21 year? Why two years? By the time you  
22 made it two years, lives is being  
23 destroyed, dream is being burned, while  
24 Uber is boasting \$60 billion profits.

25 You allowed it to change, all the

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2 hard money, hard-working money that we pay  
3 for those licenses and Medallions, to  
4 burn, and benefits of Uber and other  
5 companies.

6 And so many ways, help them with  
7 insurance, either. We have to help them  
8 we (inaudible) the insurance (inaudible).

9 The vehicles, or black vehicles for  
10 hire because they have two shifts. And I  
11 don't know if you have a mechanism to  
12 check --

13 (Timer sounding.)

14 MR. AGUAGALLO: -- if they are forced  
15 to have also Workers' Compensation.

16 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you for your  
17 testimony.

18 MR. AGUAGALLO: Thank you.

19 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

20 The next speaker is Muhammad Nawar.  
21 And following Mr. Nawar there will be  
22 Chris Demergis and Brad Gerstman.

23 (Simultaneous speaking.)

24 CHAIR JOSHI: After Mr. Nawar, we're  
25 going to take a break for 45 minutes, and

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2 then we will start again with the speakers  
3 list.

4 MR. NAWAR: Hi. My name is Muhammad  
5 Nawar, and I drive yellow cab like three  
6 years.

7 And like six months back I pass  
8 through the toll plaza, and something was  
9 wrong with my EZ-Pass. And they took my  
10 EZ-Pass and they gave me new EZ-Pass after  
11 one week. In that time, I went and I pay  
12 cash, and like six times.

13 So TLC give me letter that: Give us  
14 \$1,200, because you charged \$8.

15 I said to them that they took my  
16 EZ-Pass.

17 And they said to me: Okay, go to the  
18 judge(inaudible). You did nothing. So  
19 you take \$8, if you pay \$8 cash, everybody  
20 knows that.

21 And the judge said to me: You have  
22 to pay \$600 and you get your license back  
23 after three years.

24 CHAIR JOSHI: I would like you to  
25 speak to someone in the back about the

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2 specifics.

3 MR. NAWAR: You listen to how much we  
4 make. We make \$600. I even don't have  
5 \$500 to pay.

6 My wife and my daughter is with me.  
7 You want to see my phone, my landlord is  
8 telling me, "Give me \$1,500."

9 CHAIR JOSHI: I would like to learn  
10 more about your case, and we have members  
11 in --

12 (Simultaneous speaking.)

13 MR. NAWAR: -- fine me for this,  
14 because I don't have my EZ-Pass on me,  
15 what you (inaudible) toll plaza? This is  
16 not fair.

17 CHAIR JOSHI: What you've said is  
18 disturbing. So I want to --

19 MR. NAWAR: Give me one, two, three  
20 hundred dollar fine, I pay. But how I can  
21 pay \$600?

22 And everybody know it's \$8 toll,  
23 people are not mad. In fact, I'm taking  
24 one dollar more from someone else.

25 This is ridiculous. Please give me

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2 my license back, and please remove this.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

5 And before we break for lunch, I just  
6 want to say who the next three speakers  
7 are, and ask them to be back promptly at  
8 1:45, so that we can commence and get  
9 through the list.

10 The next three speakers are Chris  
11 Demergis, Brad Gertsman and Michael  
12 Rosner.

13 (Whereupon, a break was taken from  
14 1:00 p.m. to 1:48 p.m.)

15 CHAIR JOSHI: The time now is 1:48,  
16 and we're going to resume our hearing.

17 Commissioner Jiha and Commissioner  
18 Aguado were not able to stay for the  
19 afternoon. I thank Commissioner Marino  
20 and Commissioner Polanco who are able to  
21 stay.

22 I have asked a few members of the  
23 senior staff to also sit on the dais, so  
24 we make sure that everybody hears your  
25 comments. So we're being joined by Deputy

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2 Commissioner Valdivia, Assistant

3 Commissioner Stiles, and Deputy General

4 Counsel Wanttaja.

5 MR. WILSON: So the first speaker is

6 Chris Demergis, to be followed by Brad

7 Gerstman and Michael Rosner.

8 MR. DEMERGIS: Good afternoon,

9 Commissioners. My name is Chris Demergis.

10 I am the president of All City Corporate

11 Transportation, Incorporated. We are a

12 black car company. We're a cooperative.

13 We were awarded, a couple years ago,

14 by the City of New York, as perhaps the

15 first one, as being an MBE, minority

16 business enterprise, owned and operated

17 entity.

18 All these years in the business,

19 since 1992, since I came out of the

20 Persian Gulf War, serving the United

21 States Armed Forces (inaudible) and coming

22 to this business, driving, working with

23 the yellow cab driver, buying my own

24 Medallion, to this day I still own the

25 Medallion. Believe it or not, I still



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2 drive it once a month, just to see what's  
3 going on out there on the streets.

4 And I never hear anything about  
5 supporting our vets, and maybe the TLC  
6 creating some kind of a discounted program  
7 for veterans to get licensing for the  
8 discounted program. I don't know if any  
9 of you have ever served in combat or in  
10 wartime, but coming back home, the  
11 veterans need support from every angle  
12 they can get.

13 Additionally, we, as being certified  
14 as a minority business enterprise by the  
15 City of New York, supposedly that would  
16 help us to get contracts through private  
17 entities and through the City of New York.  
18 I don't see anything on the TLC side to  
19 actually mention things like this, or to  
20 try to help us or to create a program to  
21 help us even further. Basically it  
22 becomes a piece of paper hanging on the  
23 wall.

24 About enforcement, enforcement,  
25 everybody here is talking about

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2 enforcement. If you don't go on the  
3 streets to know what's going on, you  
4 cannot see what's going on. Okay?

5 The other companies, the TNC  
6 companies, they drive down the streets  
7 with their little lights, with the huge --  
8 the big (inaudible) lit up at night like  
9 flashlights. Okay?

10 The only thing that I am supposed to  
11 have (inaudible) shining is a roof light,  
12 or in a yellow cab or in a green cab.  
13 They drive down, put it in the middle of  
14 the windshield. Yet everybody is  
15 concerned about, oh, safety.

16 I think that decal being lit at night  
17 is an invitation -- because I see it with  
18 my own eyes -- hailing with your hand,  
19 getting in, then doing the app. Okay?

20 So, in essence, it doesn't become any  
21 more an electronic hailing system. It  
22 becomes, "Hey, there's an Uber. Let me  
23 open the door. Hey, how are you?" Click,  
24 I do the app, I get in the car, close the  
25 car, this is me inside the car. There I

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2 go. Okay?

3 So there's a lot of things here to be  
4 considered, respectfully so.

5 We're also members of the BCAC.

6 Commissioner, you've been -- I've seen you  
7 many times in our meetings, the BCAC. You  
8 come there, respectfully, you give great  
9 speeches, and we have all kinds of  
10 concerns. Okay?

11 I came here today just to say a  
12 couple of words, and that's it. Have a  
13 nice day.

14 (Applause.)

15 CHAIR JOSHI: I also just want to  
16 mention, we do have a program for vets who  
17 want to get licensed. And if you talk to  
18 somebody in the back we can give you more  
19 details on that, as well as any other  
20 thoughts you have that would help vets  
21 that are interested in getting into the  
22 taxi business.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. DEMERGIS: Enforcement is the  
25 key.

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2 MS. MARINO: I'd like to say thank  
3 you for your service.

4 MR. DEMERGIS: Thank you.

5 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

6 The next speaker is Brad Gerstman, to  
7 be followed by Michael Rosner and to be  
8 followed by Alan Sapoznik.

9 Mr. Gerstman is not here. Okay.  
10 Michael Rosner.

11 MR. ROSNER: And It's Michael.

12 MR. WILSON: Michael.

13 MR. ROSNER: I'm not a minority, you  
14 know, just to let you know.

15 Let me know when the time starts,  
16 I'll just stop at three minutes. You guys  
17 tell me when.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When the green  
19 light comes on, it starts.

20 MR. ROSNER: Okay. Great.

21 How are you guys doing? Thanks for  
22 seeing me, hard-working people.

23 (Applause.)

24 MR. ROSNER: I'm probably the last  
25 person who should be up here because I'm

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2 three and a half weeks into this industry.

3 I have an insurance license. I was a  
4 business owner for ten years, stock  
5 broker, real estate, IT recruiting. Okay?

6 So I say to you this: How did you  
7 let a company like Uber into this city?

8 And I work for them. It's the most  
9 disgusting, disgraceful, inhumane company  
10 I've ever seen in my life.

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. ROSNER: They rob and steal,  
13 38 percent. The fares are insane.  
14 Entitled riders walk in, walk out, don't  
15 have respect to leave a dollar, all right?  
16 It's inhumane. How is someone supposed to  
17 make a living?

18 These people here, yellow cab  
19 drivers, Lincoln cars, they are the  
20 backbone for international travelers for  
21 the last 50, 60, years, and you abandon  
22 them.

23 Why? What are you going to do about  
24 it?

25 These are family people who have been

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2 destroyed by paperless companies with no  
3 employees.

4 And all you hear about in the news  
5 are their executives, from sexual  
6 harassment to the stealing of Google's  
7 patents --

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. ROSNER: -- to the president and  
10 COO stepping down.

11 How about the drivers that are  
12 getting robbed and raped in finances? I  
13 mean, what you guys need to do is step up,  
14 you know.

15 In all disrespect, have you guys ever  
16 sat with a driver, spent a week in a car  
17 and seen what they earn?

18 Again, I'm three weeks in it, but I  
19 see the whole industry already. From the  
20 insurance, the five insurance companies  
21 that, you know, charge astronomical money,  
22 they don't play claim and they take their  
23 time when they do, to the rental car  
24 companies who charge \$400 to start, a  
25 week. I mean, that's highway robbery.

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2 That's \$21,000 a year.

3 It's just insane, that you guys got  
4 to do something about it.

5 I work for Uber, but get them out of  
6 our lives.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. ROSNER: What's next? What's  
9 next? We're going to take away another  
10 industry, an industry of people, so no one  
11 can make money?

12 If they make money, then they have a  
13 right. But they're losing money faster  
14 than any technology in the history of  
15 technology companies.

16 So, you know, that's all I have to  
17 say. Bring back the lives to these  
18 people, you know. Really.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. ROSNER: If I could drop the mic,  
21 I would, guys. Thank you.

22 (Laughter.)

23 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

24 The next speaker is Alan Sapoznik, to  
25 be followed by Celestin Rossini and Ebrima

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2 Jobe.

3 MR. SAPOZNIK: Hello. I'm Alan  
4 Sapoznik. A small disclosure, I work for  
5 the City of New York, a different agency.  
6 I own two Medallions, which I bought back  
7 in 2004.

8 I'm not quite sure if you,  
9 Mrs. Joshi, or TLC could do anything to  
10 help the yellow cab industry, because  
11 what's going on behind closed doors, there  
12 is corruption.

13 (Applause.)

14 MR. SAPOZNIK: I don't have the  
15 proof, but I could tell you something:  
16 How come Mayor de Blasio, a few weeks ago,  
17 said he will not bail out the yellow cab  
18 industry. I believe the commissioner is  
19 appointed by the mayor, so technically he  
20 is your boss.

21 How you going to tell your boss that  
22 we're in distress?

23 I own two Medallions. My negative  
24 cash flow was \$700 for the month of March.  
25 It's \$2,100. So now I could have given



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2 back to you. You cannot do a thing to fix  
3 the situation. Just walk.

4 Uber should not even be on the same  
5 pedestal as the yellow cabs. They're  
6 buying their way in.

7 And also -- and yeah, license this  
8 question is not for you, but how come  
9 former Commissioner David Yassky now  
10 consults for Lyft? And Ashwini Chhabra  
11 the former deputy commissioner for policy  
12 and planning at TLC, now works for Uber.  
13 How about --

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. SAPOZNIK: How about --

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. SAPOZNIK: Stu Loeser who was the  
18 press secretary under Mayor Bloomberg, now  
19 works for Uber as well?

20 Those were the people that were  
21 involved in policy making that were  
22 detrimental to yellow cabs.

23 Also, I spoke to some of you -- I'm  
24 not going to mention names -- on the  
25 phone. Oh, you know what? I paid

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2 \$650,000 for the exclusive right to  
3 operate in New York City. And the Uber,  
4 oh, no, you need an account. That's a  
5 share -- that's a ride that is planned.

6 No, it's not. Within 30 seconds you  
7 get a car. A planned ride is something,  
8 if I want to go to JFK tomorrow, I make a  
9 reservation today. So it's not the same  
10 thing. And it's just a technicality, or  
11 just pressing a button versus raising a  
12 hand; or, you know what, raising a hand,  
13 there's still exclusive to yellow cabs.

14 You know what? Technology goes  
15 forward. I'm in the computer field.  
16 Today it's an app, pressing a button. The  
17 result is the same. You're still getting  
18 a ride right away tomorrow.

19 It might be something else. We don't  
20 know. People are -- we're not stupid  
21 people. We understand.

22 How come Governor Cuomo, when De  
23 Blasio wanted to put the cab on Uber, all  
24 of a sudden Governor Cuomo got involved?  
25 Oh, no, don't -- oh, you know what?

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2 They're not going to put. I'm going to  
3 order a report --

4 (Timer sounding.)

5 MR. SAPOZNIK: -- which came  
6 negative, right? Because, oh, no, 30,000  
7 cars --

8 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

9 MR. SAPOZNIK: -- don't do anything.  
10 Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
13 Celestin Rossini, to be followed by Ebrima  
14 Jobe and then Fernando Galleria.

15 (No response.)

16 (No response.)

17 MR. GALLERIA (through interpreter):  
18 Good afternoon to all the Commissioners,  
19 and good afternoon to all the brothers  
20 that came to fight for their rights.

21 I see that the taxi industry in  
22 general is getting on the same page. In  
23 the past, the yellow and green taxi  
24 industry were a bit separated, but he sees  
25 that they're now coming together because

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2 they're all affected.

3 We know that the Commission cannot  
4 resolve all the issues, but you can help  
5 with some of the issues.

6 We have to destroy Uber because  
7 they've come to --

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. GALLERIA: -- sabotage the work  
10 of the drivers who have families in the  
11 City of New York. If Uber -- he spoke  
12 with a lawyer, one of their lawyers, and  
13 told them, if they were so good then are  
14 cars being set on fire in Europe and why  
15 is their business going backwards in  
16 Europe?

17 Ten or fifteen years ago he spoke  
18 with the previous commissioner regarding  
19 the basis. They made a list of prices,  
20 minimum prices. The minimum fare was \$7.  
21 However, he's been a car driver and his  
22 meter is 4.80. He's experiencing a lot of  
23 losses. Out of the 4.80, he could drive  
24 20 blocks and he gets just the minimum.  
25 Uber is creating a huge competition --

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2 (Timer sounding.)

3 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

4 MR. GALLERIA: (Continues speaking,  
5 not interpreted.)

6 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. WILSON: So the next speaker is  
9 Beresford Simmons, to be followed by  
10 Abraham Zachi, to be followed by Charlie  
11 Smith.

12 MR. SIMMONS: Good afternoon,  
13 Commissioners. My name is Beresford  
14 Simmons. I'm also a member of the Taxi  
15 Workers Alliance, but today I'm here on my  
16 own. I've been driving since 1973 in this  
17 industry. And I would hope --

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. SIMMONS: -- that today's meeting  
20 would give you guys a lot of education on  
21 what's going on in the street.

22 I've never seen it so desperate. I  
23 have known seven guys within the last six  
24 months that have lost their Medallions,  
25 hard-working men. Okay?

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2 I personally -- I would love to  
3 retire. I just had a heart attack. I'm  
4 on kidney dialysis. But I'm still here  
5 and I'm still driving, because the  
6 industry is on the way down.

7 You guys can help. And I know that  
8 some of the problems that are here today  
9 does not belong to you; it belongs to the  
10 state, the governor and to the City  
11 Council of New York City. So some of the  
12 things I hear today, I very much  
13 sympathize with you guys, but you need to  
14 get the word out.

15 The City is shrinking, and the  
16 pressures of this City has caused a lot of  
17 health problems to drivers. To survive --  
18 you can't survive in the City. Too much  
19 traffic. Uber has dominated the City with  
20 cars.

21 Business, Wall Street, losing a lot  
22 of money because drivers are sitting with  
23 passengers for hours to get from one point  
24 of New York City to another. From going  
25 to the East Side to the West Side, it

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2 takes at least an hour to get there.

3 Okay?

4 So like I said, I sympathize with you  
5 guys very much, and I wish you guys could  
6 do something to help the drivers  
7 health-wise, because I've seen too many  
8 drivers -- for instance, I have one friend  
9 here who is kind of senior, like myself --  
10 I'm close to 70 years old -- and he has to  
11 change to a wheelchair accessible car, and  
12 I don't think he can handle it physically,  
13 to help pushing the passengers in and out.  
14 So you need to do something about the age  
15 brackets and the wheelchair cars, too.

16 And I thank you very much for hearing  
17 what I have to say, after 43 years in the  
18 industry.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. WILSON: The next speaker --

21 (Applause continuing.)

22 MR. WILSON: -- followed by Charlie  
23 Smith, to be followed by Firhntz Noel.

24 (No response.)

25 MR. WILSON: No Gibaki. Charlie

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2 Smith.

3 MS. SMITH: Hello to the TLC and to  
4 my fellow drivers. This is a very  
5 layered, layered cake subject. Really, I  
6 have come to understand by driving -- with  
7 driving with the TLC for a year and a  
8 half, that it's not about us yellow,  
9 green. We're all in the same boat, just,  
10 we get customers by different mediums.

11 For me, ignorant at the time, Uber  
12 was an opportunity to gain financial  
13 freedom, to support myself, to be able to  
14 have a decent roof over my head.

15 The only thing that I'm going to hit  
16 today, because the majority of everything  
17 else has been hit and will be hit again  
18 and again, is that I get 19-year-old girls  
19 in my car, to 50-something-year-old women  
20 in my car, and they ask about the  
21 business.

22 And I don't dog Uber, because that  
23 would be dogging everybody, but I educate  
24 them as much as I can and let them know  
25 the sacrifice that they would have to put



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2 in, and I educate them on what it would  
3 take.

4 So for the younger ones under me and  
5 for the women, this industry has provided  
6 employment. We can create our checks.  
7 And corporations have come in with the  
8 faces of eagles, but behind they are like  
9 crows and hawks, and they have swooped  
10 down on the whole industry.

11 And now we are electric cars and all  
12 of these things. And nobody is mad at  
13 anyone for getting wealthy, but why do you  
14 have to be greedy about it? It's  
15 unnecessary.

16 Women have kids. They do this  
17 part-time. It helps. Not everybody is  
18 owning a Medallion. But there are  
19 issues -- everybody is earning money and  
20 the drivers are on the bottom of the totem  
21 pole. And women, statistically speaking,  
22 financially, we're on the bottom of the  
23 totem pole, and this is an opportunity.

24 So as women who are on this  
25 Commission, and as men who have

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2 girlfriends or wives or friends, this is  
3 something that definitely needs to be  
4 thought about before taking food out of my  
5 mouth, out of women's mouths, out of the  
6 mouths of the men who support their  
7 families, to be able to grow; and not  
8 survive, but live.

9 Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 MS. MARINO: I have a question. I  
12 haven't wanted to ask many questions, or  
13 any, because of the volume of speakers,  
14 but are you -- I'm a little confused. Are  
15 you supportive of Uber or not supportive  
16 of Uber?

17 MS. SMITH: I am not supportive of  
18 what they stand for now. So, I used to  
19 be. I used to be.

20 MS. MARINO: And are you currently  
21 driving for them?

22 MS. SMITH: I drive with Lyft now.  
23 I'm still affiliated with them because of  
24 politics and technicalities. Does that  
25 answer your question?

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2 MS. MARINO: Yes, you did. Thank you  
3 very much.

4 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
5 Firhntz Noel, and the speakers after that  
6 will be Sohail Rana and Jose Molina.

7 MR. NOEL: Good afternoon,  
8 Commissioners. We need your help.

9 CHAIR JOSHI: Just for the record,  
10 would you mind stating your name? We said  
11 several names, and I want to make sure I  
12 know who you are.

13 MR. NOEL: My name is Firhntz Noel.

14 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

15 MR. NOEL: We need your help. All  
16 the drivers need your help. Some agent,  
17 some TLC agent, thinks you hire taxi, you  
18 drive a taxi, you have no degree. You  
19 nothing.

20 I want you make sure the driver work  
21 same like a lawyer, same like a police  
22 officer. But some TLC officer, not  
23 everyone, treat the driver like nothing.

24 (Applause.)

25 MR. NOEL: And we have couple rules

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2 that TLC make, the rules just to make  
3 money, not for help.

4 Last time, one people crush -- almost  
5 crush my car. I call a police. When the  
6 police come, police say, okay, everything  
7 fine.

8 The girl have a cigarette, try to  
9 smoke a cigarette. She put it in my wool  
10 (phonetic). I tell her I'm supposed to  
11 call the police, because you almost make a  
12 fire in my car. Okay?

13 When the police come, they say,  
14 "Okay, everybody fine. Everybody okay.  
15 No car crush. Okay. Everybody go home."

16 I say, "Thank you, Officer."

17 The officer asks us, "Who need  
18 report?"

19 I say, "No."

20 The girl say, "No."

21 After couple weeks, I receive one  
22 letter from TLC, say I have to -- to go in  
23 Queens.

24 When I go there, the girl make a  
25 false report, say I'm hurt her car, and I

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2 just go. Four percent was there, but TLC  
3 asked me to pay it, \$1,800, for no reason.

4 CHAIR JOSHI: Did you go to a  
5 hearing?

6 MR. NOEL: First of all, I go -- my  
7 attorney have a problem. I'm sick.

8 (Timer sounding.)

9 MR. NOEL: I have the letter for my  
10 doctor. I brung it. They just say no, I  
11 have to pay the money. But I don't have  
12 money to pay for that.

13 CHAIR JOSHI: I would like it if you  
14 could speak to somebody in the back about  
15 your particular case. Thank you.

16 MR. NOEL: Thank you.

17 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

18 The next speaker is Sohail Rana, to  
19 be followed by Jose Molina and then  
20 Fernando Garcia.

21 MR. RANA: Thank you. Good  
22 afternoon, Commissioner. My name is  
23 Sohail Rana. I have been driving  
24 23 years, driving from yellow cab to black  
25 car to app-based company now. Over the

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2 years I have seen a lot of changes, not  
3 like favor -- in favor of drivers.

4 So, I now drive SUV. I invested  
5 \$70,000. I pay the dealer. I pay the  
6 bank. I pay the TLC, the DMV. And in the  
7 end I don't even like able to get minimum  
8 fare wage.

9 And then all these app-based  
10 companies, they advertise for \$1,500 a  
11 week, \$2,000 a week. And I don't know.  
12 How many of you guys make \$1,500 a week,  
13 \$2,000 a week?

14 No. So this is like -- it should be  
15 illegal to advertise false advertisement.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. RANA: And on top of everything,  
18 if you're working for Uber, you're not  
19 even like allowed to take tips.

20 And if you guys been like, you know,  
21 take care of all these things, we wouldn't  
22 be talking about fatigue rules, we had  
23 hearing last time, because drivers are  
24 forced to work many, many hours because  
25 they are not getting paid like what

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2 they're supposed to get paid. And that's  
3 it.

4 Thank you.

5 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you very much.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

8 The next speaker is Jose Molina, to  
9 be followed by Fernando Garcia and then  
10 Rafael Estrella.

11 MR. MOLINA: Good afternoon. My name  
12 is Jose Molina. I've been driving for  
13 about a year and a half now. Just like  
14 somebody else, I invested \$75,000 in my  
15 vehicle. It lasted six months. I had to  
16 return it back. I can't do \$5 rides any  
17 more.

18 So out of that \$75,000, my trade in  
19 New York was \$15,000. I had to go out of  
20 state in order for me to make some money  
21 out of it. Now I had to get another  
22 vehicle. Keep doing the same rides.

23 So unless you guys decide to do  
24 something about it, where we can make a  
25 little bit more money so we can sustain

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2 what we do for a living, it's not even  
3 worth it.

4 Uber takes Commission, and so does  
5 everybody else. TLC makes money, and the  
6 companies that rent the vehicles and the  
7 insurance companies.

8 I also own another business as a tow  
9 driver, and owner-operator, we're capped  
10 on how much we can make: \$5 a mile, 125  
11 base.

12 So why can't we do that for everybody  
13 else in here? We're all trying to make  
14 the same living. It doesn't matter if  
15 you're yellow, green, Uber, Lyft; it  
16 doesn't matter. We're trying to make a  
17 living. We are trying to feed our  
18 families. We all have a mortgage -- most  
19 of us do. My mortgage is \$2,500 home.

20 How am I supposed to pay a car, a  
21 \$75,000 car? I can't.

22 So it's up to you guys to decide for  
23 us, see if we're worth it. Because the  
24 way it's going, none of us can afford  
25 anything. Everything is going up, except



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2 our fares. Everybody else is getting paid  
3 except for us.

4 And the funny thing is, the ones  
5 that's supposed to make money, the  
6 drivers, we're not making it. We're  
7 barely surviving. We're becoming the next  
8 slavery. That's what it is.

9 And the Uber pool is just going to  
10 get bigger and bigger. Next thing you  
11 know, we're going to have buses. That's  
12 what the next Uber pool is going to be, a  
13 bus, and the driver is going to make \$3.25  
14 for every single ride; 10 miles for one  
15 person. Doesn't pay off, not to me, not  
16 to anybody else.

17 Thank you.

18 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
21 Rafael Estrella, to be followed by Jose  
22 Fermin to be followed by Steven Moore.

23 Rafael Estrella?

24 (No response.)

25 MR. WILSON: Okay.

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2 MR. FERMIN: Hi everyone. Thank you  
3 for listening to me. My name is Jose  
4 Fermin. I have about \$40,000 invested in  
5 my car, and I come on behalf of me and my  
6 family only.

7 The first (inaudible) we have is TLC,  
8 the first one. I think so because they  
9 have very high fines, over nothing.

10 You have a hybrid car, hybrid. You  
11 have to put one sticker on the side  
12 because you, who pay your car, you don't  
13 know it's a hybrid. This makes no sense  
14 at all.

15 We are not (inaudible). We are  
16 business people, family people.

17 TLC, after the term of Michael  
18 Bloomberg, it bring thousands of traffic  
19 enforcement officers and thousands of TLC  
20 (inaudible).

21 We don't need no more police. Over  
22 here, in this building, today, we have at  
23 least 50, 50 TLC enforcement officer. To  
24 me, I'm not criminal. I'm a family man.

25 And TLC have harassment (sic) us

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2 every single day. You go to drop off at  
3 the hospital, there's TLC behind you.

4 After you receive a ticket, \$150.

5 Probably for you \$150 is nothing. You  
6 probably make, I don't know, 125, 200 a  
7 year?

8 I don't. I need that money for my  
9 family, my kids to go to college. And my  
10 kids, believe it or not, they eat. They  
11 do. I don't want give my money away to  
12 you guys. With all respect, I don't want  
13 to offend nobody.

14 Second, TLC have a lot employees, can  
15 pay people. I suggest you can send some  
16 of them to Fire Department. Maybe they  
17 have diverse people, not only white.

18 And I think TLC is still with the  
19 Michael Bloomberg campaign against  
20 minorities, Dominican, Arab, black people.  
21 I believe that's hundred percent.

22 I have an investment in my car. I  
23 don't want nobody chasing me.

24 (Inaudible) -- on the sidewalk, they want  
25 yellow, blue, green. They passengers, not

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2 TLC.

3 Why you give the airport? Why?  
4 Everybody pay for the airport, me, too; no  
5 TLC. And I sure it's not your fault,  
6 because we have a transportation president  
7 from (inaudible). I saw him and  
8 complained, not any more. When you call,  
9 they don't do nothing.

10 But I want --

11 (Timer sounding.)

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER (Jose): Thank you.

13 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. WILSON: Next speaker will be  
16 Steven Moore, to be followed by Hassan  
17 el-Kark (phonetic) and by Satwinder Singh.

18 MR. MOORE: Good afternoon. I'm  
19 going to first just start by saying it was  
20 a lot of things I was going to talk about,  
21 but I hear a lot of the men and women here  
22 already bring up a lot of the points. I'm  
23 going to just talk about my experience as  
24 a driver.

25 I've done a lot of things. I have --

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2 I even come here and look at the setup  
3 here and am really interested in that. I  
4 even notice some of the workers, because I  
5 used to do that, also. But my experience  
6 as a driver, I really like driving. I have  
7 the opportunity to work in the greatest  
8 city in the world and meet the greatest  
9 people from all over the world. So every  
10 day that I get behind the wheel it's like  
11 an honor, and I'm excited about it, still.  
12 Been driving for years.

13 But lately, when I came back the City  
14 to start working, I noticed that there's  
15 been like a form of like vampirism that is  
16 going on, blood-sucking from -- from TLC,  
17 from the app-based and yellow cabs. I did  
18 all of them and do all of them still, and  
19 definitely from the police officers.

20 And I feel that there's like a  
21 feeding frenzy that's going on here. I  
22 don't know how it's able to be justifiable  
23 that you charge \$600 to inspect a car, or  
24 register, just to start off period, \$500  
25 to register a car.

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2 You speak to passengers about that.  
3 They say, "Well, you know, you know, can't  
4 you do this part-time?"

5 No. You can't drive part-time,  
6 because your bills are not going to allow  
7 that. So you have to do this full-time.  
8 And you can't even do it full-time. You  
9 have to work overtime just to make what  
10 you would make as a full-time worker. So  
11 I don't see that it's possible for me to  
12 do other things that I should do, like  
13 spend time with my family and/or maybe any  
14 of the hobbies.

15 One thing that I do see is that  
16 there's a lot of traffic, and it's not  
17 only because of app-based companies. It's  
18 also the traffic from the construction, a  
19 lot of construction. Every city (sic) in  
20 that block has construction. And if one  
21 doesn't, the next block has two.

22 They close the lanes. They close the  
23 sidewalks. Don't turn here. Don't turn  
24 there. And I don't know if these people  
25 that make these laws actually drive in the

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2 City, but it's hard.

3 Double park UPS trucks, Fed Ex  
4 trucks, triple park. They just -- no one  
5 says nothing to them. And they make so  
6 much traffic. You can't even get by.

7 And their fines are the same amount  
8 as our fines. Why don't they charge a  
9 business like UPS or FedEx \$700, the same  
10 way you would charge me \$100? You charge  
11 me \$100, that's almost my day pay or half  
12 a day pay. But FedEx is going to keep  
13 doing it because they can incorporate that  
14 in their stuff.

15 Only thing I wanted to tell everybody  
16 that's here, if you have one of these  
17 things (indicating), it's a driver's  
18 license, a TLC driver's license. That's a  
19 vote. There's 150,000 voters right here.  
20 Make it last.

21 (Timer sounding.)

22 MR. MOORE: Make it work for  
23 something, because we're one of the  
24 biggest agencies --

25 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much --

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2 MR. MOORE: -- if we actually stick  
3 together.

4 CHAIR JOSHI: -- for your testimony.

5 MR. MOORE: Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
8 Hassan el-Kark, to be followed by  
9 Satwinder Singh, to be followed by  
10 Jashinder Singh.

11 (No response.)

12 MR. WILSON: Okay. Satwinder Singh.

13 MR. S. SINGH: Good afternoon, Madam  
14 Chairwoman, Commissioners. My name is  
15 Satwinder Singh. I'm a member of TMODA,  
16 Taxi Medallion Owner/Driver Association.

17 Firstly, I would like to thank you  
18 for the opportunity to speak --

19 CHAIR JOSHI: Do you mind just  
20 repeating the name of our organization?

21 MR. S. SINGH: TMODA, Taxi Medallion  
22 Owner/Driver Association.

23 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

24 MR. S. SINGH: Firstly, I would like  
25 to thank you for the opportunity to speak



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2 here today.

3 We are going through the worst year  
4 that we ever faced in taxi industry. Some  
5 of us already filed for bankruptcy, some  
6 in the middle of it. Others are planning  
7 to file it.

8 We have many friends who have  
9 invested their lives in the City, and  
10 hundreds of thousands of dollars. With  
11 the banks and credit unions now refusing  
12 to finance due to the drop in Medallions.

13 Many of my friends are unable to  
14 afford enormous bill payments. Because of  
15 the same reasons Jashinder Singh, who is  
16 with me today, who (inaudible) accessible  
17 Medallion four years ago from the City  
18 auction (inaudible) for a 60-year-old man,  
19 own three and a half corporations, which  
20 is considered seven Medallion, is being  
21 forced to foreclose by the bank and thrown  
22 out from his house, with four young  
23 children.

24 Would you imagine losing everything  
25 in one shot, when he worked for 30 years?

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2 Another, Mr. (Inaudible) own  
3 Medallion, never missed a payment ever,  
4 and credit union refused to renew his  
5 balloon because of insufficient income,  
6 and they forced him to foreclosure.

7 Mr. Lugni (phonetic) was forced to  
8 put 15 grand to renew his balloon, or  
9 otherwise have to file for bankruptcy.

10 The question arises, why all of a  
11 sudden happen this? What is responsible  
12 for this mess? Where did something go  
13 wrong?

14 Let me say that there's no longer a  
15 value in the Medallion system because the  
16 City gives the right of (inaudible) for  
17 free to the app-based companies, thus  
18 reducing the value of the Medallion  
19 system. And because of this, the banks  
20 refuse to accept loans, as it no longer  
21 see that value.

22 In reality, these app-based companies  
23 are cabs, and the cabs drivers too.

24 When you raise your hand, what do you  
25 see? Cab and driver. And the same thing

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2 when you press the button on the phone,  
3 same thing you're doing that.

4 Just without the strange (inaudible)  
5 demolition and debilitating mortgages,  
6 that maybe more than yellow and having  
7 inspection once in two years, but the  
8 yellow has six inspections in two years.

9 There are many differences in rules  
10 and regulations in yellow and app-based  
11 cabs (inaudible) the same. We are not  
12 against technology. But technology should  
13 be our cabs. Please have the right to  
14 make money through existing cabs like us,  
15 rather bypassing us and creating their own  
16 50, 60,000 cabs. But misusing the  
17 technology can make some millionaires and  
18 others slum dog like us.

19 There are many --

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. S. SINGH: -- full-time drivers  
22 losing their jobs, retirement, and their  
23 kids' future. Could you please help them  
24 in any manner --

25 (Timer sounding.)

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2 MR. S. SINGH: -- or could you please  
3 take the Medallions back with half the  
4 loans --

5 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

6 MR. S. SINGH: -- over the City.

7 Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

10 The next speaker is Jashinder Singh,  
11 to be followed by Rafael Estrella, to be  
12 followed by Fredy Teno.

13 MR. J. SINGH: Good afternoon  
14 everyone. My name is Jashinder Singh.  
15 And unfortunately, I am also part of this  
16 yellow cab industry.

17 There is no place of justice, and  
18 today we got three minutes to explain the  
19 story of three years. Anyway, I will try  
20 to convey my message to this hearing to  
21 all those lawmakers and responsible for  
22 provisions who rule our lives, and have  
23 failed us so badly by using their power.

24 My family had four yellow cab  
25 Medallion, which we lost all of them last

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2 year. And now everybody is bankrupt in my  
3 family because of the mismanagement of the  
4 New York lawmakers and (inaudible) of New  
5 York City.

6 Which is no need to explain.

7 Everything is in front, which is total  
8 injustice and ignoring those hard-working  
9 people who are in this taxi industry for  
10 last seven, eight decades.

11 I am driving yellow cab for last  
12 13 years, and I bought a Medallion,  
13 keeping in mind as a good investment  
14 and (inaudible) a job for me and I can  
15 sell my family part of it. Because I  
16 believed at that time this industry is  
17 being controlled and managed by the most  
18 responsible and trustworthy administration  
19 of New York City.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. J. SINGH: We had a blind  
22 faith -- we had a blind faith on them, and  
23 keep on working without any fear of losing  
24 our job for the last twelve years.

25 But in few years before, City

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2 betrayed us so badly, which would never  
3 expect, and shaken the future of our life,  
4 where we won't be able to revive it again.

5 Everybody knows what the City did. I  
6 don't want to repeat it again. I lost my  
7 driver and could not find another one, and  
8 drove alone for 14 months. But  
9 unfortunately, I could not make my  
10 mortgage on time, and bank repossessed my  
11 Medallion.

12 In spite of my (inaudible) and put  
13 down \$1 million lien on my house, too.  
14 After filing bankruptcy, I am still in  
15 debt. Who is responsible for that?

16 There could be so many ways to  
17 protect and keep and maintain the yellow  
18 cab industry, by keeping these (inaudible)  
19 also. But none of the intelligent  
20 lawmakers try it ever.

21 As usual, power takes one-sided  
22 decisions, and they did, and we have no  
23 right to ask anything. We are crying for  
24 last three years, but they never been  
25 listened.

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2 And here we want to ask some  
3 questions. We want the Medallions, by  
4 keeping in mind, by keeping blind trust,  
5 is that our fault?

6 Why we are being punished? Even  
7 behaviors of --

8 (Timer sounding.)

9 MR. J. SINGH: -- is better than  
10 yours. If you are really --

11 (Applause.)

12 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much for  
13 your testimony.

14 (Applause.)

15 (Simultaneous speaking.)

16 CHAIR JOSHI: I would like to get one  
17 of the members in the back to get your  
18 contact information, because it's clear  
19 you have --

20 MR. J. SINGH: My Medallion is in the  
21 garbage right now, and I am helping. Who  
22 is responsible for my loan?

23 And nobody want to listen (inaudible)  
24 last two years. I was in the newspaper,  
25 but in the media I spoke in City Hall

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2 (inaudible) nobody want to listen. This  
3 is the first time you invited us, and we  
4 have just about three minutes. We have  
5 very long stories.

6 CHAIR JOSHI: We have a lot of  
7 drivers --

8 (Applause.)

9 CHAIR JOSHI: -- and I invite you to  
10 please give your contact information to  
11 one of our staff members, so we can give  
12 you much more than three minutes one on  
13 one.

14 MR. J. SINGH: Thank you.

15 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

16 The next speaker is Rafael Estrella,  
17 to be followed by Fredy Teno, to be  
18 followed by Bhairavi Desai.

19 MR. ESTRELLA: Good afternoon,  
20 Commissioners. My name is Rafael  
21 Estrella, and I start driving from 1986,  
22 trying to accomplish my American dream.

23 I was very happy. 1986, Taxi and  
24 Limousine Commission give me an hour for  
25 being an honest and responsible driver. I



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2 was very happy and proud to be a New York  
3 City cab driver.

4 But, unfortunately, on 1999, I  
5 suffered a traumatic brain injury. After  
6 two and a half months in a coma, I wake up  
7 and I start fighting to get better. But  
8 due to my (inaudible) my two kidneys fail.  
9 Then I went for dialysis and wait for a  
10 kidney transplant. Now I have the kidney  
11 now.

12 But now I'm going to lose my  
13 Medallion and probably my wife, because I  
14 can't afford it no more. I had two  
15 drivers. They put the food and the  
16 payment for my mortgage until the last  
17 month, when the -- one of drivers, he  
18 quit, and now I just have one driver. I  
19 don't -- I don't know what to do.

20 TLC give me an hour. Now I would  
21 like TLC give me financial advisor to do  
22 something for my -- you know, or probably  
23 I'm going to (inaudible) yellow cab  
24 driver, proud to be, I own this cab. I'm  
25 going to be proud to be homeless in front

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2 of the Taxi & Limousine Commission.

3 Because until now --

4 (Applause.)

5 MR. ESTRELLA: -- one penny from the  
6 government. Everything comes from my  
7 Medallion.

8 But now I really don't know what to  
9 do. Please, dear Commission, try to give  
10 me somebody to help me to not go to  
11 bankruptcy. Because I still have my wife  
12 and hopes to keep going and going.

13 You know, I'm like a rabbit -- I'm  
14 like a turtle, that I walk slowly to  
15 accomplish my dream as the American people  
16 that I am now.

17 Thank you very much, and I hope you  
18 listen to me, and I have some result, good  
19 result.

20 Thank you and have a nice day.

21 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is  
24 Fredy Teno, to be followed by Bhairavi  
25 Desai, to be followed by Gary Farberov.

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2 MR. TENO: Good afternoon,  
3 Commissioner. Good afternoon, other TLC  
4 staff and, more importantly, good  
5 afternoon fellow drivers. My name is  
6 Fredy Teno. I'm the black owner --  
7 black-base owner of a base called  
8 Semperide. I retired from the military  
9 after 22 years of service, and then opened  
10 up the base shortly after my retirement in  
11 2012.

12 My first experience with this  
13 industry was with Uber. And like everyone  
14 else here, I was sold on a dream. I was  
15 sold on a lot of promises. I was sold on  
16 a lot of great opportunities, you know,  
17 that were presented, but only, you know,  
18 to come down crashing, you know, to what  
19 it is fast-forward today, an industry of,  
20 you know, that has been undervalued,  
21 under-appreciated, and certainly being  
22 transformed into what it is now.

23 So the TLC set up three levels of  
24 bases for a reason, right, livery, black  
25 car and luxury. Uber -- not just Uber,

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2 but all the TNCs have transformed the  
3 black car industry into something that is  
4 probably sublevel than livery. I don't  
5 even know how to describe it, when you're  
6 using black car, \$80,000 vehicles, to pick  
7 up \$3 fares.

8 So -- and I know, when I opened up my  
9 own company, I am here also to fight on  
10 behalf of the other black car base owners,  
11 because it's very hard. The competition  
12 is not level. It's totally unfair.

13 When I have people calling me to get  
14 prices, and as I did, you know, at the  
15 beginning when I set up the base, I submit  
16 my prices to TLC. I don't change my  
17 prices dramatically, like other companies  
18 do, like the TNCs do.

19 They are very shocked when I (sic)  
20 hear my prices, because the customer is  
21 now always thinking \$3. So it's hard to  
22 make a living. It's hard to stay in  
23 competition. It's hard to stay in  
24 business.

25 I set up a wheelchair accessible

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2 program within my base, because I thought  
3 that was important, to be able to serve  
4 everyone equally. And then I'm not making  
5 money with that either, because obviously  
6 I didn't even -- as a black car owner, I  
7 was not able to get any kind of grants,  
8 any kind of subsidy, you know, even though  
9 I pay the same TLC fees, I pay, you know,  
10 diamond stickers, I go along with all the  
11 insurance and all the other regulations  
12 that everyone does, you know, the black  
13 car industry is looked at as an outcast  
14 or, I don't know what.

15 But I'm trying to offer a service to  
16 the community, you know (inaudible) and I  
17 feel that I'm being shortchanged. And a  
18 lot of obstacles in the way.

19 I feel the TLC could do more. I know  
20 that you're here to regulate, but you also  
21 should be here to train. And the reason  
22 why you are getting so many complaints and  
23 so many people coming here today is  
24 because this should have been set up a  
25 long time ago, or more periodic, so people

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2 could actually come and you can listen to  
3 the things and not let it accumulate, you  
4 know, five years down the road, when I was  
5 sold that dream in 2012 as an Uber driver.

6 I was one of their poster child, if  
7 you will. If you go on their website, you  
8 will see me -- they wanted to advertise my  
9 veteran status, you know, to bring other  
10 people in, because they're masters of  
11 advertisement and --

12 (Timer sounding.)

13 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much for  
14 your testimony.

15 MR. TENO: Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

18 The next speaker is Bhairavi Desai,  
19 to be followed by Gary Farberov, to be  
20 followed by Ali Ashraf.

21 MS. DESAI: Hi. Good afternoon. I'm  
22 Bhairavi Desai. I'm the executive  
23 director of the New York Taxi Workers  
24 Alliance.

25 Gosh. I got to tell you it's like

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2 half my heart is just crushed and the  
3 other half is just on fire, and I imagine  
4 most people in this room feel this way.

5 I mean, you've heard me testify for  
6 almost 21 years, and all -- we're an  
7 organization of 19,000 drivers. And all  
8 we have ever done is represent drivers'  
9 interests.

10 And in my 21 years of organizing in  
11 this industry, I have never seen people in  
12 such crisis. You know, just hearing -- I  
13 mean, the bankruptcies, the foreclosures,  
14 eviction notices, having to answer -- I  
15 now go with, you know, phone calls about  
16 homeless services, to people wanting to  
17 know about suicide prevention hotlines.

18 There is such a deep-seated level of  
19 crisis amongst the drivers, I have to say  
20 to you from the bottom of my heart, I, as  
21 an advocate, just on some days don't know  
22 what to do. I mean, this is a serious  
23 human crisis because of the financial  
24 plague that has happened in this industry  
25 over the past three years.

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2 And, you know, it just brings me to  
3 serious concern about what people's  
4 futures are going to be looking like, and  
5 certainly the level of crisis that they're  
6 facing today in their day-to-day life.

7 So it's a vicious race to the bottom.  
8 To starve the taxi drivers, Uber starves  
9 the Uber drivers. That's the heart of it.  
10 They drop the fares, which leaves drivers  
11 in crushing poverty, and they do that so  
12 they can poach the fares of the other  
13 sectors. No driver wins in this race to  
14 the bottom.

15 The issues that Uber drivers have  
16 been talking about, upfront pricing,  
17 that's where Uber will say to the -- quote  
18 one price to the passenger and pay the  
19 driver something else.

20 One thing you should know is not only  
21 does the driver get shortchanged on the  
22 amount that Uber collects from the  
23 passenger, but on top of that, if Uber --  
24 the tax amount that Uber has to pay on the  
25 higher fare that's paid by the passenger,



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2 they charge that higher tax amount to the  
3 driver. That comes out of the driver's  
4 pay. Most drivers don't even know about  
5 it.

6 The sales tax and the black car fund  
7 surcharge, again, come out of the driver's  
8 pay.

9 The predatory leasing. We have a  
10 member who was granted unemployment by the  
11 New York State Department of Labor. He  
12 was unemployed. He was found to be  
13 unemployed on the grounds that he earned  
14 poverty wages. He was a 4.8, five-star  
15 driver. On weeks where he worked 45, 50  
16 hours, there were weeks where he earned  
17 less than \$5 an hour.

18 (Timer sounding.)

19 MS. DESAI: He's completely bankrupt  
20 by that economic policy.

21 (Applause.)

22 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you very much.

23 MS. DESAI: There is power that you  
24 do have as regulators, and I hope the  
25 number one thing you do is take the tapes

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2 of the testimonies of the drivers, deliver  
3 them straight into the hands of the mayor,  
4 and ask him to wake up and fight this  
5 fight. It's far from over.

6 (Applause.)

7 MS. DESAI: Thank you.

8 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is Gary  
9 Farberov, to be followed by Ali Ashraf and  
10 then Luis Suarez.

11 Mr. FARBEROV: Good afternoon,  
12 Commissioners, Commissioner Marino.

13 We're here again. Okay? I've been  
14 here many times before in front of you. I  
15 don't understand why an organization that  
16 has the word "taxi" as the first word in  
17 its title, forgets about the industry  
18 entirely.

19 When are we going to realize and  
20 admit the fact that the taxi industry is  
21 dead? It is completely dead.

22 The people behind me are telling you  
23 horrible stories. All you're doing is  
24 listening to them and at best telling them  
25 to talk to somebody in the back. And

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2 that's where it's going to end. Because  
3 time and time again you've heard all these  
4 stories and you've never done a thing  
5 about it, not one thing.

6 Your tallying your numbers, that you  
7 made 70 million pickups in New York, yet  
8 the Medallion now costs 240,000. You are  
9 not mentioning the fact that three months  
10 ago you had 8,000 green permits on the  
11 roll. Now you have less than five.

12 If you're doing so many pickups,  
13 where are these cars going? Why is the  
14 Medallion worthless now?

15 When are we going to hear the truth?  
16 Tell these people the truth: Find another  
17 job. Get into another business. They're  
18 never going to recoup their money, ever.

19 And as I've told you before, this  
20 farce of a program for wheelchair  
21 accessible dispatch is exactly what it is,  
22 a farce. It's never going to work.

23 And I told you it's never going to  
24 launch, and you told me you think it's  
25 going to work. And who was right?

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2 And the reason I was right is because  
3 you will never ever support this industry.  
4 There's no money in it. And when you tell  
5 people it's not your concern, it's the  
6 City or the State, you as Commissioners  
7 have to go to the City and to the State  
8 and argue for us.

9 (Applause.)

10 Mr. FARBEROV: It's time to take  
11 action for come clean and say, "Get out of  
12 the industry." This industry cannot  
13 support 150,000 drivers. It cannot,  
14 physically. It's not a wonderment why our  
15 fares are so little.

16 Yet the handicapped community or the  
17 wheelchair accessible community cannot get  
18 a ride. Whose fault is that?

19 There's enough cars on the street.  
20 Why can't they get service?

21 The contract that you took on for  
22 that accessible dispatch is a farce. It's  
23 not working. It's not going to work. You  
24 will never be able to launch it because  
25 you're not addressing the underlying

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2 problem. You are not. There are no  
3 drivers to support your dream.

4 This system has to change. It has to  
5 be put back together from the start. It's  
6 broken completely. You will have no  
7 wheelchair accessible vehicles. You will  
8 not. And you know that yourself. You can  
9 see how many permits have been given back.  
10 Every single day we're selling these green  
11 cars, painting them black and sending them  
12 to different states, because they don't  
13 have drivers. Where are all these  
14 drivers? Why are you getting more  
15 drivers? 150,000 drivers, what do you  
16 want to have, 200,000 cars in the city?

17 (Timer sounding.)

18 MR. FARBEROV: It's impossible to do.  
19 It is not possible.

20 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you for your  
21 testimony.

22 (Applause.)

23 (Simultaneous speaking from  
24 audience.)

25 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

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2 The next speaker is Ali Ashraf to be  
3 followed by Luis Suarez, to be followed by  
4 Bernardo Celerino.

5 (No response.)

6 MR. WILSON: Okay. Luis Suarez.

7 MR. SUAREZ: Hi everyone.

8 I came here today because I'm  
9 thinking of making a multimillion dollar  
10 investment in the yellow cab industry, and  
11 I wanted to hear a little bit about the  
12 industry.

13 I stood downstairs for two and a half  
14 hours. People -- there are only 40 people  
15 in this room. There were 250 people  
16 downstairs, half of them waiting in the  
17 rainy.

18 I see a terrible disconnect between  
19 your Commission and the industry that you  
20 regulate. There doesn't seem to be any  
21 empathy. And I think part of the  
22 problem -- I heard one of the drivers  
23 earlier ask if any of you had ever been a  
24 taxi driver. And there's no empathy.

25 What I suggest that you do is that

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2 you make it a requirement for anybody that  
3 sits in this dais, you don't have to drive  
4 for a month. Drive one shift, one 12-hour  
5 shift --

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. SUAREZ: -- and you will  
8 completely get it. Because you don't get  
9 it now. These people are virtual slaves,  
10 and there's nothing that you all are doing  
11 about it.

12 And I'm also very concerned, as an  
13 investor to make an investment of  
14 multimillion dollars -- I was talking to  
15 Melrose, one of the unions that has taken  
16 back hundreds, untold numbers of -- from  
17 these poor souls, terribly concerned that  
18 people that work in this Commission,  
19 high-level salaries, creating regulations  
20 that are stifling to the drivers, that  
21 then quit and go and work for Uber for  
22 high salaries.

23 I can't think of anything that sounds  
24 more fraudulent to me than that, and it  
25 surprises me that in the very glare of

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2 daylight this is being allowed to occur.

3 It's just -- it's incomprehensible to me.

4 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you very much.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

7 The next speaker is Bernardo

8 Celerino, to be followed by Sunu Miah, to

9 be followed by Zaheer Ahmed.

10 MR. CELERINO: Good afternoon. My

11 name is Bernardo Celerino. I started

12 driving yellow cab in 1988. I'm an

13 individual Medallion owner.

14 I have seen 11 points on the table

15 today. It's impossible to address it in

16 three minutes. But if I have to ask the

17 TLC chairwoman or the TLC council members,

18 what is the input today received by the

19 drivers advisory board regarding those

20 eleven points, the answer will be: What

21 is the drivers advisory board?

22 Local law number 60 of the year 2003

23 was never enforced by either TLC or NYC.

24 It is time to do it. After 14 years of

25 sleeping, the public (inaudible) and to



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2 create the drivers advisory board.

3 I want to be part of that drivers  
4 advisory board (inaudible) independent  
5 Medallion owners. Hopefully soon we can  
6 go back to the happy road of the NYPD.

7 Changing the subject, the not in  
8 motion time should be adjusted for 50  
9 cents a minute to 50 cents every 50  
10 seconds, to increase the not in motion  
11 time from 30 to \$36 an hour.

12 Regarding tolls, the yellow cab  
13 industry has been sending money to MTA for  
14 all these years. So it's time for MTA to  
15 pay back to the yellow cab industry by  
16 giving us free tolls in New York City.

17 Regarding Uber, is (inaudible) for  
18 the Taxi & Limousine Commission to run the  
19 app business.

20 That's it. That's all I have to say.

21 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. CELERINO: I handed a copy of  
24 local law number 60, my number, any way  
25 you can contact me.

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2 CHAIR JOSHI: We will definitely  
3 follow up with you.

4 MR. CELERINO: Please do it.

5 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

6 The next speaker is Sunu Miah, to be  
7 followed by Zaheer Ahmed, to be followed  
8 by Juan (inaudible).

9 MR. MIAH: Hi. How are you everyone?  
10 (Inaudible).

11 Me and my partner, we bought a  
12 Medallion in like 2014, from auction. So  
13 we didn't win. We buy from private owner,  
14 880 plus City tax, 940 altogether. So we  
15 have a loan like \$815,000. So our payment  
16 is monthly. Before it is 6,000, now it's  
17 monthly payment, \$5,000.

18 We can't even make a payment for the  
19 mortgage. We don't make money for that.  
20 We make less money, not even for mortgage  
21 money.

22 So we have two kids. My partner have  
23 three kids. So we have a very hard time.  
24 So we're not sure right now what to do.  
25 Maybe can you help us or maybe take your

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2 Medallion back.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. MIAH: Because we don't have any  
5 passenger. People don't want to take  
6 (inaudible) they taking black car  
7 everyone, Uber.

8 I'm sick. I'm still working for the  
9 payment --

10 CHAIR JOSHI: May I ask you, do you  
11 have trouble finding another driver?

12 MR. MIAH: Nobody want to drive.  
13 It's a handicap.

14 CHAIR JOSHI: So you're having  
15 trouble finding a driver that wants to  
16 drive an accessible taxi?

17 MR. MIAH: Not even one person want  
18 to drive. That's it.

19 CHAIR JOSHI: Okay. Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

22 The next speaker is Zaheer Ahmed, to  
23 be followed by Juan Heredia (phonetic), to  
24 be followed by (inaudible).

25 MR. AHMED: Hi. Good afternoon

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2 everybody. My name is Zaheer Ahmed, and I  
3 have few quick questions to the  
4 Commissioner.

5 My first quick question was: Why is  
6 it that Uber car, when it is not passed on  
7 an inspection center, has to pay \$10, and  
8 a cab, yellow cab will have to pay \$35 to  
9 get back into the inspection center again?

10 And the other question is: Why is it  
11 that a yellow cab driver have to go  
12 through inspection every four months,  
13 meanwhile Uber cars have to go through  
14 inspection every two years, if I'm not  
15 mistaken?

16 And we pretty much stay on the road  
17 12 hours a day, each shift, no matter if  
18 it's a green cab driver, black cab driver  
19 or any other cab driver. Why is it that a  
20 yellow cab driver would have to only go  
21 through -- a green cab driver only have to  
22 go through four months of inspection every  
23 year?

24 And like Uber drivers or any of the  
25 limousine drivers, we all have families,

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2 too. They're allowed to use the phone.  
3 They're (inaudible) calls are coming in,  
4 they're touching their phones, they are  
5 operating the phones, they are calling the  
6 passengers, they are texting.

7 Meanwhile, if I have a family or all  
8 of the cab drivers sitting behind me, they  
9 have families, if some emergency calls  
10 come along and if I have a passenger in my  
11 car and I have to take that call,  
12 meanwhile there is a TLC officer around,  
13 they can pull me over just because I'm on  
14 the phone.

15 This is not fair. And everybody  
16 knows that Uber drivers are using the  
17 phones while they are operating their  
18 cars. It's not even like they're taking  
19 calls, they have to pull over the car and  
20 take the phone call.

21 The other question that I have is:  
22 We pay 50 cents to MTA on each fare, and  
23 we not allowed to use bus lanes. We are  
24 not allowed to pick up or drop off people  
25 close to bus stops. There are cameras on

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2 each bus stop, bus lanes, and you get \$115  
3 fine for that.

4 Why can't you make a rule that says  
5 that if you have a passenger, you are  
6 allowed to go in a bus lane? Meanwhile,  
7 these bus lanes are pretty empty all day  
8 long.

9 And why is it that we are going to  
10 get charged \$4 fee for pickup or drop off,  
11 to bill that has passed (inaudible)  
12 registration to approve it?

13 And one last quick question to you is  
14 that: Why is it that you cannot regulate  
15 prices for Uber?

16 Why is it that Uber sometimes on and  
17 off, put a \$5 flat rate toward Manhattan  
18 or Brooklyn; meanwhile a cab driver can't?  
19 And we are losing money -- a lot of our  
20 fares are going towards those companies  
21 because they have far more better prices.

22 (Timer sounding.)

23 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much for  
24 your testimony.

25 (Applause.)

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2 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is Juan  
3 Heredia, to be followed by Waheed Ahmad,  
4 to be followed by Pablo Urena.

5 (No response.)

6 MR. WILSON: Okay. Mr. Ahmad?

7 (No response.)

8 MR. WILSON: Pablo Urena.

9 MR. URENA (through interpreter):  
10 Good afternoon. My name is Pablo Urena.  
11 I drive a green cab.

12 This is a big deal, this meeting.  
13 The ones that are trying to make the money  
14 for the industry is asking for help from  
15 the TLC. It doesn't make sense, but we  
16 will try to make it.

17 We're just asking for justice, for  
18 all the drivers to be treated equally and  
19 fairly. Right now, instead of sitting  
20 here, we should all be working, us  
21 drivers, being out there driving the  
22 passengers around, and TLC is doing what  
23 they have to do to support us so we could  
24 have an easier and stress-free life.

25 That you understand that the

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2 drivers -- that us drivers are picking up,  
3 according to the TLC, 1 million passengers  
4 per day. If each ride is \$10, can you  
5 imagine how much we're putting into the  
6 City? But we're not taking some of them.

7 We're asking for your help that --  
8 because this industry bloomed when the  
9 City was in crisis, with job losses and  
10 the recession. This is when all of the  
11 drivers came and started applying for TLC  
12 licenses, and that's why we have more  
13 drivers, and we're trying to fulfill that  
14 need. But we can't if we don't have the  
15 backbone of TLC.

16 We're asking -- I'm asking you to  
17 help for the black livery fund, since I  
18 work for the livery base, that they help  
19 us with the livery insurance.

20 They have two rules that is absurd.  
21 First, that the driver has a passenger  
22 from the base. Second, that the driver  
23 picks up a wheelchair accessible.

24 Thank you.

25 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you very much.



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2 (Applause.)

3 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

4 The next speaker will be Zafar Khan  
5 to be followed by Joseph Cadet, to be  
6 followed by Javaid Tariq.

7 (No response.)

8 MR. WILSON: Okay. Is Joseph Cadet  
9 here?

10 (No response.)

11 MR. WILSON: Javaid Tariq?

12 MR. TARIQ: Good afternoon everybody.  
13 My name is Javaid Tariq. I'm working with  
14 the New York Taxi Workers Alliance.

15 As you see that all the long  
16 (inaudible) people were talking about this  
17 economical situation about the taxi  
18 drivers, what is affecting on them by  
19 Uber; it's not Uber economics.

20 But I have come to some different  
21 thing. As you know, maybe a couple days  
22 ago, you guys saw in the New York Times a  
23 big article about how Uber is manipulating  
24 the drivers and playing their games.

25 They are not just people who started

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2 manipulating people by the technology.

3 They learned from TLC.

4 I tell you how. Yeah, it's in the  
5 technology. Yeah, they are manipulating  
6 drivers through their technology. But TLC  
7 is manipulating drivers, sending summons,  
8 unfair summons.

9 Nine million people (inaudible) who  
10 just pick up the phone (inaudible). You  
11 could ask (inaudible) and send them \$500  
12 summons. This is not fair.

13 You people have to do proper  
14 investigation and send someone to the  
15 drivers. When someone is goes through  
16 whole week's income of drivers  
17 (inaudible).

18 TLC is the most revenue-making  
19 machine in New York City.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. TARIQ: (Inaudible) -- drivers.  
22 Every day in our office, if we have 100  
23 people, 80 people come with those summons,  
24 but they have no idea that any private  
25 motorists or any other things, and TLC is

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2 sending those summons.

3 Those summons are so scary. They put  
4 five, six allegation, and then  
5 manipulating them, if you're not going to  
6 pay, you're going to lose your license,  
7 you're going to lose -- like that other  
8 gentleman -- and \$6,000 fines.

9 Please think about it and lower your  
10 fines. Because it is not just making  
11 machine. Everybody is taking money from  
12 hard-working people.

13 The second thing you have to control  
14 on your TLC office are the agents who are  
15 telling everybody -- because when driver  
16 got those summons, they got upset.  
17 There's so many people (inaudible) who has  
18 no TLC representation by the rules and  
19 regulations of TLC, and they're looting  
20 those people.

21 So you have to control that, if you  
22 have to allow only TLC certified  
23 representation as a TLC.

24 CHAIR JOSHI: I just want to make  
25 sure, you're talking about people that

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2 are -- they're offering services to rep  
3 TLC licensees.

4 MR. TARIQ: Yeah.

5 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

6 MR. TARIQ: So they are neither --  
7 because before (inaudible) certified by  
8 the TLC. They are able to stand there.  
9 But now everybody wearing suit and telling  
10 people --

11 (Timer sounding.)

12 MR. TARIQ: -- give me \$200. I will  
13 do that, I will do this. That is  
14 corruption going on there.

15 THE CHAIR: Thank you so much for  
16 your testimony.

17 MR. TARIQ: Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. WILSON: The next speaker will  
20 be Arvind Kumar, followed by Emmanouel  
21 Wambrin, and followed by Xenia Rodas.

22 (No response.)

23 MR. WILSON: Emmanouel Wambrin?

24 MR. WAMBRIN: Good afternoon, ladies  
25 and gentlemen, Commissioners. I'm here to

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2 talk about the yellow Medallion industry.

3 I'm going to read through my notes.

4 The yellow Medallion taxi industry  
5 has been decimated. The taxi garages are  
6 closing left and right. Medallion owners  
7 are declaring bankruptcy. Medallion  
8 owners with large loans who cannot make  
9 their payments are dropping off their  
10 taxis (inaudible) Medallion at the lending  
11 institutions. The drivers cannot make  
12 ends meet. More than half the yellow  
13 Medallion taxis are sitting idle in the  
14 taxi garages. What is going to happen to  
15 them?

16 This has happened because New York  
17 City and TLC both have given the app  
18 for-hire companies free rein to operate an  
19 unlimited number of vehicles, over 9,000  
20 as of last year.

21 Without regulations or concern, we  
22 are drowning the existing yellow Medallion  
23 owners and bases that operate them.

24 There is unfair competition. Yellow  
25 taxis are required to have wheelchair

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accessible vehicles. The for-hire companies do not have the same requirement. And by any chance the TLC has made any push for this rule with them, they, Uber, Lyft, have managed to bypass by diverting the cost to other wheel accessible companies.

There are a limited number of Medallions (inaudible) which are regulated by New York City and the Taxi & Limousine Commission.

The app for-hire companies are asphyxiating the yellow taxi industry by a margin of seven to one. Uber, Lyft and every other app company have an agenda to take over the yellow taxi industry.

With all due respect, what is the TLC, in honoring its commitment to protect the Medallion owners and its taxi drivers as stated in its mission statement?

There's a question from the yellow taxi industry that cries for an answer. Can the TLC auction yellow Medallion taxis for over a million dollars, and then turn

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2 around and allow every app company and  
3 every scheme thought out by everyone else,  
4 decimate their own supposedly protected  
5 industry, the yellow Medallion taxi  
6 industry?

7 I have great respect for Attorney  
8 Matthew Dowdy and I quote an article from  
9 Taxi Magazine from May 2015 by Matthew  
10 Dowdy, esquire. According to the article  
11 he wrote: "Why the New York City  
12 Medallion is alive and well and will  
13 survive. I have extensively studied and  
14 helped oversee the most successful  
15 Medallion system in the world. The New  
16 York City Medallion system is alive and  
17 well, and it will survive minor disruption  
18 by smart phone app (inaudible) Uber, the  
19 New York green borough taxis and other  
20 competitive regulatory forces. But the  
21 facts available data" --

22 (Timer sounding.)

23 MR. WAMBRIN: -- "available data in  
24 the unique aspect of the regulatory  
25 system" --

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2 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you so much for  
3 your testimony.

4 MR. WAMBRIN: -- "show" --

5 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

6 MR. WAMBRIN: -- "progress in the  
7 long term," end of quote.

8 Unfortunately, this is not a fact any  
9 more.

10 CHAIR JOSHI: Can I ask you if you  
11 have --

12 MR. WAMBRIN: Thank you.

13 CHAIR JOSHI: -- if you have your  
14 notes available that we could take a copy  
15 so we have a record of it, if you're  
16 comfortable sharing that?

17 MR. WAMBRIN: Sure, ma'am.

18 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

21 The next speaker is Xenia Rodas, to  
22 be followed by Mohammad Hossen, to be  
23 followed by Mr. Hang.

24 (No response.)

25 MR. RODAS: Commissioner, judges, my



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2 fellow hard-worker driver brothers. We  
3 are here just for hundred people, but  
4 also (inaudible) hundred thousand driver  
5 do their best service in everyday life.

6 This is the business industry of  
7 taxi. And you are here, the Taxi &  
8 Limousine Commission. I am a new  
9 immigrant people here, just three years.  
10 I don't have so much idea how this country  
11 and the rules and regulations.

12 But today, when I listen, the  
13 drivers -- history, like one brother is  
14 1973 driving, but what is his future? Can  
15 anyone answering me? What is his future?  
16 What is my future, my four-year son?

17 No, there is no future. I drive  
18 every day. If I don't drive tomorrow,  
19 what will happen? Who is paying my lease  
20 amount? Who is paying like every  
21 (inaudible)? Nobody. Nobody. So there  
22 is no life.

23 But we are saying that Medallion  
24 driver is the first ambassador of the New  
25 York City. When we speak to the

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2 foreigners in the airport, they are  
3 asking, where do I have to go? Which is  
4 the best thing?

5 We are always giving our best  
6 service. We are the drivers. We are the  
7 first ambassador of New York City. But  
8 nobody say in the papers, only say in the  
9 by mouth, the word.

10 I'm sorry to say that I'm speaking  
11 the different language, I'm speaking  
12 Bengali, you know. I'm from Bangladesh.  
13 But I'm looking for the interpreter, but  
14 she is not here available. Anyway, I'm  
15 trying to explain something.

16 Almost everything is happening, you  
17 know. Almost drivers think everything for  
18 their life --

19 CHAIR JOSHI: We do have someone who  
20 could provide Bengali interpretation.

21 MR. RODAS: Anyway, let me finish,  
22 because there's no time, only three  
23 minutes.

24 CHAIR JOSHI: By the way, your  
25 English is extremely good.

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2 MR. RODAS: Thank you so much for  
3 your cooperation.

4 Anyway, I'm just saying a few word  
5 because there's a limited -- three minutes  
6 in nothing. The life is 300,000 minute.  
7 Every driver's life is suffering here  
8 every day. So three minutes is nothing.

9 I just want to say something cheery.  
10 I don't complain to any other particular,  
11 like yellow, black, nothing. We are  
12 working here. We all want to do -- New  
13 York City is much better and beautiful  
14 city. This is our duty as a driver.

15 So my purpose at least for the driver  
16 future, that every driver should be --  
17 after one year, they should be listed in  
18 the Taxi & Limousine Commission for their  
19 future.

20 The (inaudible) one percent goes to  
21 the driver's account, so then after I say  
22 every year (inaudible) return, the money  
23 goes, and I don't need to beg to the other  
24 person, give me some money, give me some  
25 money, because this money is my working

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2 money, my blood money. So this is my  
3 (inaudible).

4 The minimum fare should be \$10, and  
5 that equal opportunity for everyone, so  
6 that the yellow driver -- you know, the  
7 yellow is our heritage with the New York  
8 City. I'm driving the black car, but I  
9 know the history of yellow, and I respect  
10 all other brothers.

11 Anyway, the Commission, they don't  
12 take more than ten percent Commission.  
13 That Taxi & Limousine Commission is the  
14 highest authority.

15 How the Uber, Lyft, Juno and other  
16 companies take the different Commission?

17 (Timer sounding.)

18 MR. RODAS: This is not fair. If the  
19 Commission is fair, then do something  
20 because --

21 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

22 MR. RODAS: Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 MR. RODAS: By the way, I submitted  
25 my application already by e-mail. Thank

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2 you.

3 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

4 MR. WILSON: The next speaker will be  
5 Mohammad Hossen, followed by Mr. Hang,  
6 followed by Moncef Fadili.

7 Mohammad...

8 MR. HOSSEN: Good afternoon,  
9 Commissioner, and my colleagues.

10 So we came to this country as with  
11 dreams, and we have 200,000 to buy the  
12 Medallions. And after now it's going to  
13 bankruptcy.

14 This is -- why the bankruptcy are  
15 happening? Due to these big companies,  
16 now we have invested 500,000-something and  
17 those billion investments. We have  
18 company that (inaudible) the street. They  
19 don't have any law. They don't have to  
20 follow the law, and they don't have to pay  
21 the high insurance. So we pay the high  
22 insurance.

23 So we work in the same street, same  
24 street, and they have very different  
25 rules, different type of rules.

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2 There is -- how to say? There's big  
3 discriminations for us, the yellow cabs.  
4 And now most of my friends, they're going  
5 to bankruptcy. So banks, they don't  
6 refinance. All these left to take care  
7 of (inaudible) this industries.

8 That's all.

9 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you very much.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

12 The next speaker is Mr. Hang, to be  
13 followed by Moncef Fadili, to be followed  
14 by Celestin Rossini.

15 MR. HANG: Good afternoon,  
16 Commissioners. I wish to greet everyone  
17 in this room, and a big thanks to my  
18 friend (inaudible) for coming here today  
19 with me instead of working out there.

20 My name is Hang. I came by to  
21 represent not just myself, but my fellow  
22 relatives, my friends, and friends of  
23 friends who are also driving for a living.  
24 That's roughly 300 families I personally  
25 know who are struggling because the

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2 industry is out of order. High expenses  
3 and unstable income is hitting each and  
4 every one of us hard.

5 Some of us are living in fears and  
6 worries, not knowing how to pay for the  
7 expense of car loans. I pay 50,000. I  
8 just started the business, and I want  
9 out --

10 CHAIR JOSHI: What's your weekly or  
11 monthly payment, if you don't mind sharing  
12 it?

13 MR. HANG: Six hundred.

14 CHAIR JOSHI: A week?

15 MR. HANG: A week. Less sometimes.

16 Back to story. We need to set a  
17 limit on the numbers of for-hire vehicle  
18 license issued every year, to reduce our  
19 current lease driver oversaturated  
20 condition. That's the problem.

21 Hoping to restore the balance of  
22 supply and demand. And as of now, we  
23 drivers so very often find ourselves in a  
24 situation where we have to wait more than  
25 one hour for just an \$8 job. That's gross.

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2 After net we are left with \$5.20.

3 And for-hire vehicle drivers --

4 CHAIR JOSHI: I'm sorry. On those  
5 like minimum fares where you get \$8, is  
6 there Commission taken out of that?

7 MR. HANG: Yes, of course.

8 CHAIR JOSHI: Okay.

9 MR. HANG: Not to mention gas and  
10 other costs.

11 For-hire vehicle drivers deserve more  
12 relief stands. With more resting points  
13 established, we can schedule our meal time  
14 more easily, take relief when driver needs  
15 to do so.

16 Driving for a living is not an easy  
17 task, especially in Manhattan. One must  
18 be a hundred percent focused on the job,  
19 for both the sake of the client and driver  
20 and the pedestrian. We are not asking for  
21 an easy life. But we just simply believe  
22 that hard work should be well-rewarded.

23 Thank you.

24 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you very much.

25 (Applause.)



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2 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

3 The next speaker will be Moncef  
4 Fadili, to be followed by Celestin  
5 Rossini, to be followed by Carol Guerra --  
6 Garza, excuse me.

7 MR. FADILI: Hi everybody. I came  
8 today to share an idea to reduce drivers  
9 being in the street, or to drive for share  
10 companies.

11 Why not TLC give these black cars  
12 Medallion, so that we can stop new drivers  
13 buying the Medallion, you know? And also,  
14 there's -- like for this new driver will  
15 buy the Medallion, but the old driver, if  
16 you want to sell the Medallion, so TLC  
17 will have 15 percent.

18 And also, why not the TLC will have  
19 their own app, so we can kick all these  
20 companies out? Because in five, ten years  
21 we -- it's not going to be no TLC office  
22 with this other (inaudible). It's true  
23 story.

24 Thank you.

25 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

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2 (Applause.)

3 MR. WILSON: The next speaker will be  
4 Celestin Rossini, followed by Carol Garza,  
5 followed by Gloria Guerra.

6 MR. ROSSINI: Good afternoon  
7 everybody. I do believe this is not first  
8 time I walk over you to see the  
9 Commission. (Inaudible) -- I cannot, but  
10 I miss 22nd floor. You always receive me  
11 very nice. Very good. I'm so happy, from  
12 security to the top.

13 My problem is, I've been driving  
14 since 1978, drive car service for four  
15 years, yellow cab for 34 years. I have my  
16 Medallion since 1983, which I was so  
17 young. Now I'm old. I'm sick. I'm  
18 diabetic, cholesterol, nerve problems, and  
19 sugar -- diabetes, high blood pressure, I  
20 mean.

21 This is now the same Medallion to  
22 (inaudible) which I do believe is very  
23 good to someone to have a handicap, but if  
24 you can. If you cannot, like, you know, I  
25 know (inaudible) of the United Nations

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2 said, you cannot push someone do a job it  
3 cannot do, which believe me, I cannot do.

4 I got my Medallion (inaudible) nine  
5 months. I cannot tell you more  
6 (inaudible) the bank (inaudible) in my  
7 house.

8 That mean in the next two, three  
9 years I can be (inaudible) and at the same  
10 time I will work, and then I can work. I  
11 cannot work -- but I can work.

12 My Medallion sit on the windshield.  
13 This is for the Commissioner. This is not  
14 the first time. Every person I met from  
15 the Queens Boulevard to here told me it's  
16 only the Commissioner can help me.

17 Please, after 38 years driving cab, I  
18 can't work. Do not let me lose my family,  
19 my house, my everything, because I can't  
20 work. Change my Medallion. Take it off  
21 from the wheelchair to normal car.  
22 Because it doesn't mean I don't want to  
23 help people. I want to help people. My  
24 life -- I lost everything and help people,  
25 help you, help that, help this. But the

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2 wheelchair, I cannot do it.

3 And if I put the wheelchair

4 (inaudible) who's going to be responsible?

5 Me. I (inaudible) help nobody. Help me

6 out. Take off my Medallion on your

7 windshield. Let me back in a car to help

8 my family, my grandson, my granddaughter,

9 everybody. Please, this is for

10 Commissioner.

11 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

12 MR. ROSSINI: This is not the first

13 time I come here.

14 (Applause.)

15 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

16 MR. ROSSINI: I got so many things to

17 say, but everybody is here (inaudible)

18 already.

19 Please, take off my Medallion on the

20 windshield, please.

21 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you very much.

22 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is

23 Carol Garza, to be followed by Gloria

24 Guerra, to be followed by Zulker Hyder.

25 MS. GARZA: Good afternoon

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2 Commissioner, committee member, and to my  
3 fellow brothers and is sisters, TLC  
4 drivers. My name is Carol Garza, and this  
5 is my first TLC meeting that I've  
6 attended.

7 I became a driver for Uber two months  
8 ago at the encouragement by friends, who  
9 said that while I was completing my  
10 doctoral dissertation to get my PHD  
11 degree, that I could drive for Uber and  
12 make money to pay my bills until I find my  
13 dream job.

14 Coming to this meeting today and  
15 experiencing the things that I have as a  
16 new Uber driver and a new member of the  
17 Taxi & Limousine Commission, I'm astounded  
18 by the horror stories of these  
19 hard-working men and women and how they  
20 are being oppressed by the green cabs, the  
21 yellow cabs, Uber, Lyft, the TLC  
22 Commission.

23 This is not what I expected to become  
24 a part of, being a new owner of a TLC  
25 license. I have amassed so many parking

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2 tickets, I've had my car towed, because I  
3 don't understand the terrain. I don't  
4 know how it works. This is all new for  
5 me.

6 But in the process of experiencing  
7 all the things that I've had and the  
8 things I've heard here today, it has  
9 caused me to do research about this. I am  
10 a sociologist. And I am now going to take  
11 all of these experiences from myself and  
12 these people, and I'm going to do research  
13 and write and produce a documentary about  
14 all of this, because these are real lives.  
15 These are people's lives, and these  
16 stories need to be told.

17 Thank you so much for listening to  
18 me. And I hope and pray that these  
19 people's words and their pleas to you will  
20 not fall on deaf ears. That is what I  
21 have been hearing since I've been here  
22 today, that nothing is going to change.  
23 There's no reason to come here, because  
24 nothing changes. And the politicians are  
25 in bed with Uber and Lyft and all -- and

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2 the list goes on and on.

3 But I pray and ask that you will take  
4 these pleas and cries from myself and all  
5 these other people seriously.

6 Thank you.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

9 The next speaker is Gloria Guerra, to  
10 be followed by Zulker Hyder, to be  
11 followed by Abubakr Mohamed.

12 MS. GUERRA: Good afternoon. My name  
13 is Gloria Guerra. How are you?

14 I'm here today because my husband and  
15 I bought a dream in 1984. We bought a  
16 Medallion. We bought the right to street  
17 help.

18 Today, we paid that Medallion in  
19 1997, took out my money from my 401(k),  
20 hard-earned working money, and paid off  
21 the Medallion with the dream that this  
22 past year my husband and I could retire  
23 after putting my kids through college,  
24 buying our home.

25 Now my husband is sick. He can't

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2 drive any more, and he's still doing it  
3 because we don't have a choice.

4 Nobody wants his Medallion, because  
5 again it's a wheelchair accessibility. My  
6 husband is disabled. He needs to be  
7 pushed into a car, because he had heart  
8 failure, has three stints, diabetes. He  
9 lost his youth driving that cab for  
10 35 years.

11 This man -- I'm going to get  
12 emotional -- he was sent here from Cuba,  
13 by himself, to get the American dream,  
14 16 years old, by himself. He was lucky to  
15 meet me, though --

16 (Laughter.)

17 MS. GUERRA: -- I hope.

18 And today I sit in my house and I  
19 feel like Linda Blaire, because in my  
20 wildest dream -- you know who Linda Blaire  
21 is, from the Exorcist?

22 In my wildest dream, I thought that  
23 this Medallion today would be worth zero.  
24 I can't get anybody, no brokers, to take  
25 this Medallion, because the first question



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2 is: "Oh, is it wheelchair accessibility?

3 Oh, sorry."

4 So today, I'm here to ask you, as a  
5 businesswoman, what is it that I should do  
6 so that I could just pull my husband out  
7 of this depression? Because I'm going  
8 down right with him. Because right now we  
9 should be sitting in Florida with our feet  
10 up, because we did our time. We worked  
11 hard.

12 My father came here also as an  
13 immigrant -- I'm also Cuban. I was six  
14 years old. He built his life. He was the  
15 first restaurant, Cuban restaurant in Long  
16 Island City. He taught old us to work  
17 hard.

18 He did not take one penny from the  
19 City to help him with his children,  
20 because he had pride. So did my husband.  
21 So do I.

22 What do I do today with this piece of  
23 metal that's worth nothing?

24 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you for your  
25 testimony.

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2 (Applause.)

3 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

4 The next speaker is Zulker Hyder, to  
5 be followed by Abubakr Mohamed, to be  
6 followed by Tendi Sherpa.

7 MR. HYDER: Hi. Good afternoon  
8 everybody. I can only speak long because  
9 all my friends explained a lot of things.  
10 You, Commissioner, you know better than  
11 us.

12 But I ask of you guys, take the gun  
13 and shoot us (inaudible) because it is  
14 very harmful. Because I live almost --  
15 over 18 years. I live hard like this  
16 time. I bought the Medallion, no problem.  
17 I pay every single month over how much I  
18 have to pay, over I pay still now.

19 But my (inaudible) company call me,  
20 sit down, give me \$100,000 cash, I write  
21 down the people in my bag, how I got. I  
22 don't have money, cash money. I have to  
23 pay every month. It's hard. I don't have  
24 a lot of income. Look at my income. Nor  
25 my driver. My driver pays \$750 before,

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2 right now I couldn't find out two, three  
3 months, my driver -- I'm the oldest guy,  
4 almost 60 years old, but I work eight day  
5 a week. I can't afford it.

6 My wife says, "What are you doing?  
7 Honey, what do you do?"

8 I tell her, "Honey, I don't have any  
9 choice."

10 After I took lease, I have lovely  
11 girl, and my son -- I (inaudible) three  
12 days ago. The guy said, give me \$100,000  
13 (inaudible) \$100,000 -- I have to pay.

14 Why you ask me later? How my wife  
15 name.

16 Bring your wife and sign up the  
17 paper. I have to talk with the wife.  
18 Okay.

19 After they decide the 18,000, I pay  
20 \$2,900 a month. My insurance going to be  
21 \$1,000 (inaudible) and liabilities, all  
22 coming like that.

23 My car payment is almost \$1,000.  
24 Right? My cost of fixing everything is  
25 going to be a lot of money, almost \$700

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2 that I pay every month (inaudible) how  
3 much I make. (Inaudible.)

4 I tell you, Commissioner (inaudible)  
5 I take care of you. There is not enough  
6 room. I give you room, the whole team,  
7 and I put up the five, six hundred people  
8 (inaudible). If you give me chance, I  
9 work for you. I bring all people, ask  
10 them, each and every one. It's a big  
11 problem, a very, very big problem.

12 And we complain about you guys and we  
13 complain about the City --

14 (Timer sounding.)

15 MR. HYDER: -- but why is (inaudible)  
16 not problem?

17 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you for your  
18 testimony.

19 MR. HYDER: And after my son, my  
20 son -- my wife give them \$5 each every day  
21 in their school. They don't eat --

22 (Timer sounding.)

23 MR. HYDER: -- they don't take  
24 (inaudible)

25 (Simultaneous speaking.)

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2 MR. HYDER: -- because daddy have to  
3 pay --

4 (Simultaneous speaking.)

5 MR. HYDER: (Inaudible) thousand  
6 dollars, the down payment.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. HYDER: That's why (inaudible) my  
9 money.

10 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you for your  
11 testimony.

12 MR. HYDER: Thank you very much.

13 Go, I bring the big hall, I call 500,  
14 600 people (inaudible) tell you what --

15 CHAIR JOSHI: Sir, it's time for the  
16 next speaker.

17 MR. HYDER: Thank you.

18 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

19 The next speaker is Mahamed Abubakr,  
20 to be followed by Tendi Sherpa, and then  
21 Asim Aknter.

22 MR. MOHAMED: Thank you for the  
23 opportunity to talk tonight, this  
24 afternoon here. Hi everybody. Good  
25 afternoon. My name is Abubakr Mohamed.

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2 My company is All Ride, Inc. And as a  
3 permit owner (inaudible) transportation.

4 When the green taxi come in, I say,  
5 okay, I'm going to take a chance and get  
6 into small business, because I feel like  
7 the taxi is so hard. So I put all my  
8 money into this business. I bought City  
9 permits. I couldn't put in my name, so my  
10 friend put down in his name, and we start  
11 this business.

12 Everything goes wrong, because nobody  
13 anticipate how the TNS or this E-hail  
14 would come into play and, you know, just  
15 change the whole game.

16 The car cannot be leased right now  
17 for more than 300. Because it is  
18 accessible, it use a lot of gas. Many  
19 drivers don't like it. Sometimes  
20 (inaudible) at least one of them at some  
21 point. We are suffering.

22 So I would say basically it's like  
23 \$300. I have to pay 770 for the car, 700  
24 for insurance, which I (inaudible) about  
25 it, \$700 for the insurance every month for

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2 each car; 770 for the payment for five  
3 years.

4 I (inaudible) promised that I will  
5 get 15,000 when I do that. Yes, I bought  
6 the car with a permit, with accessible  
7 wheel. It goes to 41,000. With the  
8 interest, is almost 50, with interest for  
9 five years.

10 Then I had little problems at the  
11 beginning. The permit owner want to  
12 travel, because there is no (inaudible) at  
13 that point. I have to lose immediately  
14 5,000, because the cars are already in.  
15 The insurance is in. Everything is in.  
16 The DMV is in.

17 Just the TLC office at that point, it  
18 was 11:00 a.m. Just we have a problem in  
19 the base signature, says, "Please, I'm  
20 just going to run his car -- it's around  
21 there, so I will just run and do it."

22 She said, "No, we cannot do that."

23 I said, "I'm going to" (inaudible)  
24 permit."

25 She said, "I don't care."

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2 Okay. When I stop talking -- because  
3 two of them are okay, one of them is  
4 (inaudible). So I'm trying to run and do  
5 that so I can have them all go out  
6 together.

7 So once she said, "Sit down," I sneak  
8 out of the TLC in Queens Boulevard, and  
9 I (inaudible) and came back.

10 She said, "How dare you leave the  
11 building? How dare you leave the  
12 building?"

13 It's in the middle of (inaudible).  
14 I'm afraid to lose that much money. So I  
15 have to make the payment for the three  
16 cars, that are already financed.

17 So this shouldn't happen. A  
18 supervisor should be able -- a TLC  
19 supervisor should be able to see the  
20 severity of the loss that you're going to  
21 lose at that point. She didn't see that.

22 (Timer sounding.)

23 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you for your  
24 testimony.

25 MR. MOHAMED: I complained. Nobody



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2 did.

3 The permit -- the permit --

4 (Simultaneous speaking.)

5 MR. MOHAMED: -- 15,000, I get only

6 10,000 --

7 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you for your

8 testimony, sir.

9 MR. MOHAMED: (Inaudible)

10 Commissioner.

11 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you --

12 MR. MOHAMED: Because I supposed to

13 get 15,000, I get 10,000, because of the

14 day of application of --

15 (Simultaneous speaking.)

16 MR. MOHAMED: (Inaudible) of the --

17 an inspection.

18 CHAIR JOSHI: We're going to make

19 sure that you speak to somebody.

20 MR. MOHAMED: Thank you.

21 CHAIR JOSHI: There's people in the

22 back.

23 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

24 (Applause.)

25 MR. WILSON: The next speaker is

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2 Tendi Sherpa, to be followed by Asim  
3 Aknter, to be followed by Sarwar Rafi.

4 MR. SHERPA: Good afternoon TLC  
5 Commissioner (inaudible) City Council  
6 member, lawmakers, service media groups,  
7 and all hard-working ladies and gentlemen.  
8 Thank you for having me.

9 My name is Tendi Sherpa. I'm a green  
10 cab driver. I have been driving green cab  
11 since 2013, the new green cab taxi program  
12 was started. Green cab are probably  
13 our (inaudible) but owners are returning  
14 back to TLC, anticipating green cabs day  
15 by day, months by months.

16 As you know, the Commissioner, since  
17 the first year there were 6,000 green cabs  
18 and second year around 8,000 green cabs,  
19 but today around 5,226 green cabs  
20 available (inaudible) every day.

21 Green cabs are (inaudible) base.  
22 There is not allowed to hail and pick up  
23 e-mail, pick up below 95 -- East 96 and  
24 West 110, and (inaudible).

25 Each day we pick up four trips

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2 (inaudible) green zone to the red zone.

3 Red zone means like inside Manhattan.

4 When we drop a passenger red zone, we need

5 to go back to (inaudible) green zone,

6 which takes around two hours every day.

7 That means I used to drive 6 days,

8 12 hours, no paid time, which is like

9 624 hours in a year for each driver.

10 Everybody knows that time is money.

11 That's why the TLC and the lawmakers need

12 to understand this issue. I mean, get a

13 92,000 license TLC on the road. Each

14 (inaudible) accept e-mail and dispatch any

15 place in New York City, except the green

16 taxi. This is the way, the

17 reason (inaudible) are every day.

18 Last three years, we don't have any

19 improvement, rule changes in our green cab

20 industry.

21 For the (inaudible).

22 2013 to 2014 (inaudible) the grant

23 money for (inaudible) as today. The grant

24 money accessible vehicle today is \$4,000

25 at the beginning, when the (inaudible) and

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2 each inspection permits to give like  
3 \$2,000 we pay, according to TLC.

4 For the street hail, the one of the  
5 most important things we need to  
6 understand is, most of the -- some of the  
7 permit owners, they are using their retire  
8 yellow cab vehicle, make it green.

9 (Timer sounding.)

10 MR. SHERPA: This vehicle is  
11 dangerous for the industry --

12 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you for your  
13 testimony, sir.

14 MR. SHERPA: -- dangerous for the  
15 industry.

16 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you for your  
17 testimony, sir.

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

20 The next speaker will be Asim Aknter,  
21 followed by Sarwar Rafi, followed by  
22 Karimul Haider.

23 (No response.)

24 MR. RAFI: Good afternoon,  
25 Commissioner and all. My name is Sarwar

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2 Rafi. (Inaudible) -- all the friends and  
3 family, with all of our friends basically  
4 in here, since we are same page. I'm  
5 driving taxi. I am Medallion owner  
6 (inaudible) \$1 million.

7 Is everybody getting the problem  
8 about the mortgage? I don't have to  
9 explain so many thing, because you know  
10 better than me. You are making good.

11 So it's my idea -- it's my idea, not  
12 your idea, which is we are paying  
13 mortgage, \$4,000, and \$1,000 for the  
14 insurance. So it's almost \$5,000 only for  
15 the car and Medallion -- insurance and  
16 Medallion, not with the car. So if you go  
17 with all together, that's almost \$6,000.  
18 I think nobody makes \$6,000 every month.

19 So it's my idea, if you go  
20 (inaudible) see to it that the insurance  
21 company or the bank, they do (inaudible)  
22 with us, they give us. We're not going to  
23 walk over (inaudible) and go back. This  
24 is our job. I need to do something. I'm  
25 not going to go for any other job.

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2 CHAIR JOSHI: Can I ask you  
3 something? Most mortgages that we've seen  
4 for Medallions are three-year -- they  
5 finance every three years.

6 MR. RAFI: I -- explain --

7 CHAIR JOSHI: Is there any products  
8 where the monthly payments could be lower  
9 and they are spread out over a longer  
10 period of time, like a 30-year house  
11 mortgage that you usually see?

12 MR. RAFI: (Inaudible) -- like that.  
13 If you go with the bank -- I spoke with my  
14 attorney, and my attorney give us advice  
15 to help us into two percent interest  
16 rate (inaudible) the seven year. After  
17 that, 35 year. Then I think affordable  
18 for everybody. It's going to be like 200  
19 -- 2,200 to 2,800 --

20 CHAIR JOSHI: It would reduce your  
21 monthly?

22 MR. RAFI: Yes.

23 CHAIR JOSHI: Do you see many banks  
24 offering that?

25 MR. RAFI: I do that only, and we're

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2 almost 200 people together.

3 CHAIR JOSHI: Okay.

4 MR. RAFI: So I -- my attorney spoke  
5 with Signature Bank. They offered us  
6 2.99. But it's still fighting with the  
7 two percent, two and a half percent. They  
8 give us (inaudible)

9 CHAIR JOSHI: We would like to maybe  
10 get your contact information and learn  
11 more about some of that. We don't,  
12 obviously, regulate banks or insurance  
13 companies, but it is very helpful for us  
14 to know what the common practices are.

15 MR. RAFI: But you still have power,  
16 you still have power. You (inaudible).  
17 So you should talk with them, if you  
18 pressure them. So I think we are safe.

19 If we pay like 2,800, 2,500, 2,600, I  
20 think most owners are happy, and we  
21 (inaudible). We're not going to walk  
22 away. Where I going to go? I have kids,  
23 family, and everybody. We're not going to  
24 go back to our country. We have  
25 (inaudible) 23, most people live there.

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2 So I think if you help us with our  
3 loan (inaudible) for most people  
4 (inaudible) I so far am fine.

5 (Applause.)

6 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you very much.

7 MR. WILSON: Thank you. Let me call  
8 Mr. Asim Aknter again.

9 MR. AKNTER: Good afternoon. My name  
10 is Asim Aknter. With the New York Taxi  
11 Workers Alliance.

12 The thing -- I mean, a lot has been  
13 said. One thing I wanted to mention is  
14 that we filed the federal lawsuit against  
15 Uber Technologies, alleging, you know,  
16 the -- offer pricing issue, black car  
17 fund, sale tax, predatory leasing, minimum  
18 wage and overtime.

19 And Uber had filed a motion to  
20 dismiss all the charges, which was denied.

21 Not only that, the federal judge also  
22 said that he's going to fast-track the  
23 case because of the economics and the  
24 drivers that are involved.

25 We don't have to wait for the, you



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2 know, ruling from the courts. I really  
3 believe all drivers -- that's why all  
4 those drivers that came, that TLC had a  
5 power to regulate.

6 You have one sector, yellow sector,  
7 which have all the regulation, and then  
8 you have all the drivers, you know, have a  
9 regulation for all the drivers. But then  
10 you have a black sector, which are not  
11 regulated as the other sector.

12 And that's where really cause  
13 economic hardship to the drivers. You  
14 know, you have yellow expense here, and we  
15 have to pay 60 percent more than the  
16 black, but then the black, they're paying  
17 less but they're making less money, and  
18 then they have to work more hours. It has  
19 to be done something.

20 And then there are lenders out there  
21 who are selling the cars to the driver,  
22 where they will sell them a car for the --  
23 over the two-year agreement, and they will  
24 charge them \$500. And (inaudible) driver,  
25 by the end they will pay them \$80,000 --

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2 60,000 -- sorry -- from \$70,000 to  
3 \$80,000.

4 We have done that in yellow industry,  
5 where there was a cap of how much of the  
6 down payment and (inaudible). The same  
7 thing has to be done for the black car  
8 sector.

9 And also, we have to bring all the  
10 app-based companies under TLC regulations.

11 Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

14 The next speaker is Caramel Hada  
15 (phonetic).

16 Okay. Lhakpa -- excuse me for  
17 butchering it -- Lhakpa Ringi Sharpa.

18 MR. SHARPA: Good afternoon. My name  
19 is Lhakpa Sharpa, and I'm representing  
20 like (inaudible) communities from Nepal  
21 and Tibet. We have almost like 25  
22 Medallion owners here in New York City.

23 And due to like -- we bought  
24 Medallion like 2009, like ten, we almost  
25 pay 600,000, some pay 800,000.

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2 Due to TLC negligence, like now we  
3 are suffering and getting hard time to pay  
4 the mortgage. And we got a call from bank  
5 like every morning, every evening, you  
6 know. So what I do now? What are you  
7 going to do now?

8 CHAIR JOSHI: Could I ask you the  
9 same question I asked the other  
10 gentleman --

11 MR. SHARPA: We have like 200 driver  
12 now. We have meeting every week.

13 CHAIR JOSHI: Have the banks offered  
14 you any --

15 MR. SHARPA: They offer like every  
16 length. So sometimes they offer, "Give me  
17 \$10,000. Give me \$20,000."

18 CHAIR JOSHI: Do they offer different  
19 terms for the loan?

20 MR. SHARPA: They offer like, you  
21 know, three percent, I'll give you 2.5.  
22 This is not like work, you know.

23 And I have one more question, like --

24 CHAIR JOSHI: Do your mortgages now  
25 balloon after three years?

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2 MR. SHARPA: My mortgage is about --  
3 I'm waiting for refinancing last eight  
4 months. Most all of them, they waiting  
5 almost a year to refinance.

6 CHAIR JOSHI: Okay. Like I said to  
7 the other gentleman, we don't regulate the  
8 banks, but I would very much like to  
9 continue the conversation on what kinds of  
10 deals they're offering you, and see if  
11 there's anything that we can help or  
12 assist in that situation.

13 MR. SHARPA: Because either we have  
14 to -- we want to leave this job now. It's  
15 like we can't survive this kind of way,  
16 like every day like hustling with like,  
17 you know. I just want to say that.

18 And I want to say one more thing, the  
19 price, like if it comes from 96th to  
20 Houston Street, like for the taxi drivers,  
21 according to TLC rule, if you charge \$10  
22 more, you lose your license.

23 But this app company, like the same  
24 destination, every day you have to pay a  
25 different price. You pay like some days

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2 you pay \$10, another day when it's raining  
3 you pay like \$50. They don't lose their  
4 license. So we lose a lot of business,  
5 please. I just want to say.

6 Thank you very much.

7 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you very much.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

10 The next speaker is Hassan Sherpa  
11 (phonetic).

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: He's already.

13 MR. WILSON: He's already spoken?  
14 Thank you.

15 The next speaker is (inaudible).

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: He had to leave.

17 MR. WILSON: Okay. And then our last  
18 speaker is Mohammad Chaudhary.

19 MR. CHAUDHARY: Good evening. I have  
20 two things that I want to express. One is  
21 like you guys have no sales tax in the  
22 yellow cab business, right? As we Uber  
23 drivers, we do pay the sales tax.

24 The second thing is, there should be  
25 a minimum wage, with no overtime. Like we

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2 are living in the apartment, right. Every  
3 year it's increase. I pay more. So with  
4 this business I'm here, like I've been  
5 doing cab for like Uber and the cab for  
6 like eight years. But everything is  
7 coming down. Nothing has gone up.

8 I remember the yellow, prices went up  
9 but, over here, Uber should run underneath  
10 the TLC, because today it's ruin the  
11 yellow cab business. Tomorrow it's going  
12 to be the black cars. And then it's the  
13 self-driving cars.

14 And then how you guys going to find  
15 self-driving cars too, right? And we're  
16 all going to lose our job, if you have  
17 done nothing today. So that's all.

18 Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 CHAIR JOSHI: Thank you.

21 Do we have one other person?

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Previous speaker.)

23 Yes, Commissioner. When I came here, I  
24 didn't say my point. The main reason I am  
25 here. This can be off the book. It's

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2 okay.

3 Just, the way they calculate my  
4 grant --

5 CHAIR JOSHI: You know, I'm sorry,  
6 we're going to have to cut you off,  
7 because everybody has been allotted the  
8 same amount of time, and I want to make  
9 sure we treat everybody the same.

10 So you're happy to speak to people in  
11 the back about your grant. We have people  
12 that can stay and speak to you for as long  
13 as you need to.

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you.

15 CHAIR JOSHI: Okay. I want to thank  
16 everybody. I want to thank also the TLC  
17 staff who are here today, who have helped  
18 put this hearing together.

19 It is now -- you know, the people  
20 that are left, good for you, because it  
21 was a very long hearing. It's the first  
22 hearing of this kind that's been really  
23 focused on drivers across all sectors.

24 I don't think it's been an easy  
25 hearing for any of us. It certainly has

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2 not been an easy hearing for the  
3 Commissioners, and I know it hasn't been  
4 an easy hearing for all the drivers, no  
5 matter what sector they work in, talking  
6 about some of the difficulties they face.

7 And we will -- certainly, this won't  
8 be the last time we have this kind of  
9 hearing. It's obviously needed. And  
10 though this is the first time, the need is  
11 apparent from the number of people that  
12 came today.

13 And we really appreciate, one, that a  
14 lot of people actually sacrificed money  
15 today by coming here, especially on a  
16 rainy day when it's easier to earn money,  
17 and two, by telling us some of the  
18 personal details of their own struggle,  
19 which may not be that comfortable to talk  
20 about in a public arena, in order to help  
21 advocate for yourself and your fellow  
22 drivers.

23 So thank you everybody very much for  
24 coming. It has been a long and difficult  
25 day, but I don't regret that we had this



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hearing. I think that we'll all be better  
for it. Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR JOSHI: And that ends the  
meeting at 3:50 p.m.

(Time noted: 3:50 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
  : ss.:  
COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

I, NICOLE ELLIS, a Notary Public for and within  
the State of New York, do hereby certify:

I reported the proceedings in the within-entitled  
matter, and that the within transcript is a true  
record of such proceedings.

I further certify that I am not related to any of  
the parties to this action by blood or by marriage  
and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of  
this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand  
this 12th day of April 2017.

\_\_\_\_\_  
NICOLE ELLIS

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