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“Taxis Drive 25 Day” on 2/5 Promotes Role of Taxis to Reach Vision Zero

Cab Riders United, the TLC, Transportation Alternatives, and more join forces to raise awareness of 25mph speed limit and urge cab riders to consider tipping 25% to thank drivers for driving 25mph or less

NEW YORK, NY – Organizations representing cab riders, drivers, safe streets advocates and policy makers came together today to create “Taxis Drive 25 Day.” The groups are working to raise awareness of the 25 mph speed limit, the important role of NYC’s 75,000 taxis and other for-hire vehicles in setting the pace on our streets, and to ensure that cab riders and drivers are working together to support the policy and save lives.

The 25 mph citywide speed limit was recently implemented as part of Mayor Bill de Blasio’s Vision Zero plan to help achieve the goal of eradicating traffic fatalities and serious injuries. To celebrate Taxis Drive 25 Day, advocates are asking cab riders to talk to their drivers about the speed limit and urging passengers to “tip 25 to say thanks for driving 25.” Cards featuring cab safety tips and fun facts are being distributed today at the Grand Central and Penn Station taxi stands.

“The 25 mph speed limit is safer for everyone – taxi passengers, drivers, and the New Yorkers outside the vehicle,” said Michael O’Loughlin, Campaigns Director of Cab Riders United. “In year two of Vision Zero, cab riders are looking for continued improvement to education and certification standards for taxi and for-hire drivers, safer design standards for TLC-licensed vehicles, and to close the loophole that exempts taxis and for-hire vehicles from the state’s mandatory seatbelt law.”

Enforcement of Vision Zero policies has already reduced traffic fatalities and resulted in fewer collisions. Advocates are working together to raise awareness and encourage cab passengers and drivers to work together to make streets safer.

“People look to taxi drivers to get where they need to go safely and conveniently,” said Taxi and Limousine Commission Chair and Commissioner Meera Joshi, who participated in today’s effort. “We’re putting the emphasis on the safety today, and asking passengers to perform a crucial role by communicating to their drivers that they prefer safety over speed, and to tip 25 percent for 25 MPH. Time is money for taxi drivers, but they can have it both ways when passengers send them a tangible message of appreciation for putting safety first. Education is a central component of Mayor de Blasio’s Vision Zero plan, and I am proud to say that our taxi drivers have always been receptive to learning how best to serve their passengers.”

"This 25 percent tipping initiative is a great way for taxi riders to recognize and reward drivers who follow the new 25 mph citywide speed limit, which saves lives and has broad support across the five boroughs," said Paul Steely White, Executive Director of Transportation Alternatives. "Professional drivers who operate taxis, liveries and other for-hire vehicles are central to the Vision Zero effort because they set the tone on New York City streets. We at Transportation Alternatives, along with our 115,000 supporters, join all New Yorkers in thanking taxi operators for driving safely."

"Even though taxi and livery drivers work 60-hours on the streets, serving close to one million passengers a day, and you are safer in a taxi or livery than any other vehicle, it's not often that drivers' labor and safety records are recognized, let alone appreciated," said Bhairavi Desai, Executive Director of New York Taxi Workers Alliance. "We want to thank Cab Riders United and our other partners for standing with us today, and appreciating drivers' hard work and sacrifices to keep New York moving safely. Tips make it possible for most drivers to earn above minimum wage. No worker should have to choose between earning a living and safety. Today is a reminder that our riders agree with that."

"Green Taxi drivers serve our neighborhoods around the city and strive for safety every day. On Taxis Drive 25 Day, we really appreciate that passengers might want to thank us with "a little extra green" for Green Taxi drivers' hard work to get New Yorkers where they need to go – safely at 25 mph or less," said Nancy Soria, Vice President of Green Taxi New York.

"New York taxi drivers are among the safest, most professional and hardworking drivers anywhere in the country which is why we always encourage our passengers to tip their drivers well," said Ron Sherman, President of the Metropolitan Taxicab Board of Trade. "But today, we have a special request of our 750,000 daily passengers - if you were ordinarily going to tip your driver 15% or 20%, tip your driver 25% in recognition of the Mayor's Vision Zero program and one of its core components, the new 25 mph city speed limit. You will be encouraging safe driving and rewarding hardworking cabbies. Together, we can all make a big difference in saving lives and supporting livelihoods."

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About Cab Riders United

Cab Riders United works to provide a voice for the 1.2 million daily passengers who ride in New York City's taxicabs and for-hire vehicles and for the countless other New Yorkers and New York businesses that rely on taxicab and for-hire vehicle service to help keep the city moving every day. The mission of Cab Riders United is to improve the safety, quality of service and environmental impact of New York City's taxicab industry. For more information: cabridersunited.org

About the NYC TLC:

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) was created by the New York City Charter in 1971, and is the agency responsible for the regulation and licensing of almost 200,000 yellow medallion taxicabs and for-hire vehicles, their drivers, and the businesses that operate and support their industries. It is recognized as the largest and most active taxi and limousine regulatory body in the United States.

To find out more about the TLC, or to review its rules, regulations and procedures, we encourage you to visit www.nyc.gov/taxi or call 311 in New York City, or 212-NEW-YORK from outside of New York City.