

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing to urge you to adopt the proposed Taxi of Tomorrow rule at your June 20 meeting. We believe this rule will greatly enhance the quality of taxi service in New York City.

Taxicabs form a critical piece of the City's transportation network, complementing our unparalleled subway and bus service, and transporting some 600,000 people a day. In particular, taxis provide crucial transportation support to the midtown and downtown Manhattan business districts, to the airports, and to the City's tourism industry.

We commend the TLC for keeping taxicab service reasonably priced, compared to competitor cities, and for enabling taxi passengers to pay by credit card and to use taxi-hailing smartphone apps. Credit card acceptance, in particular, has proved to be of great value to taxi passengers.

We believe the Taxi of Tomorrow will be an even greater advance in customer service. We recognize that the vehicles currently used as taxicabs were designed for general consumer use and have been retrofitted for taxi use. By contrast, the Taxi of Tomorrow vehicle has been custom designed for use as a taxicab, and will provide a new standard of safety, comfort and passenger amenities:

- **Safety:** Unlike current taxis, the Taxi of Tomorrow vehicle will meet federal crash-test standards with the partition installed, and will reduce the risk of head and face injuries to passengers. The vehicle's front is specifically designed to minimize pedestrian injuries in the event of a collision, and the sliding doors will prevent the 'dooring' of cyclists.
- **Passenger comfort:** After safety, the most significant shortcoming in much of the current fleet is a lack of adequate legroom for rear-seat passengers. The Taxi of Tomorrow vehicle includes a spacious passenger compartment that will accommodate even taller passengers. It also provides a separate heating and air conditioning system controlled by rear-seat passengers.
- **Ease of entry and exit:** Many older passengers and passengers with limited mobility have difficulty entering and exiting the SUV and minivan vehicles that now compose about half of the taxi fleet. The Taxi of Tomorrow vehicle includes a retractable step, grab handles that will make entry and exit much easier, and an automatic light to alert pedestrians and cyclists when a passenger is entering or exiting the vehicle.
- **Driver/passenger communication:** The ToT is equipped with an intercom enabling clear communication between the driver and rear-seat passengers. The intercom includes hearing loop technology to assist passengers with hearing aids.

- **Panoramic roof:** The Taxi of Tomorrow vehicle is equipped with a panoramic roof that is substantially larger than a typical sunroof, giving passengers thrilling, vertical views of the cityscape. Visitors to the City will particularly appreciate this feature.
- **Reading lights, floor lights and charging ports.** The Taxi of Tomorrow includes passenger reading lights similar to those found in luxury “black cars,” as well as floor lights that illuminate when the door opens, to help exiting passengers notice items left on the floor. The Taxi of Tomorrow also includes charging ports for phones and tablets.

In sum, we believe the Taxi of Tomorrow will provide a passenger experience markedly superior to that provided by current taxis, and thus will help New York City continue to improve its position as a choice location for businesses and an attractive destination for tourists. We urge you to vote in support of the Taxi of Tomorrow rule on June 20.

Nancy Ploeger
President
Manhattan Chamber of Commerce
(as one who took a test ride in the Taxi of Tomorrow!)

Kathy Wylde
President/CEO
Partnership for New York City

Lee Sander
President/CEO
HAKS
Chair
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William C. Rudin
Chairman & CEO
Rudin Management Company
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