

In Re Hearing NYC - Taxi & Limousine Commission
April 5, 2022

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NEW YORK CITY
TAXI & LIMOUSINE COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING

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Held Remotely
Via Zoom
April 5, 2022
10:02 a.m.

H E L D B E F O R E:
RYAN WANTTAJA, Acting Commissioner
SHERRYL ELUTO, Acting General Counsel

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1 S P E A K E R S :

2 MOHAMMAD HOSSEN

3 JAIME SERRANO

4 PETER MAZER

5 MANJINDER SINGH

6 BHAIRAVI DESAI

7 VINOD MALHOTRA

8 ERHAN TUNCEL

9 MD MOTALEB

10 GOLAM TALUKDER

11 JOSEPH ETIENNE

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1 MS. SCOTT: Good morning. Today's
2 public hearing is about to begin. This
3 hearing is being conducted remotely via Zoom,
4 and is being simulcasted to the TLC's
5 website, livestream and Facebook accounts.

6 All persons wishing to testify were
7 asked to sign up in advance of the hearing.
8 All registered speakers are joining the
9 meeting via Zoom. If you are speaking today,
10 your audio and video were automatically
11 muted.

12 When your name is called, the moderator
13 will activate your account and you will have
14 control of your camera and microphone. When
15 ready, please state your name and affiliation
16 and then proceed with your testimony.

17 Public testimony will be limited to
18 three minutes per speaker. Any additional
19 comments may be submitted in writing to the
20 Commission. When your testimony is complete,
21 your audio and video will be muted by the
22 moderator.

23 Closed captioning is available for
24 today's meeting. Consecutive interpretation
25 is also available. During the sign-up

1 process, individuals were asked if they
2 require language assistance. Spanish and
3 Haitian Creole interpreters were requested
4 and have been made available.

5 When your name is called, please speak
6 and the interpreter will repeat your
7 testimony in English.

8 Thank you for your attention. Please
9 hold until we are ready to begin. We will
10 repeat this message in Spanish and Haitian
11 Creole.

12 Spanish Interpreter, please go ahead.

13 SPANISH INTERPRETER: Hello?

14 MS. SCOTT: Spanish Interpreter, please
15 unmute your microphone and reread my
16 testimony, please.

17 SPANISH INTERPRETER: Okay.

18 (Translation in progress.)

19 MS. SCOTT: Thank you, Spanish
20 Interpreter.

21 Haitian Creole Interpreter, please go
22 ahead.

23 (Translation in progress.)

24 MS. SCOTT: Thank you to both
25 interpreters.

1 I will now yield the floor to Acting
2 Commissioner Ryan Wanttaja.

3 MR. WANTTAJA: Okay. Hi, good morning.
4 I am Acting Commissioner Ryan Wanttaja. I am
5 joined today by TLC's Acting General Counsel
6 Sherryl Eluto and Commissioners Mitchell,
7 Sorrentino, Kest and Aguado.

8 We have two rule packages for public
9 hearings before us today. We're going to
10 have the hearing on the proposed airport flat
11 rate rules first and the proposed financial
12 disclosure rule second.

13 In the first rule package up for a
14 public hearing, the TLC is considering
15 increasing the flat fare between Manhattan
16 and the JFK Airport from \$52 to \$65, and
17 creating a new \$39 flat rate for trips
18 between LaGuardia and Manhattan below West
19 110th Street and East 96th Street, or
20 otherwise, the Hail Exclusionary Zone.

21 So, those are the top line numbers in
22 the rules, but I'll say a few words about why
23 we're considering these rates and how we
24 arrived at those numbers.

25 Airport trips are typically a lucrative

1 source of income for drivers. Fare data from
2 June 2019, 2020 and 2021 showed that the
3 average airport pick-up at both LaGuardia and
4 JFK was \$36.41 compared to the \$10.68
5 citywide average for fares.

6 However, taxi hold lot wait times
7 negate a fair amount of those higher earnings
8 and discourage drivers from going to the
9 airports. At LaGuardia, drivers wait in lots
10 for an average of an hour and 18 minutes.
11 And at JFK, it's an hour and 45 minutes.

12 The proposed fares will compensate
13 drivers for that wait time at a \$15 per hour
14 minimum wage. And since the flat rates apply
15 both to and from the airports, split that
16 time between the pickup and the dropoff.

17 So, at JFK where drivers wait on
18 average an hour and 45 minutes, a \$15 minimum
19 wage would compensate them \$26.25 for that
20 time. So, we divided that number in half to
21 account for the trips to and from the airport
22 and added \$13.13 to the current fare of \$52,
23 amounting to a final fare of \$65.13 plus
24 taxes, tolls and tips.

25 Similarly, at LaGuardia drivers wait on

1 average an hour and 18 minutes. A \$15
2 minimum wage would compensate them \$19.50 for
3 that time. And dividing that amount in half
4 results in \$9.75 being added to the fare.

5 To calculate the fare onto which we
6 would add that amount, we looked at the
7 current average metered rate between
8 LaGuardia and the Hail Exclusionary Zone,
9 which is \$29.40. Adding \$9.75, the final
10 fare is \$39.15 plus taxes, tolls and tips.

11 Importantly, these rates will represent
12 about a 25 percent increase in driver
13 earnings on all New York City airport trips,
14 but this is just the start. Airport trips,
15 while important, are just a piece of the
16 driver income puzzle. We need to ensure
17 drivers earn a liveable wage after expenses,
18 not just on airport trips but on all trips.

19 TLC has not adjusted the taxi metered
20 rate of fares in over a decade, and has not
21 adjusted the underlined minimum per
22 minute/per mile rates for high-volume drivers
23 in over two years.

24 So, this spring and this summer, we are
25 going to go beyond the airport rates and look

1 holistically at the taxi meter rate of fare
2 and the high-volume driver pay rates, to
3 ensure that driver pay across sectors keeps
4 up with expenses.

5 This is important and complicated work,
6 and we hope that drivers and members of the
7 public will work with us as we actively
8 solicit feedback from you during this
9 process.

10 So, with that, I'll hand it over to
11 Acting General Counsel Sherryl Eluto, to
12 begin the public hearing on the proposed
13 airport flat fare rules before us today.

14 MS. ELUTO: Good morning. When I call
15 your name, you can unmute your microphone and
16 begin your testimony. Each speaker will be
17 allotted three minutes to speak. The time
18 limit will be strictly enforced.

19 A 30-second warning will be provided,
20 and then you will need to conclude your
21 testimony when your time limit is up. The
22 video of this hearing and copies of all
23 written comments will be provided to the
24 Commissioners prior to the vote on these
25 rules at the next Commission meeting.

1 With that, we'll begin our public
2 hearing, and I will call on our first
3 speaker.

4 Mohammad Hossen, please unmute your
5 microphone and you may begin.

6 Mohammed Hossen?

7 MR. HOSEN: Good morning, Acting
8 Commissioner Ryan Wanttaja, the panelists and
9 my fellow drivers of New York City. My name
10 is Mohammad Hossen. I am the co-founder of
11 the Driver's Cooperative.

12 My testimony is in favor of the FHV
13 industry, not only for the airport fare,
14 besides all fare increase should be applied
15 for the FHV industry. So, here is the point:
16 Mr. Ryan Wanttaja already mentioned what the
17 drivers want to say, that the increase in the
18 price, everything is difficult to surviving
19 now.

20 So, all the information already
21 Mr. Ryan mentioned, just I want to edit this
22 one point: From LaGuardia to Manhattan or
23 any other borough is a -- \$39 is not
24 sufficient. I want to propose that at least
25 \$50 and up to 7 miles; that is my proposal to

1 LaGuardia.

2 And JFK, \$65 is a very low fare right
3 now in 2022. I propose that it should be \$85
4 for everyone -- FHV car, it doesn't matter.
5 It can be yellow taxi. It can be black car.
6 It should be -- keep like the minimum fare
7 \$85 from JFK to Manhattan, and \$50 any car,
8 like it doesn't matter -- it's Uber, Lyft,
9 whatever. The driver should get minimum \$50.

10 Okay. So, here is the point: So, TLC
11 is a guardian for the FHV industry. It's
12 more than 150,000 drivers are working for
13 this and most of them immigrant people from
14 different countries. And now, you see the
15 situation, the driver passengers, the fare
16 percent is going down because of the pandemic
17 and the recent war against the Ukraine. So,
18 the drivers are suffering for every day.

19 So, now my proposal is to consider my
20 proposal to reconsider and so that the
21 driver -- so that they can live --

22 TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds left.

23 MR. HOSSEN: Yeah. I'm really happy to
24 say that the panelist, Acting Commissioner,
25 that the Driver's Cooperative always with the

1 FHV industry and support for the TLC.

2 And thank you so much, everyone, for
3 giving me the chance. Have a good day.

4 MS. ELUTO: Thank you for your
5 testimony.

6 Next up we have Jaime Serrano, and he
7 will need a Spanish interpreter.

8 Mr. Serrano?

9 SPANISH INTERPRETER: Señor Serrano?

10 MS. ELUTO: Mr. Serrano, please unmute
11 your mic.

12 MR. SERRANO: Yes, good morning.

13 Okay. My testimony is about price.
14 The flat rate for \$39 is not fair for many
15 people. I think it will be fair because not
16 all the people go to Manhattan. However,
17 they go to Brooklyn, Queens and other places.
18 And I think the beginning will be to
19 LaGuardia to \$7.50, it will be more
20 convenient for everybody.

21 Okay. Yes, if we consider the waiting
22 time for -- the driver has to do for one hour
23 to hour and a half at the airport, and plus
24 short local trip is not -- we are not -- we
25 are losing. Yes, I think that from the --

1 the \$15 from J.F. Kennedy, it can work, but I
2 think that \$65 to JFK will be much better
3 than the \$29 of LaGuardia.

4 Yes. I think as it was said earlier,
5 it would be better to increase a fare that
6 has been applied for more than ten years.

7 And that's all what I have to say.

8 MS. ELUTO: Okay. Thank you for your
9 testimony.

10 Next, we have Peter Mazer, and he will
11 be followed by Golam Talukder.

12 Mr. Mazer, you can begin. You have to
13 unmute. Still muted.

14 MR. MAZER: Good morning, Chairperson
15 Wanttaja and members of the Commission. My
16 name is Peter Mazer and I am general counsel
17 to the Metropolitan Taxicab Board of Trade
18 and Association, representing the owners and
19 operators of licensed medallion taxicabs.

20 I speak today generally in favor of the
21 proposed rules related to the airport flat
22 fare rates, suggest some modifications, and
23 urge the Commission to begin consideration of
24 a comprehensive rate of fare increase as well
25 as a fuel surcharge.

1 A flat fare rate from trips from JFK to
2 Manhattan has been in effect since 1996. The
3 flat fare was extended to include trips from
4 Manhattan to the airport in 2006, and the
5 current flat fare rate of \$52 has not been
6 increased in ten years.

7 The rate is insufficient to incentivize
8 drivers to serve the airport. The Port
9 Authority frequently reports that there are
10 cab shortages at critical hours and a fare of
11 \$52 is insufficient to encourage drivers to
12 provide badly needed service, since drivers
13 are frequently required to wait in the
14 holding lot an hour or more to obtain a fare
15 and then face considerable traffic congestion
16 at virtually every hour of the day and night.

17 At \$52, drivers on average earn less
18 per hour serving the airport than they do on
19 other metered trips. The TLC is currently
20 recommending an increase to \$65. We
21 recommend that an increase of \$70 be
22 considered, which would provide drivers with
23 needed incentives to serve the airport and
24 adequately compensate drivers for the time
25 spent completing a trip to and from JFK.

1 Even at \$70, taxicab fares would still be
2 competitive with other forms of for-hire
3 transportation.

4 We support the adoption of flat fare
5 for trips to and from LaGuardia. We would
6 recommend that the exclusion to trips to and
7 from Upper Manhattan contained in the
8 proposed rules also be extended to include
9 Roosevelt Island.

10 A review of data shows that the average
11 metered fare on a trip from LaGuardia to
12 Roosevelt Island is only about \$25, similar
13 to the average metered rate of fare for a
14 trip to Upper Manhattan. While we support
15 the concept of a flat fare, we believe a flat
16 fare of \$35 -- excuse me, \$39 may not be
17 sufficient, particularly on a trip to and
18 from Lower Manhattan and during times when
19 traffic is heaviest.

20 A flat fare in the \$45 to \$50 range may
21 be necessary to adequately compensate
22 drivers. These proposed fare adjustments are
23 an important first step, but we wish to
24 dialogue with the Commission --

25 TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

1 MR. MAZER: -- on other rates of fare
2 adjustments, including the following: Adding
3 an equivalent amount, \$2.50, to the trips
4 presently not subject to the MTA congestion
5 surcharge to an increase in driver incomes
6 and incentivize drivers to serve the outer
7 boroughs.

8 Gasoline surcharge automatically
9 adjusted based on increases and decreases on
10 average gas prices and a general increase in
11 the mileage charge in taxicabs, a rate that
12 has not been increased since 2012 --

13 TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired.

14 MR. MAZER: Sure. Thank you. And
15 thank you for providing me the opportunity to
16 testify this morning. And if the
17 Commissioners have any questions, I would be
18 happy to answer.

19 MS. ELUTO: Thank you for your
20 testimony.

21 Next, we have Golam Talukder, followed
22 by Manjinder Singh.

23 Mr. Talukder, you can unmute and begin.

24 Sorry, did we lose Mr. Talukder?

25 MR. SINGH: Hello?

1 MS. ELUTO: Yes, I'm sorry. Is this
2 Mr. Singh or Mr. Talukder?

3 MR. SINGH: Yes, Mr. Singh, Manjinder
4 Singh.

5 MS. ELUTO: Yes, go ahead.

6 MR. SINGH: Good morning to all
7 Commissioners, and I am very humble and
8 respect for the new young Commissioner and
9 he's slightly long sleep and a wake up is
10 great, humble and welcome.

11 And we want \$65 flat rate from JFK to
12 the City or City to JFK is good. Plus, we
13 want at least \$7.50 fuel surcharge when we go
14 to the short trip anywhere, it doesn't
15 matter, from Manhattan to -- sorry. I mean,
16 JFK to anywhere is a short trip, which is
17 only compensate to drivers the gas and the
18 time is not we.

19 But at least, if somebody going to like
20 Williamsburg area, right, I can get only \$45.
21 The same time, I can drop the fair to the --
22 like, Delancy and Suffolk, I can \$65, which
23 is very unfair for the drivers.

24 At least give us the fuel surcharge
25 through the other fare to going from the JFK

1 and drivers going back. At least we'll pay
2 the fuel back, you know. It's a long time no
3 increase the meter, and I'm very humble with
4 the chairman. He's got a lot of things going
5 on, but I don't know how it's going to be.
6 The system is very slow for us and the people
7 will fight us. And we could not afford it to
8 pay from our pocket. Plus we are paying the
9 5 percent driver fee, which is very unfair
10 when we go to pay the TLC fine and you charge
11 us 2.5 hidden, unlawful driver fee.

12 So, please give us like every single
13 fare from the airport surcharge, at least
14 \$7.50, which is also the last night in the
15 Taxi Workers Alliance decided to do that.

16 Thank you very much.

17 MS. ELUTO: All right. Thank you very
18 much for your testimony. We're going to go
19 back now to Golam Talukder.

20 Mr. Talukder, are you available?

21 (No response).

22 MS. ELUTO: Okay. All right.

23 MS. SCOTT: Mr. Talukder, please unmute
24 your microphone and begin with your
25 testimony.

1 (No response.)

2 MS. ELUTO: Mr. Talukder, unmute your
3 microphone.

4 (No response).

5 MS. ELUTO: All right. We're going to
6 have to go back to -- let's go with Bhairavi
7 Desai, please.

8 Ms. Desai, you can proceed.

9 We're losing people. Okay.

10 MS. DESAI: Hi, good morning. Are you
11 able to hear me?

12 MS. ELUTO: Yes.

13 MS. DESAI: Okay, great. Thank you.
14 Good morning, everybody.

15 So, on behalf of the Taxi Workers
16 Alliance, I would first like to thank the TLC
17 for proposing these increases. I mean, we've
18 already heard in so many of the testimonies,
19 it has been a painful ten years for the
20 yellow cab industry, where there have been no
21 raises.

22 And airports are not only, you know,
23 key points of fares for drivers, but we know
24 that millions of New Yorkers and our tourists
25 and visitors depend on drivers for that

1 critical service. And it is long overdue for
2 an increase in that JFK rate.

3 What we would like you to do, though,
4 is consider a different approach to getting
5 drivers a raise for LaGuardia. We do not
6 support the concept of a flat fare. The idea
7 of freezing the income essentially for
8 drivers and going off the meter, even if
9 you're looking at averages, we think will
10 eventually leave drivers behind and will
11 unfairly disproportionately treat the riding
12 public, which there's a great concern about,
13 given that Uber and Lyft passenger fares are
14 not regulated.

15 And so, we do not want to return to
16 what happened in 2016 when the companies
17 dropped their rates of fare in an unfair, you
18 know, advantage over the yellow cab and green
19 cab meters, which really decimated the number
20 of trips that drivers could have,
21 particularly at a time when something like
22 upfront pricing can be used, where you could
23 use the meter with technologies to really
24 project a fare for the public.

25 But again, using the actual realtime

1 and metered rate, we think, is a much better
2 way to go to keep with the metered rate at
3 LaGuardia, but consider adding a surcharge
4 similar to what we do with Newark Airport
5 fares.

6 We ask you to take the time after this
7 hearing to run your data again with a
8 surcharge of \$5 posed from LaGuardia to
9 Manhattan, Manhattan back to LaGuardia, in
10 mind. We think it's a much more fair way to
11 compensate the drivers without leaving them
12 at a disadvantage.

13 And again, given that we need an
14 overall fare raise, as so many have already
15 said, and we expect that to take place before
16 the end of this year, we think --

17 TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

18 MS. DESAI: -- it's much more prudent
19 to keep that fare raise overall in mind and
20 add a surcharge for the LaGuardia trip as the
21 means to get drivers a raise, rather than a
22 flat rate, which we think in the long run
23 will actually be, not only disadvantaged --
24 disadvantages to the drivers, but could
25 actually be harmful in terms of drivers

1 losing out on passengers in the long run from
2 LaGuardia. Thank you very much.

3 MS. ELUTO: Okay. Thank you for your
4 testimony.

5 We have Vinod Malhotra, following him
6 will be Erhan Tuncel.

7 So, Mr. Malhotra, please unmute
8 yourself and go ahead.

9 MR. MALHOTRA: Hello.

10 MS. ELUTO: Hello.

11 MR. MALHOTRA: Hi. Good morning, all
12 Commissioners. Thank you so much for
13 proposing us a raise on airport fares. So,
14 my proposal is -- you hear me?

15 MR. WANTTAJA: Yes, we can hear you.

16 MR. MALHOTRA: Okay. Sir, my proposal
17 is, we want overall increase, so -- because
18 only a raise on airport is going to work for
19 us, but we like -- we can wait another, like,
20 four or five months for raise. But my
21 proposal right at the moment is -- because
22 everybody is getting off the pandemic.
23 Everyone have hard time, including us. And
24 most times we have more hard time than normal
25 people.

1 But I would like to add like maybe zone
2 systems, like three zones -- East Side,
3 West Side and Downtown. Because, you know,
4 when we go through the area Downtown, it's
5 too much traffic. We're facing too much
6 traffic.

7 So, steady fare like as it is right
8 now, LaGuardia just add the \$7.50, East Side,
9 like \$10 for the West Side and \$12 for the
10 Downtown fares.

11 And for JFK, I like what we have like
12 the \$52 and rush hour is \$5 surcharge,
13 estimated at \$57, 24 hours, 7 days a week and
14 add the same, like, surcharge like \$7.50 to
15 \$10 and \$12. So, this may work this well
16 when we're doing without Revels facing like
17 high gas, everything goes very high -- bill,
18 rent, everything goes higher up. So, we need
19 overall raise at least another -- within
20 three, four months. So, this is my proposal
21 and I have another to ask.

22 And for flat fares, I say I have
23 example with me. I take the fare from the
24 City to JFK and LaGuardia, so some give tip
25 and taxi fare, but that doesn't show on my

1 seal. Some guy asked me -- "Did you get
2 tip?" I say, "No. So, why you don't get
3 tip? I have \$4 tip, right?" It happened
4 before to driver but when I call to the car
5 company they say -- you ask them how much is
6 the fare, they say the same as maybe
7 (inaudible). I said, "Where my fare gone --"

8 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

9 MR. MALHOTRA: Okay. She say, "Did you
10 get tip?" I said, "Why you sent me before?"
11 And some company like add company are doing
12 the Access-A-Ride jobs, they're charging us
13 like cancellation fees. Why they're charging
14 cancellation fee? So, even with certain
15 jobs, same time call the customer, customer
16 say, "Did I order cab?" They canceled it,
17 they charge us fee of \$5, so this is not fair
18 with us. So, again, please --

19 TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired.

20 MR. MALHOTRA: Thank you very much for
21 giving me time. Thank you.

22 MS. ELUTO: Thank you for your
23 testimony.

24 We have Erhan Tuncel.

25 Mr. Tuncel, unmute your mic.

1 (No response.)

2 MS. ELUTO: Sir, unmute your mic.

3 Mr. Tuncel?

4 MR. TUNCEL: Yes.

5 MS. ELUTO: There you go.

6 MR. TUNCEL: Can you hear me?

7 MS. ELUTO: Yes.

8 MR. TUNCEL: Thank you.

9 Thank you for -- first, I want to
10 tell -- I want to thank Commission for
11 recognizing that our overall fare hike
12 increase has not -- the last one was
13 ten years ago and a next one is long overdue.
14 And that's one thing I want to say.

15 And the second thing about the flat
16 rates from JFK to -- and LaGuardia into
17 Manhattan. I want to remind you of a little
18 Google data that I collected, that fares into
19 Manhattan from JFK is anywhere it does -- the
20 mileage changes anywhere from 16 to 19 miles
21 for 95 percent of the passengers.

22 So, a flat rate from JFK is justifiable
23 for driver and passenger at the same time
24 without them feeling unfairly treated.
25 However, LaGuardia, because of its location

1 and the proximity to the City, a fare, a
2 mileage can vary from -- anywhere from
3 6.8 miles to 14 miles, depend on the route
4 and depending on -- so, what I'm trying to
5 say is that the discrepancy is so great, as
6 far as the distance is concerned. One flat
7 rate is not justifiable.

8 So, I am against the flat rates from
9 LaGuardia into Manhattan. As a member of New
10 York Taxi Workers Alliance, I do support a
11 surcharge to give incentives for drivers to
12 serve LaGuardia, both to and from LaGuardia,
13 and we feel that \$5 surcharge is sufficient
14 to accomplish that goal.

15 Another thing that I could mention,
16 that for whatever reason the shorties that
17 got eliminated from both airports, I think
18 should be put back in. That will give,
19 especially to LaGuardia customers, an
20 incentive to go back to LaGuardia because of
21 shortie tickets.

22 So, if the concern is taxi drivers --

23 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

24 MR. TUNCEL: -- taxi drivers serving
25 the public from LaGuardia, I think shortie

1 could accomplish part of that goal.

2 So, that's basically what I have to
3 say. And I'm also for keeping the yellow
4 taxi medallion meter, its integrity in tact.
5 Any time we go towards the flat rates --

6 TIMEKEEPER: Your time has expired.

7 MR. TUNCEL: -- we take that integrity
8 and we bury it down on the bottom. So, thank
9 you very much.

10 MS. ELUTO: Thank you for your
11 testimony.

12 We have Mohammed Motaleb speaking. And
13 I'm also supposed to remind everyone to make
14 sure their Zoom name matches the name they
15 signed up with.

16 Okay. I don't see Mr. Motaleb. Yep,
17 there he is.

18 Can you please unmute, sir. You can
19 begin.

20 MR. MOTALEB: Hello.

21 MS. ELUTO: Yes, we can hear you.

22 MR. MOTALEB: Hi, good morning, today's
23 honorable chairman, respectable all official
24 personnel and all the attendees. Good
25 morning. My name is MD Motaleb. I'm member

1 of the Taxi Workers Alliance, driving cab
2 like 18 years.

3 Today's issue, the rule on flat \$39 for
4 LaGuardia and \$65 for JFK. I'm really glad
5 to hear that after long time the City is
6 going to take good initiative about fare
7 increase on the airport fare.

8 The proposing on the \$65, it sounds
9 good to me, but it's not good for all
10 customers. So, my point of view, if you put
11 \$10 initial charge on JFK on top of meter,
12 the initial charge, the City to JFK, JFK to
13 the City, that would work for driver and the
14 passenger also. Passenger also will not feel
15 that much hurting.

16 So, that other 10 years is going to
17 resolve this shortie thing. So, if we charge
18 this fare around the airport, like JFK
19 Airport Hotel, South Jamaica, Howard Beach,
20 the driver will get only ten to \$20 and they
21 have to go back far for another same process
22 again, long waiting.

23 So, that will help \$10 for shortie
24 fare, \$10. Another thing that LaGuardia is
25 \$39. \$39 is --

1 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

2 MR. MOTALEB: -- for the East Side
3 customers, so they will not feel good about
4 that. So, I think the same shortie fare and
5 the East Side customer, if we put like a
6 \$7.50 surcharge every fare, LaGuardia to
7 JF -- LaGuardia to City, City to LaGuardia --

8 TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired.

9 MR. MOTALEB: Yeah. Thank you. Thank
10 you.

11 My point of view, put the initial
12 charge at \$7 for the charge for the LaGuardia
13 and \$10 for the JFK.

14 Thank you for allowing me for
15 testimony. Thank you very much.

16 MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

17 Okay. We're going to try for Mr. Golam
18 Talukder last time.

19 Sir, unmute your mic and you can begin.

20 MR. TALUKDER: Can you hear me? Hello,
21 can you hear me?

22 MS. ELUTO: Yes.

23 MR. TALUKDER: Hi. My name is Golam
24 Talukder, and I am a member of the NYTWA.

25 Thank you so much for thinking about us

1 and raise the fare with LaGuardia and JFK. I
2 think we need overall meter fare rate number
3 one increase. Price of everything went up so
4 much, we cannot keep up the expense.

5 I agree like, you know, \$65 to the JFK,
6 that fare is okay. But LaGuardia to the
7 City, some places like if you go to the --
8 like, you know, Downtown Manhattan in rush
9 hour, like, you know, 7:00 to 10 a.m., like
10 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. is so congested. Going to
11 like Downtown Manhattan from LaGuardia, flat
12 fare is not -- driver is going to lose a lot
13 of money.

14 If you do like, you know, increase,
15 keep the not flat fare to LaGuardia, keep the
16 fare like, you know, regular fare to the
17 LaGuardia Airport to any destination, that
18 would be better for us.

19 And we need, in general, fare increase
20 as soon as possible. Oil price went up so
21 much, maintenance went up so much. So, we
22 need, in general, rate one fare increase as
23 soon as possible.

24 And I would like to -- like you want to
25 do -- when you work at the airport,

1 especially any given day, 4 p.m. to 7/8 p.m.
2 is all the time in and out, not ten minutes
3 taxi. So, I would like to request to work
4 with the Port Authority and with my union
5 support the shortie ban.

6 Sometimes from JFK Airport, we go to
7 the Brooklyn and some part of the
8 South Jamaica, they have to come to the line
9 and take the line again; that's not fair.
10 So, you have to remove the shortie again, and
11 number one, fare increase.

12 Thank you so much.

13 MS. ELUTO: Thank you for your
14 testimony.

15 That is the last speaker on the public
16 hearing on the airport fare. So, our next
17 public hearing is on rule proposal that will
18 implement the provisions of Local Law 109 of
19 2020, which creates an annual disclosure
20 requirement for each person that has any
21 interest in a taxicab medallion.

22 And the first speaker is Joseph
23 Etienne, and he needs a Creole interpreter.

24 So, Mr. Etienne and Mr. Creole
25 Interpreter, if you can both unmute

1 yourselves.

2 (No response.)

3 MS. ELUTO: Mr. Etienne, Creole
4 Interpreter, I need you to unmute yourselves
5 and you can begin.

6 MS. SCOTT: Creole Interpreter, could
7 you give the speaker guidance, please.

8 (Creole Translation in progress.)

9 MR. ETIENNE: Good morning. It's a
10 pleasure for me as a taxi driver, that the
11 Taxi & Limousine is making improvements and
12 they're actually out there helping immigrants
13 and what they're doing.

14 The problem with the industry right now
15 is that there's no regulation for Lyft and
16 Uber, and that's what the taxi industry is
17 facing as their major problem right now.
18 Lyft and Uber, they both have the amount
19 (inaudible) of the industry because their
20 rates are not regulated and they're able to
21 drop the fares as they please, which is very
22 competitive to the taxi company.

23 It's going to be a waste of time to put
24 the rates if the share rides are not
25 regulated. Making any adjustment with the

1 taxi is going to be a waste of time because
2 they have the amount of total for the
3 industry. When share ride is able to pick up
4 three or four passengers and the taxicab
5 can't do that, that's the reason why the taxi
6 drivers' income is dropping.

7 There need to -- there need to be a way
8 for the share ride to no longer exist because
9 it's just detrimental to the taxi industry.
10 Because nothing is being done for the -- in
11 reference to the share ride, nothing is being
12 regulated, the Taxi & Limousine seems
13 powerless in front of them and unable to
14 compete with them.

15 If a regulation is not put on Uber and
16 Lyft as soon as possible, the raise could be
17 -- the fair could be \$100 from LaGuardia, \$50
18 from JFK, it will not solve the problem. The
19 solution is that the share ride be
20 city-regulated.

21 Since the Taxi & Limousine is -- since
22 the Uber and Lyft is licensed by the Taxi &
23 Limousine, Taxi & Limousine was here before,
24 they were the ones who were the fierce, most
25 fierce competitors when it came to

1 transportation. They have to find a way to
2 regulate the share rides.

3 I feel that Taxi & Limousine knows
4 what's going on, but the fact that nothing is
5 being done, that's why now the Taxi &
6 Limousine drivers are suffering.

7 My voice will not be enough to state
8 this point. More people will need to talk
9 about it. However --

10 TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds left.

11 MR. ETIENNE: However, Lyft and Uber
12 have taken over, and Taxi & Limousine has
13 always been there. They were the first to
14 exist. They help immigrants. My voice will
15 not be over enough to help with this problem.

16 And it's basically a warning that I'm
17 giving you, that the shared rides are the
18 issues we feel as taxi drivers, that we're
19 being sold as slaves.

20 TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired.

21 MR. ETIENNE: It was a pleasure for me
22 to tell you what's on my mind.

23 MS. ELUTO: Thank you for your
24 testimony.

25 We have Manjinder Singh. Mr. Singh,

1 you can unmute your mic and proceed.

2 (No response.)

3 MS. ELUTO: Mr. Singh, I need you to
4 unmute your microphone.

5 (No response.)

6 MS. ELUTO: Okay. Mr. Singh, if you
7 wish to testify, you need to unmute.

8 MR. SINGH: Hello?

9 MS. ELUTO: Good. Yes, go ahead. We
10 can hear you.

11 MR. SINGH: Yes. Good morning to all
12 Commissioners and the other parties present.

13 Actually, this is the next proposal
14 about taxi like the bailout, and we are the
15 ones already paid to the -- paid to the -- to
16 the bank, like cash bill, and we have like a
17 lot of debt with the like -- to the
18 (inaudible) car money, SBA loan, everything.

19 Right now, we are eligible for the
20 \$30,000. It should be unfair for us if the
21 other people can get it, the people already
22 get the bill, but they not get it. My
23 brother has taken depression, if I cannot pay
24 debt on time, he going to be dying this time,
25 you know.

1 So, I take a lot of money from the
2 other creditor and pay to the -- my bank.
3 And I feel like very, very different for the
4 other, if I cannot get the same deal, you
5 know; that's my testimony for the medallion.

6 Hello?

7 MR. WANTTAJA: Yeah, we can hear you.

8 MR. SINGH: Yes. And I feel very,
9 very, you know, like cheated from the system.
10 'Cause whenever, like if you want me to sent
11 you the proof, when we say it to the bank
12 and -- (technical difficulty) -- you know, so
13 we did but we should deserve \$30,000 from the
14 City, 'cause we are on the same page like
15 last -- like for 13 years, and we pay the
16 same debt to the City and everything, you
17 know.

18 So, it's not fair for us if you gave
19 only them to pay a lot of money and we not
20 get it, it's very unfair. Thank you so much.
21 Think about us, too, you know. We got a lot
22 of bills, too, to pay to the bank and the SBA
23 loan.

24 So, look to us the same problem we're
25 having and you only give -- the bank only

1 have the loans.

2 TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

3 MR. SINGH: So, please help us, too.

4 Thank you so much.

5 MS. ELUTO: Okay. Thank you,
6 Mr. Singh. Someone from our external affair
7 staff will reach out to you to continue the
8 conversation.

9 That was our last speaker for today.
10 The hearing is concluded. Thank you.

11 MR. WANTTAJA: Yeah. Thanks, all. I
12 thank everybody for their contributions
13 today. Every time we talk about the fare,
14 there's a lot of moving parts and a lot of
15 things to consider.

16 So, I appreciate all the testimony
17 today, and I look forward to hearing from all
18 of you this spring and summer, to talk about
19 the rates of fare going forward, so thanks,
20 all.

21 (TIME NOTED: 10:51 a.m.)

22

23

24

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK)

:SS

COUNTY OF QUEENS)

I, Sabrina Brown Stewart, a shorthand reporter within and for the State of New York, do hereby certify that the within is a true and accurate transcript of the statement taken on April 5, 2022.

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 2022.

Sabrina Brown Stewart
Sabrina Brown Stewart

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