

**In Re NYC - Taxi & Limousine Commission Public Hearing
July 16, 2025**

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NEW YORK CITY
TAXI & LIMOUSINE COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
YELLOW TAXI FARES, LEASE CAPS, AND INDUSTRY
ECONOMICS

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Held Remotely Via
Zoom Video Conference
July 16, 2025
10:02 a.m.

H E L D B E F O R E:
DAVID DO - COMMISSIONER AND CHAIR
SHERRYL ELUTO - GENERAL COUNSEL

Sabrina Brown Stewart,
Court Reporter

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A P P E A R A N C E S:

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

COMMISSIONER KENNETH C. MITCHELL

COMMISSIONER ELISA VELAZQUEZ

COMMISSIONER SARAH KAUFMAN

COMMISSIONER PAUL BADER

COMMISSIONER KENNETH Y.K. CHAN

COMMISSIONER ANDREA BIERSTEIN

1 S P E A K E R S:

2

3 AMRO MOHAMED - Taxi Driver

4 PETER MAZER - MTBOT

5 MICHAEL SIMON - Taxi Driver

6 VINOD MALHOTRA - Member of NYTWA

7 ALLI LANGLEY - Attorney, NYTWA

8 JOSH GOLD - Senior Director of Public Affairs, UBER

9 BHAIRAVI DESAI - Executive Director, NYTWA

10 HARJOT SINGH - Taxi Driver

11 RICHARD CHOW - Taxi Driver

12 WAIN CHIN - Taxi Driver, NYTWA

13 Erhan Tuncel - Taxi Driver

14 DOROTHY LECONTE - Taxi Driver

15 KUBER SANCHO-PERSAD - Taxi Driver, NYTWA

16 GOLAM TALUKDER - Taxi Driver, NYTWA

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1 MODERATOR: Good morning. Today's
2 public hearing is about to begin. This
3 hearing is being conducted remotely via Zoom,
4 and the live stream will be available on the
5 TLC's website. All persons wishing to
6 testify were asked to sign up in advance of
7 the hearing. All registered speakers are
8 joining the meeting via Zoom. If you are
9 speaking today, your audio and video were
10 automatically muted.

11 A few special notes for our registered
12 speakers: Please ensure that your display
13 name in the Zoom meeting matches the name
14 that you used when you signed up to speak.
15 This will enable the moderator to confirm
16 that you are present in the meeting. If you
17 are listed as iPhone or some other name that
18 differs from your name that you used when you
19 signed up, we will not know that you are
20 present in the meeting. You must update your
21 screen name to the name you provided when you
22 signed up.

23 When your turn to speak is approaching,
24 the host will send a prompt inviting you to
25 join the meeting as a panelist. In order to

1 provide testimony on camera, you must accept
2 the invite. Please be aware that if you are
3 watching this meeting on a minimized screen,
4 you may not see this prompt. If you have
5 accepted the invite to rejoin as a panelist,
6 when your name is called, you'll have control
7 of both your camera and microphone. When
8 ready, please state your name and
9 affiliation, and then proceed with your
10 testimony.

11 Public testimony will be limited to
12 three minutes per speaker. When your
13 testimony is complete, your audio and video
14 will be muted by the moderator. Closed
15 captioning is available for today's meeting.
16 Thank you for your attention.

17 I will now yield the floor to our
18 Commissioner and Chair, David Do.

19 CHAIR DO: Good morning. I'm calling
20 the public meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. I
21 am David Do, commissioner and chair of the
22 Taxi and Limousine Commission, and I'm joined
23 today by our board of commissioners;
24 Commissioner Mitchell, Commissioner
25 Velazquez, Commissioner Kaufman, Commissioner

1 Bader, Commissioner Chan, and Commissioner
2 Bierstein.

3 Today, we're looking forward to some of
4 the most robust discussion and public input
5 on the state of the yellow taxi industry.
6 We've seen a lot of changes to the industry
7 in recent years, as we've worked towards
8 recovery from seismic shifts, including the
9 medallion crisis, the pandemic, and we want
10 to hear from you how it's going. Holding a
11 hearing of this kind is in keeping with a
12 longstanding TLC practice of holding a public
13 hearing on taxi industry economics every few
14 years. The last time TLC held a hearing like
15 this was in 2022, so we are due for one.

16 Some of the changes the industry has
17 since then include in the first -- since
18 then, in about a decade, we have since seen
19 the first meter rate of increase, a
20 50 percent wheelchair accessible vehicle
21 mandate, and the restructuring of the Taxi
22 Improvement Fund to meet the mandate, and the
23 regular use of e-hails for taxis.
24 Specifically, to help guide the discussion,
25 we have requested comments in a variety of

1 different areas, including changes to the
2 economic circumstances of drivers and owners,
3 including changes in revenue and expenses,
4 changes to industry dynamics, including the
5 evolving nature of competition and
6 coordination among e-hail providers and
7 high-volume for-hire vehicle services, the
8 impact of flex fare trips relative to street
9 hail fare on gross revenues and net returns
10 for drivers, owners, and agents, the balance
11 of \$3 upfront drop fare relative to the
12 70 cents per unit in distance and time
13 charge, and its contribution to the overall
14 trip cost for passengers, opportunities to
15 simplify the fare structure and increase
16 price transparency for passengers, such as
17 consolidating fees and surcharges or
18 expanding the use of flat fares to LaGuardia
19 Airport, other information related to the
20 taxi fare structure and its role in
21 supporting a competitive taxi industry.

22 Written comments may be submitted
23 through July 23rd. While we specify those
24 areas for our own information gathering
25 purposes, if there is another subject related

1 to yellows that you would like to bring up,
2 please feel free to do so. We encourage an
3 open discussion, but please keep it focused
4 on the yellow taxi industry.

5 Before kicking off our public comments,
6 would any of my fellow commissioners like to
7 speak?

8 Go ahead, Commissioner Bierstein.

9 COMMISSIONER BIERSTEIN: Well, I just
10 want say -- and I don't know to what extent
11 any of the comments today will be addressed
12 to that -- but while we're looking at the
13 state of the yellow industry in terms of the
14 drivers and owners and the economics of it,
15 we also need to be considering the
16 perspective of the passengers as well and the
17 public at large, and I know that that's
18 sometime harder to hear from because those
19 groups are less well-organized.

20 So, I just wanted to mention that as a
21 thing to keep in mind, and if any of the
22 speakers are prepared to address the public
23 at large or the use of the riders, I would be
24 interested in those comments, in addition,
25 obviously, to the concerns that Commissioner

1 Do outlined.

2 CHAIR DO: Thank you, Commissioner.

3 Anyone else?

4 (No response).

5 CHAIR DO: Okay. And feel free,
6 Commissioners, to ask questions and
7 follow-ups to our speakers this morning.
8 You're more than welcome to do that.

9 And with that, I'm going to turn it
10 over to our general counsel, Sherryl Eluto,
11 to start our public hearing for today.

12 MS. ELUTO: Good morning. When I call
13 your name, you can unmute your microphone and
14 begin your testimony. Our first speaker up
15 is Amro Mohamed.

16 So, Mr. Mohamed, just unmute your
17 microphone. Still muted. All right. We
18 will come back to you. So, our next speaker
19 will be Peter Mazer.

20 MR. MOHAMED: Yeah. I'm here. I'm
21 sorry. My microphone was on mute.

22 MS. ELUTO: Okay. So, you're ready?

23 MR. MOHAMED: Yeah. I'm so sorry.

24 MS. ELUTO: Okay.

25 MR. MOHAMED: Can I speak right now?

1 MS. ELUTO: Sure. Go right ahead.

2 MR. MOHAMED: So, how many minutes do I
3 have, so I can speak --

4 MS. ELUTO: Three minutes.

5 MR. MOHAMED: Three minutes. Sounds
6 good.

7 MS. ELUTO: Okay.

8 MR. MOHAMED: I just want to tell you
9 something on behalf of myself and all drivers
10 I talk to at the airport, around the City,
11 that right now it is the worst days we ever
12 faced since we started driving in New York
13 City. We all know well that this industry,
14 our industry, almost was killed after Uber
15 got into the market. But even though we
16 could hardly make some money and survive to
17 be able to feed our families, until lately,
18 for the last few months, TLC allowed the
19 people who I would say are illegal across the
20 border to get their TLC license without
21 Social Security Number. Just if they have
22 item number, come on guys and take your TLC
23 license and go start. And what of the other
24 drivers who are legally lived here? This is
25 my first point. Now, we are struggling

1 making money with the many drivers around the
2 City.

3 The second point, I'm talking about the
4 \$1 we used to get from the TIF, taxi refund
5 program. You used to pay for the wheelchair
6 driving. My further point is I want to talk
7 about the Uber shuttle in LaGuardia and JFK.
8 So, I know New York City usually works for
9 the people. I understand that well. Free
10 shuttle bus from LaGuardia to the stations,
11 to the subway stations, but you guys know
12 once you let Uber to do shuttle bus from JFK,
13 \$25; from LaGuardia, 15 bucks, I would say
14 that the airports, LaGuardia and JFK, it
15 looks like the last shelter we usually seek
16 to --

17 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

18 MR. MOHAMED: -- when we work money.
19 My third point is the credit card machine.
20 Why should we get charged \$5 for each
21 transaction? And sometimes the passenger
22 doesn't give tip, so why should I pay \$5, or
23 whatever, 4.75, from my total amount?

24 Thank you so much.

25 CHAIR DO: Well, thank you so much for

1 those comments. And I just want to correct a
2 couple of things, that in order to get a TLC
3 license, you need a Social Security Number,
4 so I don't know where that is coming from.
5 Secondly, on a couple of your other points in
6 the Uber shuttle is that they're operating
7 legally and within the confines of the
8 regulatory structure, and TLC does not
9 directly regulate the Uber shuttle. That is
10 permitted through the New York, New Jersey
11 Port Authority, and that is how passenger
12 vans like those operate. And so, I'll just
13 leave it there.

14 Any other comments from our
15 commissioners?

16 COMMISSIONER KAUFMAN: Commissioner Do,
17 can you respond to the -- is it \$5 per
18 transaction for --

19 CHAIR DO: So, it is not \$5 per
20 transaction, but actually a transaction fee
21 for credit card processing. And, you know,
22 within our roles, we can take a look at that,
23 Commissioner Kaufman, and see if that is too
24 high, but I think it is standard industry
25 marketplace to charge that transaction fee.

1 When we go to a grocery store or when we go
2 to a restaurant, all restaurants, all grocery
3 stores that use credit card processing have
4 to pay that fee. And sometimes it is imposed
5 on us as a customer, and other times it is
6 hidden on the back end. And so, I think that
7 that is what the speaker was talking about.

8 COMMISSIONER BIERSTEIN: I just had a
9 question about that.

10 Given that virtually all fares now are
11 paid on credit card in some form or another,
12 is the fact that there will be a surcharge on
13 all of them factored in? And maybe I should
14 know this in terms of what the driver earns.
15 That is, there's going to be a fee because,
16 as you say, that's the way the credit card
17 industry works, and somebody pays for the
18 convenience of using a card. But I don't
19 know whether our current structure of fares
20 and payments to drivers recognizes that there
21 is that fee.

22 And if the driver is the only one
23 bearing the burden of that, maybe that is
24 something we should look at about how the
25 cost of that fee is shared between the driver

1 and the passenger who's getting -- the
2 passenger is getting the convenience of
3 paying with a card. The driver is getting
4 the convenience of picking up people who need
5 to pay with a card. But maybe that should be
6 shared in a different way, so that it's not
7 just the drivers bearing it, and it seems
8 like we ought to look at that.

9 CHAIR DO: Yeah. Definitely,
10 Commissioner. And that is an overall
11 assessment and analysis by Dave DiGiovanni,
12 our deputy commissioner for policy and
13 external affairs, to look at the overall
14 picture about the meter rate of fare.

15 I would just add one more comment
16 overall is that this is to look on a holistic
17 level, right? Today when a customer enters
18 in a yellow taxi, there's a lot of sticker
19 shock because of all the surcharges and fees,
20 right? And sometimes, especially in the rush
21 hour or the overnight hours, that initial
22 start fee could reach close to \$10. And so,
23 those are some of the concerns from the
24 public on the passenger facing side that we
25 also want to take a look at in the overall

1 picture. So, as we get the comments from the
2 public today, our policy team will consider
3 all of that and wrap it, potentially, into a
4 policy proposal that we can all take a look
5 at as commissioners.

6 COMMISSIONER CHAN: So, I have a
7 follow-up to Commissioner Bierstein's
8 comment, and this is just off the top of my
9 head. It may or may not be feasible, but
10 certainly larger corporations often have the
11 purchasing power, so to speak, or market
12 power, to negotiate more advantageous credit
13 card charges on behalf of their transactions.
14 I'm not suggesting that TLC necessarily could
15 do it, but maybe it's just something that we
16 could take a look at to say collectively,
17 you're going to reduce your rates to credit
18 card fees charged to all drivers. I don't
19 know how feasible it is, but I'll just toss
20 it out there.

21 CHAIR DO: Yeah. As an entity within
22 yellow vehicles via TPEP or the payment
23 processors, we are able to regulate that, so
24 we'll take a look at that as part of this
25 process. But we will hear more from the

1 public today about the credit card
2 transaction fee. But my early assessment on
3 this is it's pretty standard what we
4 authorize the payment providers to charge.

5 Okay, Sherryl.

6 MS. ELUTO: Okay. I'll go on to the
7 next speaker, Peter Mazer.

8 MR. MAZER: Good morning. My name is
9 Peter Mazer, and I am general counsel to the
10 Metropolitan Taxicab Board of Trade, a
11 70-year-old association representing the
12 owners and operators of licensed medallion
13 taxicabs. Our full service driver center
14 provides a variety of services, including
15 free representation in court and at
16 administrative proceedings for drivers who
17 lease cabs from our member operator. MTBOT
18 will be submitting detailed written comments
19 addressing the items set forth in today's
20 hearing notes. We also anticipate that MTBOT
21 will be petitioning the Commission for a fare
22 increase and restructuring that will be
23 essential for the survival of this industry.

24 The health of the New York City taxicab
25 industry is dependent on sufficient revenue

1 for both owners and drivers. And unlike
2 other public transportation providers, cab
3 revenue is derived almost exclusively from
4 passenger fares. Without a sufficient number
5 of passengers and fares that generates
6 sufficient revenue, the taxi industry cannot
7 remain viable. The TLC last approved their
8 rate of fare increase on November 15th of
9 2022. At that time, the Commission projected
10 that the fare increase would increase revenue
11 to drivers and taxicab owners by about
12 30 percent from 2019 levels. This did not
13 happen. Driver revenue per hour that a cab
14 is in service went up only slightly, and
15 revenue for each taxicab in service actually
16 declined since 2017. The last fare increase
17 has fallen short of expectations for meeting
18 the anticipated demand and the financial
19 needs of this industry. Our written
20 submission will provide the relevant back-up
21 data to support these allegations.

22 Ridership has begun to tick upward this
23 year, but it's still well below the pre-2020
24 levels. More taxicabs have been placed in
25 service, but there are still 4,000 medallions

1 in storage. Liability insurance premiums now
2 run between \$4,000 and \$12,000 per year for
3 each cab, and a new accessible vehicle costs
4 over \$65,000. Every major expense from the
5 cost of spare parts to utilities has
6 increased while revenue declined preventing
7 anything resembling a full recovery for the
8 taxicab industry.

9 Cabs may be seen by some riders as
10 expensive, but so much of the revenue does
11 not even go to the drivers and owners. Each
12 cab passenger in the central business
13 district subsidizes the MTA, \$3.75 --

14 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

15 MR. MAZER: That's more than a bus and
16 subway fare. Cab passengers have provided
17 more than \$2 billion in revenue to the MTA
18 from these surcharges. Most of this revenue
19 comes from surcharges assessed at the
20 beginning of the trip, making short cab rides
21 disproportionately expensive. The challenge
22 is to restructure the fare to preserve the
23 MTA's statutory mandated revenue, while
24 eliminating the disincentive for short trips.
25 Ultimately, more trips correspond to more

1 revenue for everyone --

2 TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired.

3 MR. MAZER: -- including more revenue
4 to the TLC. And I thank you for this
5 opportunity to testify this morning. I'll be
6 happy to answer any questions that you may
7 have.

8 CHAIR DO: Peter, I know you don't
9 represent ARRO or some of the TPEP providers
10 directly, but what are your thoughts on the
11 transaction fees that the providers charge?

12 MR. MAZER: The transaction fees are
13 paid by medallion owners. Drivers get the
14 full revenue. There are some charges for the
15 drivers come out of the lease fee. Drivers
16 can be charged sales tax or, you know, an
17 additional amount above the lease fee, but
18 nobody that I understand is at the lease cap.
19 So, most of the cabs are leased for less than
20 the amounts that the TLC allows to be charged
21 for leasing.

22 So, that's really an issue for
23 owner-drivers who do have to bear the burden
24 of the surcharge -- the charges for the
25 credit card fees, the drivers and owners who

1 own their own taxicabs. But those fees, as I
2 understand them, are pretty much in line with
3 what the -- is pretty much standard. If you
4 own a grocery store, you pay pretty much the
5 same fees for operating for your passengers
6 that pay using a credit card.

7 Now, it seems to be allowed that we
8 could charge, or the TLC could impose a
9 credit card surcharge. I know some merchants
10 are already doing that, charging a surcharge
11 for using the credit cards. I mean, that's
12 something we could look at. I think overall
13 we want -- I don't know if we want more
14 surcharges. I think we want more
15 transparency, more understanding about what
16 the fare should be. Passengers should pay a
17 fair amount that's comparable for the amount
18 of time that they're in the cab for the
19 length of the trip, or the amount of time
20 that they're in the cab, for the privilege of
21 having the services that's available. We
22 want cabs on the road. We want this industry
23 to be strong. We want our drivers to make
24 money. The owners have to make money, too.
25 We don't have a lot of other money. We

1 give more to the MTA. What I find very
2 amazing is that a passenger who gets into a
3 taxicab in a central business district pays
4 more to the MTA than that passenger would if
5 he got onto a bus or a subway, and he's
6 giving it for the privilege of using a
7 taxicab. And the taxicab driver doesn't get
8 it. The owner doesn't get it. I believe the
9 credit card processors even have to pay part
10 of that money, and they don't get subsidized
11 from the MTA. Everybody seems to lose on
12 that. That's a state issue.

13 I know that's outside of the control of
14 the TLC, but when we do look at fares, we
15 have to look at that, and that's a burden on
16 our passengers, our drivers, and our owners,
17 and we have to address that. We have to look
18 at that, and when we look holistically at
19 what the fare structure should look like, we
20 have to put all of that into consideration.
21 It's a balance. I don't know how --
22 sometimes it's hard, but that's -- we have a
23 lot of smart people around this -- in this
24 room that can come up with some good ideas on
25 just how to do this.

1 CHAIR DO: Thank you, Peter.

2 COMMISSIONER BADER: Peter, let me ask
3 you about your testimony. Have you provided
4 that yet? Or -- 'cause I have a number of
5 questions that I have relative to your
6 comments, but I would prefer to read your
7 full testimony.

8 Has that been provided to us yet, or
9 will we be seeing that soon?

10 MR. MAZER: Well, the deadline is next
11 Wednesday. You'll have it by then. I wanted
12 -- to be honest, I wanted to wait until I
13 hear what people said today, because I may
14 want to address that in my public comments.
15 The only thing that -- with three minutes, I
16 couldn't say very much. I wanted -- I was
17 going to flesh out the data about the 2022
18 fare increase and why it didn't -- we didn't
19 get the revenue that we anticipated, but that
20 will be in the written comments because it's,
21 basically, very technical.

22 COMMISSIONER BADER: Right. Relative
23 to the credit card charges, I'm a small
24 business owner, so I buy and sell.
25 Traditionally, my experience has been that in

1 large purchases within the industrial, the
2 business world, that charge is paid by the
3 vendor; in this case, a company like myself.
4 But when it comes to smaller transactions,
5 whether it's the bodega or any other small
6 transactions, including even from some
7 business like mine on a smaller transaction,
8 that charge, we recharge -- we charge the
9 customer for that.

10 So, you see many times in places,
11 either the default is the additional or else
12 you -- is the additional for the credit card
13 and they give you a discount if you pay cash,
14 but many, many times that two to
15 three percent is added on to the charge in a
16 variety of places.

17 MR. MAZER: That is correct. And the
18 rules, as now promulgated by the TLC, do not
19 permit passengers to be assessed to pay
20 surcharge for using credit cards.

21 COMMISSIONER BADER: Right. I'm aware
22 of that, yeah.

23 CHAIR DO: Thank you, Commissioner
24 Bader.

25 MS. ELUTO: All right. So, we'll go to

1 the next speaker, Vinod Malhotra.

2 Mr. Malhotra, if you could please
3 unmute your microphone.

4 (No response).

5 MS. ELUTO: Mr. Malhotra?

6 (No response).

7 MS. ELUTO: Okay. We'll move on to
8 Michael Simon.

9 MR. SIMON: Hello.

10 MS. ELUTO: Hello.

11 MR. SIMON: Thank you very much.

12 The taxi comeback has started. The
13 e-hail and the yellow cab are a great match.
14 Use of driver ratings for e-hail and yellow
15 and tech with human oversight and we got it
16 made. Yellow is back. The yellow e-hail
17 revolution has begun, but sustainable income
18 is not there. There is not a good balance
19 between driver earnings, owner earnings, and
20 public service, because there are too many
21 e-hail vehicles. If the e-hail was available
22 at the time the medallion industry was
23 created, would an alternative taxi industry
24 been created as well, to compete for street
25 hails? My guess is unlikely, especially if

1 medallion cabs would have done e-hails.

2 An e-hail is a street hail. Ask any
3 rider or any driver whether their e-hail
4 pickup was prearranged or hailed. Each time
5 I've asked, it's always been the same. It's
6 a hail. If Uber X cars are prearranged, how
7 is it that they're allowed to cruise?
8 Cruising is wondering around. Aren't they
9 supposed to know where they are going? Taxi
10 medallion cabs are the ones that are allowed
11 to cruise, because that was what they bought
12 when they bought a medallion. They bought
13 street hail rights, the rights to cruise.

14 In the e-hail apps, the medallion
15 number should be how a passenger identifies a
16 yellow cab. Right now, it's the license
17 plate. That subtly degrades the value of the
18 medallion. Here's an idea: How about moving
19 the tin to a more conspicuous place, like the
20 rear of the car instead of the hood, a place
21 more noticeable. That might give it more
22 visibility and more prestige. Right now,
23 nobody sees it. Uber isn't listing yellow
24 for lucrative airport rides. Cabs need those
25 rides. Airport rides are part of the taxi

1 routine and an important part of driver
2 income. This is why we see a majority of
3 passengers with luggage using black cars.
4 There's no option for yellow to the airport
5 on the Uber app. Respect comes when the City
6 stands by their taxis. Disrespect --

7 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

8 MR. SIMON: Disrespect has an impact on
9 their financial wellbeing. Make New York
10 City great again. Stand by your cabs.

11 Thank you.

12 MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

13 Any questions?

14 (No response).

15 MS. ELUTO: All right. We're going to
16 try Vinod Malhotra. If you can unmute your
17 microphone.

18 MR. MALHOTRA: Hello.

19 MS. ELUTO: Hello.

20 MR. MALHOTRA: Hi. Hello. Good
21 morning all, Inspector Board of Commission.
22 My name is Vinod Malhotra. I like gave my
23 opinions and ideas on how to improve taxi
24 street hails. Yeah, day by day, my street
25 hails decreasing, not because of e-hail is

1 very convenient, but TLC gave the loopholes
2 to companies, they able to add so many
3 vehicles in the industry. After cap, they
4 still able to put their vehicles -- recently,
5 TLC allowed EVs to add in the market, to must
6 stop these things.

7 As you know, very soon here, driverless
8 taxis will be in the service. Imagine what
9 can happen. After that, if you not make rule
10 that driverless cars only can be added in the
11 industry vehicles, like taxis or black cars,
12 yes. We need to change to the meter fares to
13 bring back our levels and respect in the taxi
14 market. Must need grow volume, so I have
15 some ideas. Please don't eliminate the
16 (inaudible) top completely. Take \$1 off from
17 this and 1.50 from my rush time surcharge,
18 make night rush time starting 4:00 p.m.
19 8:00 p.m. there 2.50, you can leave me the
20 1.50. So, make \$1 all the time night
21 surcharge from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. So,
22 all night, and please eliminate the MTA tax
23 (inaudible) from our meter.

24 As you know, the MTA have enough income
25 at this time, especially after these years

1 tolls. So, this way, our meter start will be
2 around five, six-cent all the times, even
3 lower daytime. This will be winning point
4 for everyone.

5 So, need stickers straight on my --
6 around my taxi doors. JFK Airport, please
7 you need add \$5, emergency by construction
8 zones. Right now construction everywhere on
9 Van Wyck Expressway, JFK way, this takes a
10 lot of time to go from City to the terminals,
11 adds 20 minutes to go terminals.

12 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

13 MR. MALHOTRA: Yeah. I have another
14 request. If even one driver on the -- any
15 cab, it should be one half. If those two
16 drivers are driving that, then it should be
17 different things. So, on e-hail trips,
18 companies sending us most of the time
19 standard trips. After 4.75, we make only \$5,
20 \$6 on average for trips. But companies
21 making same money on trips. On e-hail trips,
22 I have to go to the pickup location --

23 TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired.

24 MR. MALHOTRA: -- then I have to spend
25 the time. They never pay us a no-show, even

1 we lost like 10, 15 minutes on that trip.

2 So, thank you for giving me chance.

3 Thanks so much.

4 MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

5 Our next speaker is Alli Langley.

6 MS. LANGLEY: Good morning. My name is
7 Alli Langley. I'm a staff attorney at the
8 New York Taxi Workers Alliance. You'll hear
9 more from other NYTWA members and staff about
10 the substance of the questions that the TLC
11 has asked today, including the need for the
12 TLC to focus on increasing street hails, both
13 for drivers, as well as the public. But
14 however, I would like to focus my testimony
15 on the need for a study before the TLC moves
16 ahead with any proposed rule-making.

17 It's been standard practice in the
18 industry to take a data-driven approach to
19 driver pay for the last seven or eight years.
20 In the high-volume for-hire vehicle sectors,
21 so Uber and Lyft drivers, their pay structure
22 is based entirely on a 2018 study, and the
23 study was really comprehensive. It looked at
24 everything from driver income to driver
25 expenses, to how trips were distributed, to

1 even how many drivers had to rely on
2 government benefits, like SNAP and Medicaid,
3 because they were not earning enough from
4 their work to support themselves.

5 The TLC then used this information to
6 develop a pay structure, and in every
7 subsequent modification and amendment of the
8 pay rules, the TLC either used government
9 data about inflation, or like it did just
10 this past year, commission an updated study
11 to look at how the industry changed and
12 change the pay rules accordingly. It would
13 be irrational for the TLC to apply a
14 different approach to the yellow cab sector.
15 As the chairman himself and many
16 commissioners and speakers have already
17 acknowledged today, there have been really
18 seismic changes in the industry. Between the
19 unregulated entry of Uber and Lyft, the
20 COVID-19 crisis, and the medallion debt
21 crisis, everything about how this sector
22 operates has changed, whether it's how
23 drivers receive trips, how many drivers are
24 working, how many drips are available,
25 expenses from medallion debt to wheelchair

1 accessible vehicles, that has all changes,
2 and it necessitates a thorough and considered
3 study to really understand the impacts.

4 This has to be a data-driven approach,
5 and indeed, many of the questions that the
6 TLC is asking today can only be answered in
7 full by looking at the data, some of which
8 TLC already has available. So, the TLC must
9 use its authority to commission a study on
10 yellow cab driver economics before it moves
11 ahead with any rule-making.

12 In addition, the crises that I
13 mentioned are still ongoing. The TLC has to
14 continue the lifesaving work it's begun with
15 the Medallion Relief Program. It must keep
16 the medallion --

17 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

18 MS. LANGLEY: -- so that every driver
19 who is currently applying is able to get
20 through the program. And the TLC must work
21 closely with NYTWA to find a solution for the
22 group of drivers who have been left out of
23 this lifesaving debt relief because their
24 lenders refused to participate in the
25 program. There's simply no justification for

1 denying this relief to people, because it was
2 not ultimately a one size fits all solution.
3 NYTWA has been working diligently to fight
4 for these drivers and asks that the TLC joins
5 us.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. ELUTO: Okay. Any questions?

8 COMMISSIONER KAUFMAN: I have a quick
9 question. Thank you, Alli. I'm wondering,
10 you said that the TLC must conduct a study,
11 and that there was a study released earlier
12 addressing some of the current challenges.

13 Can you share a few details about what
14 you see as missing from that study that was
15 released earlier this year, either
16 off-the-cuff or submit it in writing,
17 specific datasets that you -- or analyses
18 that you would like to see.

19 MS. LANGLEY: Absolutely. Thank you,
20 Commissioner Kaufman, and I apologize if I
21 wasn't clear. That study was for high-volume
22 for-hire vehicle drivers who are Uber and
23 Lyft drivers. So, what NYTWA is asking, just
24 as we asked for Uber and Lyft drivers, is
25 that same sort of care and consideration and

1 detailed look at the data and how the
2 industry has changed is applied to the yellow
3 cab sector, so that yellow cab drivers are
4 not left behind.

5 COMMISSIONER KAUFMAN: Thank you.

6 MS. LANGLEY: Thank you.

7 MS. ELUTO: Okay. Our next speaker up
8 in Josh Gold.

9 MR. GOLD: Good morning, Commissioners.
10 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
11 I'm Josh Gold from Uber. Over the past
12 12 months, Uber has referred more than seven
13 million trips to yellow taxis, including over
14 800,000 trips in March alone. This program
15 represents a rare alignment of interests, a
16 true win, win, win, win, win. Taxi drivers
17 benefit first. They gain access to more fare
18 opportunities, especially in less densely
19 populated parts of the City where street
20 hails are less common. This means more
21 earnings and less downtime. Riders win, too.
22 The ability to match with the nearby yellow
23 cab improves pick-up time and reliability
24 across the board.

25 For-hire drivers also see real gains.

1 By expanding trip capacity through taxis, we
2 reduce the need to onboard new for-hire
3 vehicle drivers. That in turn improves
4 utilization and earnings for the drivers
5 already on our platform. Medallion owners
6 are also winners. This surge in demand has
7 enabled more medallion holders to bring
8 vehicles out of storage and back on the road,
9 breathing life into a sector that's long
10 faced challenges.

11 And finally, taxpayers benefit as they
12 backstop medallion debt relief. A thriving
13 taxi market helps protect that investment and
14 promotes long-term stability. All of this is
15 made possible by the upfront fare structure
16 permitted under the e-hail framework. Unlike
17 metered trips, upfront pricing ensures
18 transparency for riders and predictability
19 for drivers, critical features that support
20 the scale and success of this program.

21 We strongly urge the Commission to
22 preserve this capability. The taxi referral
23 program is working for riders, drivers,
24 medallion owners, and the City. Let's keep
25 this progress moving forward.

1 Thank you.

2 MS. ELUTO: Any questions,
3 Commissioners?

4 (No response).

5 MS. ELUTO: All right. Then, we'll go
6 on to Bhairavi Desai.

7 MR. DESAI: Good morning, Commissioner
8 Do and Members of the Commission. My name is
9 Bhairavi Desai. I'm the executive director
10 at the New York Taxi Workers Alliance.

11 Well, I want to follow up on the
12 previous speaker. Would like to say that,
13 you know, the issue with e-hails right now is
14 they are supplemental. You know, Uber and
15 the e-hail companies will dispatch to the
16 drivers when they need the drivers for the
17 service. It's not like drivers are receiving
18 these trips when they need trips. It's
19 important, and I think that the TLC, by
20 recognizing some of the issues with the
21 quote/unquote sticker shock, is beginning to
22 really say that we need to prioritize street
23 hails for the yellow cab sector.

24 You know, again, e-hails, Access-A-Ride
25 trips, these are all supplemental trips, but

1 the heart of this industry really remains the
2 street hail, you know -- the street hail
3 service. It's also important from the
4 passenger point of view, as the commissioners
5 have brought up earlier, that you have a
6 transportation system in New York City that
7 has diversity, so you're able to serve
8 people -- don't have smart phones, may not
9 want to use their credit or debt card online,
10 and still prefer a street hail service. It's
11 part of a public service in our city.

12 And, you know, over the last ten years,
13 it has taken a great decline, not only
14 because of the oversaturation and the fact
15 that, you know, after Uber oversaturated the
16 streets, it then cut, artificially cut, its
17 rate of fare in order to claim that they were
18 somehow, you know, cheaper than taxi service.
19 Ten years of that kind of false advertising
20 or misrepresentation about the metered fare
21 has had a real impact on the popularity of
22 street hails. But there are also other
23 issues, like street design, you know, you
24 look at Penn Station, you could barely make
25 out the taxi stand there.

1 There are locations in the City where,
2 you know, drivers will talk about where if
3 they have an Uber fare, they'll be allowed
4 in, you know, as a yellow cab driver. But if
5 they want to idle there, to wait there, for a
6 street hail, they're not able to. You see
7 less taxi stands, you know, where drivers
8 could line up for a fare. These issues
9 actually need to be addressed. Also, we
10 really --

11 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

12 MR. DESAI: -- want to see the stickers
13 back on the door, stickers that would say
14 what the rates are, particularly in response
15 to the false advertising of the last
16 ten years, and stickers that can also say the
17 things that taxis don't charge for, like the
18 credit card processing fee, extra luggage,
19 you know.

20 And lastly, you cannot drop the drop.
21 The \$3 is important. The sticker shock is
22 simply because of the MTA surcharges. That's
23 what actually needs to be addressed. And
24 while you do not regulate those fees, what
25 the TLC could do is educate the State

1 Assembly and Senate, to make them understand
2 how these fees have added to the sticker
3 shock that has impacted --

4 TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired.

5 MR. DESAI: -- street hail service both
6 for the drivers and the riding public.

7 Thank you.

8 MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

9 Commissioners, any questions?

10 (No response).

11 MS. ELUTO: All right. Thanks.

12 And our next speaker is Irene Sae Koo,
13 so you need to unmute your microphone.

14 (No response).

15 MS. ELUTO: Okay. We will --

16 MS. KOO: Oh. I don't have anything to
17 speak at this moment.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

20 Next speaker, Harjot Singh.

21 MR. SINGH: Hi. How are you doing,
22 guys? I'd like to thank the Taxi and
23 Limousine Commission for this opportunity.
24 I'd just like to speak a little bit about the
25 surcharges. I know we were talking about it.

1 I really feel like the MTA fees isn't
2 something that should be part of the meter
3 fare. One of the biggest concerns of
4 customers' perspective as well is when the
5 meter starts at very high prices, they
6 complain about, you know, the MTA fees, then
7 they talk about the taxes and stuff. I
8 understand that the fees are there for a
9 reason, but I really feel like the MTA fees,
10 some of these fees can be brought down and,
11 you know, regulated in a way where it's fair
12 to the drivers and the customers at the same
13 time.

14 Another thing that I'd like to say is
15 the \$3 surcharge that comes on the meter in
16 the beginning, that can't be dropped because
17 some customers go, you know, two minutes
18 away. We've gotten fares that go, you know,
19 30 seconds away. And, you know, that should
20 be there for a reason because that kind of
21 pays us for our time. The \$3 can make up for
22 the five to seven minutes that we drop off a
23 customer, right off the bat. Credit card
24 fees from, you know, owner's perspective and
25 the driver's perspective, I really feel like

1 the three percent is fair. We were talking
2 about it earlier. I know somebody mentioned
3 it earlier. I feel like it's a fair --
4 that's not that big of an issue to us taxi
5 drivers.

6 Other than that, I really feel like
7 another big impact is we're not allowed to
8 stop in the streets, like let's say like Penn
9 Station or Javits Center. There's a lot of
10 areas that cab drivers pick up a lot of
11 tourists that come -- Hudson Yards, for
12 example. There's a lot of Uber drivers that
13 take up places in those places, like even
14 Penn Station. I've seen it happen a lot.
15 There's a regulated spot for taxi drivers,
16 but Uber drivers come in and they park their
17 cars there and they break the lines of taxi
18 drivers. You know, it's not fair to taxi
19 drivers that are waiting in the line, and now
20 the Uber driver cuts them off, now there's
21 other taxis that cut in front and cut those
22 drivers, so now they have to wait an
23 additional 10, 15 minutes to get a trip.

24 So, I really feel like, you know, TLC
25 police should be cracking down on the Ubers

1 and stuff, which is not fair to the taxi
2 drivers. There should be more taxi stands, I
3 feel like, at Hudson Yards, a place for taxi
4 drivers to stop. Me, as a taxi driver, I've
5 seen a lot of opportunities as taxi fares
6 that come out of Hudson Yards because of the
7 BlackRock Building, Baker Tilly offices.
8 There's a lot of corporate offices there that
9 allow taxi drivers to pick up fares. But
10 since we can only, you know, drive there for
11 a second, and we have to leave right away, a
12 lot of taxi drivers miss those opportunities
13 and fares. And I've had a lot of
14 customers --

15 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

16 MR. SINGH: -- about that as well.

17 Other than that, I really feel like there's a
18 lot of people in private cars that are, you
19 know, picking up fares in the City that are
20 taking taxi opportunities away. There's
21 drivers that are impersonating taxi cabs, and
22 they're picking up street hails. I've seen
23 that happen a lot, you know. TLC is trying
24 to crack down, but they're cracking down on
25 more taxi drivers for not picking up trips,

1 but they're not cracking down on the people
2 that are driving in, you know, private cars
3 and doing that kind of stuff. So, I really
4 feel like that's hurting our business.

5 Thank you.

6 CHAIR DO: Thank you.

7 Where do you see Ubers in taxi stands?

8 MR. SINGH: On Penn Station, it happens
9 a lot. Like, I personally, you know, I work
10 as a part-time driver. On Penn Station,
11 you'll see a lot of Uber drivers parked up at
12 the taxi stand. I know some of the Uber
13 drivers, they get out the car to go at Penn
14 Station to ask people, "Hey, do you need a
15 cab? Do you need a cab?" Or some of them
16 park up just to take a break because it's a
17 taxi stand, but that taxi stand is regulated
18 for us taxi drivers to pick up trips.

19 CHAIR DO: Do you see that at the
20 Eighth Avenue taxi stand or the 31st Street
21 one?

22 MR. SINGH: Eighth Ave and 31st,
23 between 31st and 33rd.

24 CHAIR DO: So, it is on the Eighth
25 Avenue one, the main one --

1 MR. SINGH: Yes.

2 CHAIR DO: -- right outside of MSG?

3 MR. SINGH: Yes.

4 CHAIR DO: Okay. We'll have officers
5 take a look at that.

6 COMMISSIONER BADER: I would add to
7 that that personally I was there a number of
8 times and I witnessed the same thing, and
9 spoke to the dispatcher there. And it's been
10 an ongoing problem for a long time, but it's
11 not so easy to regulate because it's all
12 based on everybody learning when event at the
13 Garden are coming out or situations like
14 that, and that's when you see it. So, it's
15 not a constant. My experience is it's not a
16 constant, but it's certainly aware -- it's a
17 situation that -- for which you can see it at
18 specific times.

19 MR. SINGH: And then, also, sorry.
20 Just to put in -- it's just, you know, a
21 really big concern is the people that are
22 taking the taxi fares in their private cars,
23 that's happening a lot now. I've seen it
24 happen where people are, you know, stopping
25 on the sides in their private cars, and

1 they're trying to get the taxi customers from
2 the street hails. They say that, "We'll try
3 to give you a better price," and I really
4 feel like that's hurting our business.

5 CHAIR DO: Yeah. That is something
6 that we're focused on, unlicensed for-hire
7 activity, Mr. Singh. And it just doesn't
8 happen just at Penn Station. It happens in
9 all five boroughs, and we have police
10 officers making sure that, one, that they
11 don't take advantage of passengers, but they
12 also don't take trips away from hardworking
13 drivers.

14 MR. SINGH: I understand. I mean, this
15 is kind of going to come off in a wrong way.
16 I'm sorry if it does. I've seen them crack
17 down more on taxi drivers for taxi drivers
18 not taking certain trips to the City. Where,
19 you know, I drive down certain blocks and I
20 drive down certain streets, and they're
21 giving more tickets to taxi drivers that are
22 trying to make a living and trying to work
23 very hard. And, you know, it's like they're
24 giving them more tickets, and they're not
25 focused on this kind of stuff. I've seen

1 that happen. You know, it's just something
2 from my perspective. I'm a full-time
3 student. I drive as a taxi driver, but I've
4 seen that happen, where they're giving our
5 taxi drivers more tickets than they are to
6 those people and not concerned about that
7 issue more.

8 CHAIR DO: That's a fair assessment,
9 but we, as an enforcement agency, look at all
10 types of issues that violate our rules. And
11 so, we will make sure that we keep everyone
12 up to our regulatory rules and regulations.
13 And so, I get where you're coming from,
14 Mr. Singh, but let me also tell you that for
15 unlicensed for-hire activity, especially in
16 busy areas like the airports, like Penn
17 Station, on Jamaica Avenue, and other major
18 corridors, we're hyper focused on that. So,
19 I'll take your point and we'll make sure that
20 we have -- we can be more fair. But I also
21 encourage all drivers to follow our rules and
22 regulations.

23 MR. SINGH: Yes. All right.

24 CHAIR DO: So, my last question to you
25 is, you said that you would like to see more

1 taxi stands in Hudson Yards, where
2 specifically? And my team will take a --

3 MR. SINGH: So, yeah. Just to not,
4 like, mess up, you know, the daily traffic
5 that flows through Hudson Yards, honestly, if
6 they could have a taxi stand anywhere between
7 the roundabout that comes up, you know, it
8 could be before the traffic where like the
9 main entrance is, but they could have a
10 designated spot on the right side where they
11 have enough space for taxis to park up
12 properly and still have traffic flow through,
13 I feel like they can have, you know, taxi
14 stands for three to four taxis there.

15 And, you know, I talk to the people
16 that work at Hudson Yards as security.
17 They're completely fine with it, but the
18 problem is that a lot of -- they're told that
19 the taxi drivers have to move from there
20 because the taxis don't have a spot, so they
21 all start lining up at random spots. But if
22 they have a designated spot, like every other
23 place, like, you know, Columbus Circle or all
24 these different spots, I feel like, you know,
25 it will make it better for the taxi drivers.

1 CHAIR DO: All right. Fair.

2 All right. Thank you so, Mr. Singh.

3 MR. SINGH: Thank you.

4 MS. ELUTO: All right. Next speaker,
5 Ronish Karki.

6 Mr. Karki, you can unmute your
7 microphone and begin.

8 (No response).

9 MS. ELUTO: Mr. Karki.

10 COMMISSIONER KAUFMAN: Sherryl, I don't
11 know if you saw --

12 MS. ELUTO: Oh, okay.

13 COMMISSIONER KAUFMAN: -- he added the
14 comment in the chat.

15 MS. ELUTO: Okay. So, we'll -- does
16 anyone wish to respond to the comment in the
17 chat?

18 CHAIR DO: We're not going to comment
19 on that rule. It's unrelated to the yellow
20 taxi industry. We'll put it in the written
21 comments, if needed.

22 MS. ELUTO: Okay. All right. Then,
23 our next speaker up is Richard Chow.

24 MR. CHOW: All right. Can you hear me?
25 Good morning, Commissioner Do and everyone.

1 My name is Richard Chow. I'm an owner,
2 driver. I'm a member of the New York Taxi
3 Worker Alliance.

4 Please don't drop the \$3 per minute
5 mileage minimum fare to the driver. It's a
6 maximum minimum fare for the driver. 70
7 percent of this job are short trips. MTA
8 taxes are too much to have these laws killing
9 the yellow cab street hail, loss of our
10 income. I don't want to travel LaGuardia,
11 keep running the meter fare, low fare rate.
12 We want to bring back the taxi rate sticker
13 on the door. TLC removed the taxi door price
14 sticker, and yellow cab taxi lost a lot of
15 street hail. Let the passengers see
16 themselves what the often based on the
17 pricing, especially yellow cab.

18 After years of the false statement, you
19 know, is about cost of the yellow cab fares.
20 The false advertising, the scale of
21 passengers not taking the yellow cab, the
22 rates -- not taking the yellow cab. And TLC
23 taxi rate sticker must also must post on
24 LaGuardia, JFK, all the terminals, Penn
25 Station, Grand Central, Port Authority, so

1 depending on -- and the TLC and the City
2 should hire economic expert to protect the
3 street hail trip, the yellow cab no street
4 hail trip. Because the cost of the living,
5 cost of the operation is skyrocketing, but
6 then along WAV cap, and insurance,
7 maintenance. It's a lot of drivers that are
8 losing their MRP, who are now still waiting
9 for the MRP. They're only paying the
10 interest. Lease driver paying, overpaid the
11 lease, yellow is raising more than two years,
12 Uber raised five percent, and the yellow cab
13 zero.

14 This is -- the TLC want to cut the
15 rate. This is unfair. TLC needs to enforce
16 the regulation that the transparency and the
17 e-hail trips show the amount they charge the
18 passenger, along with the breakdown of the
19 payment to the driver. The passenger wants
20 to know how much to pay to the hardworking
21 driver, and also the tariffs are coming --

22 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

23 MR. CHOW: The tariffs are coming.
24 Okay. First, everything will be very
25 expensive. We have to pay a lot of bill to

1 making for the living. So, I pick up a
2 passenger and I charged \$44. Actually, it's
3 record on the meter for only \$33. So, after
4 the passenger found out the meter fares are
5 more reliable, the passenger told me that
6 they want to see the rate sticker on the
7 door, that they can save their money.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

10 Our next speaker up is Philip
11 Gusterson. Mr. Gusterson, unmute your
12 microphone, sir.

13 (No response).

14 MS. ELUTO: Okay. I'm going to go on
15 to the next speaker, then. Wain Chin.

16 MR. CHIN: Hi, everyone. Good morning,
17 Commissioner and all the guests. My name is
18 Wain Chin. I'm also a member of New York
19 Taxi Worker Alliance. I think you should
20 keep the initial drop of \$3 because most of
21 our trips are short trips, like a mile or two
22 miles. So, if you drop the initial drop,
23 we're going to lose our busy income or the
24 most of the driver. And, you know, if you
25 drop the initial rate, increase the meter

1 fare, and then long distance fare, like ten
2 miles or more, is going to be more expensive
3 for the rider.

4 So, I would suggest, you know, keep the
5 initial drop of \$3. And also, we would like
6 to see the airport fare rate posted on the
7 door, so the passenger know how much cost,
8 like JFK, and also the real fare. And also,
9 I would like the TLC and the City to work
10 with the State in order to lower or eliminate
11 the taxes, the MTA tax, and stuff that --
12 because the MTA tax right now is higher than
13 the initial drop of the fare with the City,
14 and MTA tax is like \$4.75, you know. It's
15 much higher than our initial fare, you know.
16 It's unfair to the riding public. So, the
17 City should okay for the state to lower or
18 eliminate the taxes.

19 And, you know, right now the rush hour,
20 when you start the meter, it's going to start
21 like ten twenty-five, so it's a shock to the
22 customer. So, you might try to lower the
23 initial fare on the rush hour. I don't know
24 how you do it, you know. I ask you to work
25 with the state to lower the taxes in those

1 times, you know, so prevent the public to
2 have that shock.

3 And myself, I still have a loan
4 with the -- our banks, they're refusing to
5 follow the -- I mean, join the city program,
6 so we're still looking for -- to finance the
7 loan for my loan, so I ask now the City work
8 with the bank to do search of the loan. And
9 because there's not many left, only like a
10 few hundred, maybe 100, 200 loan left, I
11 asked the city government have with the
12 remaining owner refinance the loan --

13 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

14 MR. CHIN: And please keep the rate,
15 the initial rate, for the drivers because we
16 need it. This is our basic income.

17 Thank you so much.

18 MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

19 Okay. I'm going to go back to Philip
20 Gusterson. Mr. Gusterson, are you available?

21 (No response).

22 MS. ELUTO: Okay. If you're not going
23 to unmute your mic, then I need to go on to
24 the next person. Erhan Tuncel.

25 Mr. Tuncel.

1 MR. TUNCEL: Good morning,
2 Commissioners. Thank you for this
3 opportunity. I've been driving for 26 years,
4 and I can tell you this, 12 years ago, I used
5 to make 25 to 30 trips a day to make \$300.
6 Today, I'm making 15 to 20 trips a day to
7 make the same amount of money. The sticker
8 shock of the meter is the main reason for
9 this. And the \$3 that goes straight into the
10 driver's pocket is not the culprit for the
11 sticker shock. It's the MTA surcharges that
12 adds to the drop.

13 And if you -- so, you need to leave the
14 90-year-old fare structure alone. \$3 drop
15 must remain. Drivers heavily depend on that,
16 especially on shorter trips, and it would be
17 impossible to work the \$3 into the fare
18 structure that pays off for the short trips.
19 It must remain, in my opinion. I think in
20 most owner, drivers' opinion.

21 And I'm going to applaud Commissioner
22 Bierstein for considering the public opinion,
23 the riding public's opinion. And here, I'm
24 going to say some things that concerns them.
25 If you really, really mean or concerned about

1 the health of this yellow taxi industry, you
2 must allow us to be transparent with the
3 riding public by posting our rates on -- back
4 on our doors. Bring back the rate stickers
5 to our doors. This will allow the riding
6 public to be adequately informed before they
7 choose the type of ride they want to be in.
8 This is very, very important for the yellow
9 taxi industry, and it's ironic that our rates
10 came off the doors around the same time Uber
11 was plowing into our for-hire vehicle
12 industry in New York City. So, bring it back
13 and make the riding public aware --

14 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

15 MR. TUNCEL: -- of how the rates in
16 yellow taxis work. Right now, they don't
17 have that. They are misinformed, and a lot
18 of people have a lot of money to misinform
19 the riding public. We don't. Our rates on
20 our doors will inform them properly on what
21 we charge, so that they can be informed.

22 Thank you very much.

23 MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

24 Our next speaker, Abdullah Neuhaus.

25 Mr. Neuhaus just appeared on the

1 screen. Yes, Mr. Neuhaus, if you can unmute
2 your microphone, please.

3 (No response).

4 MS. ELUTO: No? Maybe you're just
5 listening in. All right. Then, I'll go to
6 the next speaker, Ashraf Awad.

7 Mr. Awad, if you can unmute your
8 microphone, you can give your testimony.

9 (No response).

10 MS. ELUTO: All right. I'll go on to
11 Dorothy Leconte. Is she in the waiting room?

12 Dorothy, there you are. Go ahead.

13 MS. LECONTE: Hello.

14 MS. ELUTO: Hello.

15 MS. LECONTE: Yes. My name is Dorothy.
16 My discussion today, I heard a lot of people
17 looking the same idea with me. As, you
18 know -- I'm sorry not to say good morning to
19 everybody.

20 I've been driving for 30 years,
21 38 years. I started at 30 years old. I'm 68
22 right now. The industry right now become so,
23 so difficult. When I used to drive early in
24 the morning, my first stop would be at Penn
25 Station lining on Seventh Avenue on the Penn

1 Station side on the right-hand side.
2 Everybody coming from LIRR or New Jersey,
3 they know where to caught a car. Now, they
4 change us on the side on the left all the way
5 on 31st Street, people have to drag their
6 luggage to pick up the car, and there was no
7 standing.

8 When they have an event, such as Javits
9 Center, we usually -- we didn't have the
10 technology online, but flyers will be
11 distributed to drivers to let us know that
12 every year used to be a newspaper, would tell
13 us every time they have an event for us to
14 pick up, but there's not such a thing. For
15 Uber, we become -- we become subsidized for
16 Uber, like we could drive hours, we never
17 pick up a Uber job, unless they're busy. So,
18 this job becomes so hard. We cannot make
19 money. We cannot do -- we rely on our app
20 store, and I agree for the sticker coming in
21 the tin. And most of the passengers to come
22 into my car, they argue, "What is the left
23 side?" Because they only see the fare when
24 we get the congestion fee, everything.
25 Especially when we get someone from the City

1 going to other borough or upper East Side or
2 Upper Harlem, it's a fight because the people
3 do not want to pay all the fee to the left,
4 which is the congestion fee, all of these
5 things.

6 So, TLC has to go back to realize how
7 we make money, and everything is expensive.
8 I need a new car, it's expensive. My run is
9 not even done yet. I'm still --

10 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

11 MS. LECONTE: I'm still waiting for SNR
12 to be reconstruct for us, nothing happened,
13 and it's so hard. We need help. Put the
14 sticker back on the door because passenger
15 does not know the price of the taxi. They
16 must coming to us and ask us how much it will
17 cost us. They need to know that.

18 Thank you, and I'm waiting for the
19 answer.

20 MS. ELUTO: All right. Thank you.

21 Our next speaker up is Kuber
22 Sancho-Persad.

23 MR. SANCHO-PERSAD: Hello.

24 MS. ELUTO: Hello.

25 MR. SANCHO-PERSAD: How are you doing?

1 Good morning, Commissioners. Thank you for
2 letting me speak today. I'm a New York City
3 taxi driver for ten, eleven years now. I'm
4 also -- I've been a part of the New York Taxi
5 Workers Alliance. I've been driving -- right
6 now, I drive with a taxi com -- I drive with
7 a taxi system, the Helix, right? My taxi
8 system has not gone into a contract with Uber
9 or Lyft or Access-A-Ride, so I have no
10 e-hails to get. I have been working off of
11 only street hails. It's been really tough
12 working off only street hails, but I do enjoy
13 it because that's part of the job. My dad
14 was a cab driver for 35 years, and he used to
15 love working the street and picking up street
16 hails.

17 I have heard complaints from my
18 passengers about the transparency of what
19 they are paying for in the back of the cab.
20 Some -- with the Helix system, they are able
21 to see it in big bold letters now, to see it,
22 but I would like to see something done about
23 putting it back on the door, so we know -- so
24 customers don't have to come up to me and ask
25 me at my window what the price is and what's

1 the situation, how much it's going to cost,
2 so they have an idea what they could
3 calculate from outside. Even if they still
4 want to ask, it's fine, but I want them to
5 know what the idea, because they cannot read
6 that little tiny rate card in the back of my
7 head.

8 Also, I know you guys do not have
9 control of actually doing anything about the
10 MTA fees, but destroying our drop or
11 destroying all the trips that we mostly do in
12 Manhattan as street hails, which is like
13 picking up and dropping off short rides,
14 maybe couple minutes, maybe even ten minutes,
15 you know, so we need the drop. We need to
16 find another solution. You need to stand
17 with us to try and get MTA to remove either
18 the fares, or work with us to make an
19 incentive that the passenger gets some
20 benefit for being charged more than the
21 subway ride in a taxi. Also --

22 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

23 MR. SANCHO-PERSAD: Also, I would like
24 to see that more taxi stands, not used by
25 Uber stands, by Uber cars in some places.

1 Sometimes they just use them and they don't
2 make sense.

3 I thank you for your time today. I
4 appreciate you listening to my calls. Thank
5 you.

6 MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

7 Our next speaker, Golam Talukder.
8 Mr. Talukder, you can unmute your microphone.

9 MR. TALUKDER: Good morning.
10 Can you hear me?

11 MS. ELUTO: We can hear you.

12 MR. TALUKDER: Good morning. My name
13 is Golam Talukder. I am a member of NYTWA.
14 I drive taxi almost 20 years, and nowadays
15 for dispatching fares to us, and all of those
16 fares are flat fare. Like, let's believe the
17 rush hour in Manhattan, they give \$10 fare,
18 no problem. But after -- left over, and
19 yellow cab rate structure and Uber rate
20 structure is little bit different. So, they
21 can raise like, you know, fare any second or
22 any moment depending on their demand, but our
23 fare, you know, remaining the same. So, I'd
24 like to request the TLC Commissioner and
25 everyone, you know, is helping us. They are

1 Uber and Lyft. They are cutting the fare to
2 us like, you know -- and on top of that, I
3 would like to request that our taxi price,
4 like as before, you have put a sticker on our
5 taxi.

6 Like, let's believe JFK airport is \$70
7 plus tax, this thing, and they're sending us
8 the fares maybe \$50, you know. We have our
9 standard fare. And when car -- like, I drive
10 for car, when they print out receipt happen
11 at the end, you know, they're deducting all
12 the fee, so we should be get paid, you know.
13 They should send us the fare, like, you know,
14 you're going to be get this amount of money,
15 you know, after tax and everything. And I
16 don't know how much customer paying, how much
17 I get paid. They don't have any explanation
18 on the receipt, you know. Uber helping us,
19 but, you know, we need like our meter fare,
20 you know. They send us the trip, and it's
21 going to be happen with our meter fare. Some
22 of the fare, you know, is rush hour, too much
23 traffic --

24 TIMEKEEPER: Thirty seconds remaining.

25 MR. TALUKDER: We don't know, you know,

1 how long it's going to be take. Sometime it
2 takes longer. Like Uber, if you order Uber,
3 they can -- if it's too much traffic, they
4 can raise the price, you know, no problem.
5 But for us, flat fare, you know, sometimes is
6 hurting us. The fare is helping us, but we
7 want our meter fare.

8 Thank you very much.

9 MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

10 Okay. I'm going to give last call for
11 Philip Gusterson.

12 (No response).

13 MS. ELUTO: Okay. Last call for Ashraf
14 Awad.

15 (No response).

16 MS. ELUTO: Then, that is the end of
17 our list, Commissioner Do.

18 CHAIR DO: Are there any additional
19 comments from the commissioners before I
20 close out?

21 (No response).

22 CHAIR DO: Well, thank you so much to
23 all of our public testimonies for today. The
24 industry has changed a lot since the pandemic
25 and since I started here at the TLC. I

1 remember in 2022 when the tail end of the
2 global pandemic, our industry was still
3 struggling. There was, right at the
4 beginning of 2022, only about 2.5 million
5 trips. There were about seven thousand
6 yellow taxis on the road, and drivers were
7 still struggling with a MRP program that had
8 not been fully implemented. Three years
9 later, things have transformed tremendously.

10 Today, there's over 10,500 active taxi
11 cabs, and we reached 4.6 million trips in a
12 month, the highest since the global pandemic.
13 And now we've helped over 2,000 drivers
14 provide relief with the Medallion Relief
15 Program, saving almost \$470 million of debt
16 for our drivers. So, there's still a lot of
17 work to be done, but the industry is stronger
18 than just a few years ago, and so I am happy
19 with that. But like I said, with all these
20 comments we had today, we will continue to
21 work with all of you, work with our drivers,
22 our passengers, to create a more robust and
23 iconic yellow industry.

24 And with that, the time is now 11:15,
25 and I'll close this meeting. Thank you.
 (TIME NOTED: 11:15 a.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK)

:SS

COUNTY OF QUEENS)

I, Sabrina Brown Stewart, a Notary Public
within and for the State of New York, do hereby
certify:

That the witness whose examination is
hereinbefore set forth was duly sworn and that such
an examination is a true record of the testimony
given by such a witness.

I further certify that I am not related to
any of these parties to this action by blood or
marriage, and that I am not in any way interested in
the outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
hand on this 25th day of July, 2025.

Sabrina Brown Stewart
Sabrina Brown Stewart

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