In Re Public Hearing NYC - Taxi & Limousine Commission September 20, 2023

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12	DAVID DO - Chair/Commissioner								
13	SHERRYL ELUTO - General Counsel								
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17	COMMISSIONER PAUL BADER								
18	COMMISSIONER KENNETH CHAN								
19	COMMISSIONER SARAH KAUFMAN								
20	COMMISSIONER KENNETH MITCHELL								
21	COMMISSIONER THOMAS SORRENTINO								
22	COMMISSIONER ELISA VELAZQUEZ								
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In Re Public Hearing NYC - Taxi & Limousine Commission September 20, 2023

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      S P E A K E R S:
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MS. SCOTT: Good morning. Today's public hearing is about to begin. This hearing is being conducted remotely via ZOOM, and is being simulcasted to the TLC's website, live stream, and Facebook accounts.

All persons wishing to testify were asked to sign up in advance of the hearing. All registered speakers are joining the meeting via ZOOM. If you are speaking today, your audio and video were automatically muted. When your name is called, the moderator will activate your account, and you will have control of your camera and microphone.

When ready, please state your name and affiliation, and then proceed with your testimony. Public testimony will be limited to three minutes per speaker. Any additional comments may be submitted in writing to the Commission. When your testimony is complete, your audio and video will be muted by the moderator.

A special note for our registered speakers: Please ensure that your display name in the ZOOM meeting matches the name

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that you used when you signed up to speak.

This will enable the moderator to confirm

that you are present in the meeting. Closed

captioning is also available for today's

meeting. Thank you for your attention.

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

CHAIR DO: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the public hearing on TLC's Green Rides Initiative. I'm Commissioner David Do, and I'm joined today by all of our current commissioners; Commissioners Kaufman, Chan, Bader, Velazquez, Sorrentino, and Mitchell.

Before we begin, I'd like to say a few words. We didn't plan this, but today's hearing couldn't come at a more appropriate time. It's National Climate Week.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, last month was the hottest August ever recorded. Those records go back 174 years, and they're continuously being broken. Our world is warming rapidly. Hardly a week passes without catastrophic results of climate change appearing somewhere across the globe.

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Our dependency on fossil fuels created this problem.

Here in New York City, TLC's fleet contributes 600,000 metric tons of CO2 emissions a year. Put that into analogy. If we planted ten million trees today, it would take them about ten years to sequester that much carbon. But we are in a unique place in history. Existing technology and a rapidly accelerating marketplace for zero-emission vehicles have given us the opportunity to move to clean energy and transportation.

We can do it, and we can save drivers up to 40 percent in fuel and maintenance cost at the same time. That is why Mayor Eric Adams announced a bold vision earlier this year at his State of the City address, that the City's largest contributor of vehicle emissions, the high-volume for-hire vehicle fleet, would be required to be greener.

Commendably, both Uber and Lyft have already committed to a zero-emissions fleet by 2030.

This rule would formalize that commitment, while ensuring that wheelchair-accessible vehicles are on equal footing with EVs in

these rules; we will not sacrifice accessibility for sustainability, and that the Green Rides Initiative build on accessibility requirements already in place in the for-hire vehicle sector.

We can do this, but I need to emphasize that we cannot do it overnight. Green Rides is a gradual approach, one that takes into account charging infrastructure development and that of the used vehicle market. If passed, there will be a series of small steps that puts us on a path towards accomplishing a very big goal, a cleaner, safer, and more accessible city for everyone.

Now, on to our hearing.

Today, we're holding a public hearing on the proposed amendments to our high-volume for-hire vehicle rules. This rule package would -- one, require high-volume for-hire vehicle services to have fleets comprised entirely of zero-emission vehicles and wheelchair vehicles, wheelchair accessible vehicles -- I'm sorry -- by 2030. This goal will be achieved incrementally over the next six years.

This notice to comment on the proposed rule was published in the City Record on August 16, 2023, and comment period ended yesterday. We're not voting on these rules today.

Now, I would like to turn it over to

James DiGiovanni, our Assistant Commissioner

for Policy, to lead us through a presentation

of the proposed rules.

James.

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MR. DIGIOVANNI: Good morning,
Commissioners. Let me share my screen and
then we'll get started.

Mentioned, my name is James DiGiovanni. I'm the Assistant Commissioner for Policy at TLC. I'm going to just walk through these slides briefly, mostly to explain the background of the Green Rides Initiative, rather than the rules themselves. The rules themselves are fairly straightforward. They're really just a list of years and percentages, so nothing super technical there, but wanted to give a little more context into how the agency is thinking about electrification, and the

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research that we've done to inform this policy.

So, first, we released a report in December of 2022 called Charged Up, that I'm sure you've all seen, where we did a lot of exploratory research on electrification in the TLC world. So, we addressed questions like what the benefits are to electrification, what the current fleet looked like, what the current charging infrastructure looked like, you know, how many FHVs were EVs, how many taxis were EVs, what the transition has looked like so far, what's some patterns that we could identify in the data so far, as well as some bigger questions, like the cost of electrification, vehicle cost, infrastructure cost, maintenance, fuel.

And we try to identify potential EV centric regulations, not having committed to anything in that report, but just, you know, starting to brainstorm ideas so we can get feedback. And then, this rule proposal is sort of the result of that process.

So, I'll just briefly go through some

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of what we found through that research. So, question of "Why electrify TLC-licensed vehicles?" For many of us, it's straightforward. It's emissions reduction, climate change. Obviously, these are very important things, but digging in a little deeper, the Commissioner mentioned that TLC-licensed vehicles produce about 600,000 tons of CO2 per year. Because these vehicles are so high mileage, they actually have a much greater impact on the City's emissions than a personal vehicle would.

I mean, imagine the kind of mileage that a typical personal vehicle in New York City gets and the kind of mileage that a taxi or for-hire vehicle gets, and it's pretty obvious where the larger impact could be. So, we found that electrifying one rideshare vehicle would be the equivalent of electrifying three personal vehicles. There can be some big impacts into electrifying FHVs.

And another thing that we found is that more rideshare EVs are likely to spur additional charging infrastructure from the

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private and public sector. So, if you know that there's a demand there for charging from the rideshare fleets, it's likely that more infrastructure will be developed for the benefit of everybody.

And then, looking at the benefits, not just for the public and New Yorkers, but specifically for drivers and the industry, there are major fuel savings that could be accomplished, especially with volatile gas prices. To be protected from that volatility is a significant benefit. For TLC-licensed drivers, there can be major savings on maintenance, and there are state and federal incentives that vehicle owners who switch over to EVs can take advantage of, to really drive down the cost of driving an EV.

We also just looked at the kind of state of the industry and the state of electrification efforts statewide as well.

So, currently there are about 2,500 FHV EVs, which represents about three percent of the TLC-licensed fleet. This is higher than numbers for private vehicles in New York City or in New York State. So, the TLC-licensed

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fleet is already ahead because of some of those benefits, like reduce maintenance and reduce fuel are particularly attractive to TLC drivers. So, we are expecting that the TLC-licensed fleet will continue to be ahead of the private vehicles fleet. So, while the number is low, it has been rapidly growing, both for TLC vehicles and private vehicles.

New York State is also requiring a hundred percent of new car sales to be EVs by 2035, and 35 percent of new car sales to be EVs by 2026. So, there's a lot of action at the state level as well, that will impact the market in New York City. And we analyzed a lot of trip patterns for the current EV fleet and compared them to Internal Combustion Engine or ICE vehicles, and we found that the current growth of TLC-licensed EVs has been fairly smooth, that they have similar trip patterns and earnings to gas-powered vehicles. And we found this both in the data and through more qualitative interviews with EV drivers, about their experience, and it seems like the transition, while there's still a lot more to go, has been smooth so

far.

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We did identify three major obstacles that I'll address because I expect that that will be a lot of what you are interested in and a lot of the testimony that we get from the public at today's hearing. So, one of those is charging infrastructure, how much charging infrastructure there is and where it is. I know there is vehicle costs, and third is wheelchair accessibility.

So, on charging infrastructure, we analyzed the existing EV charging landscape, and we compared how it aligns with trip patterns, where drivers are doing their driving. And also driver residence information, where drivers actually live. Because we assume that primarily drivers either want to charge where they're doing their trips or they want to charge off shift while they're at home.

So, our conclusions were that drivers live in areas that are not particularly well-served by EV charging infrastructure, and it's because drivers predominantly live in outer borough communities, communities of

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color, more low-income communities, and those are not the areas that, so far, the private sector has really invested in for charging infrastructure. But a lot of trip pattern analysis that we did, did show that trips are more likely to occur where EV chargers already are because trips are more likely to occur in Manhattan or in the inner ring of Brooklyn and Queens, for example.

So, another kind of interesting element, and what gave us a lot of the idea for the Green Rides Initiative, is that existing chargers often have low utilization, showing that there's a lack of demand and there's this, sort of, chicken-and-egg problem with EVs and charging infrastructure. Nobody wants to invest in charging infrastructure if there's not going to be vehicles that are interested in charging there. And people may not want to buy an EV if they're not confident that there is going to be charging available for them. So, our basic finding here was that the infrastructure and vehicles need to grow together in order for the transition to be

successful.

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On vehicle costs, there's a lot here, but I'll just go through it quickly -- that EVs are currently more expensive than comparable ICE vehicles, but EVs on the market are already getting cheaper. Estimates show that in the next few years, namely by 2027, comparable EV and ICE vehicles will be similarly priced or EVs will be even cheaper. So, we do expect that while right now there are more high-end EVs available, we've seen a lot of lower end EVs come to market in recent years, and a lot of the major companies have plans to really expand their EV fleet in the next few years, so we fully expect that that will continue to address the issue of vehicle costs as the vehicles continue to gets less expensive.

And, you know, if our expectations are incorrect, either the market grows quicker than we expect or slower than we expect, of course, TLC always can go back and revise these rules, revise percentages, timelines, specifics on vehicle types, but these are our best expectations at the moment. And we also

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have tools, like the driver pay formula that cover driver expenses, to ensure that drivers do not have to bear the cost of any increased vehicle costs, if there are any.

For wheelchair accessibility, this is a really big topic for TLC, and TLC has made a lot of progress in recent years on accessibility. So, we really wanted to make sure that any initiative that's trying to push vehicle types in a certain direction is really accounting for wheelchair accessibility and is putting more emphasis on wheelchair accessibility, even than TLC has previously because it really is a top priority for us.

The issue here, though, is that there are currently no wheelchair accessible electric vehicles available on the U.S. market. So, as much as TLC would love to consider requiring a certain percentage of vehicles to be EVs and WAVs, that they would have to be both, we really just can't mandate something that doesn't currently exist. And we don't want to be in a position where we're behind the curve with how much progress is

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being made on electrification and emissions reduction of just waiting until the ideal vehicle exists.

So, we wanted to make sure that both EVs and WAVs are captured by this policy and it builds on our existing FHV accessibility rules, which require Uber and Lyft, specifically, to fulfill 80 percent of their wheelchair accessible vehicle requests in ten minutes or less, and 90 percent of those requests in 15 minutes or less. Of course, we can consider adjusting those numbers, reevaluating that program, but we think TLC has a really strong foundation on our FHV accessibility policy and that the Green Rides Initiative builds on that and does not, in any way, alter our existing FHV accessibility requirements, and does not give the companies any way to avoid those requirements. will still absolutely have to comply with our existing FHV accessibility rules.

Now, as far as crafting the Green Rides
Initiative, specifically, and determining
what the benchmarks were going to be; so,
first and foremost, we wanted to make it a

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phased approach knowing that, as I alluded to earlier, a gradual expansion of rideshare EVs is not only going to be easier for the industry to comply with, you know, the slow growth over the next six years, rather than, you know, some sudden requirement. Not only is that the case, but it will also spur the demand for public and private charging infrastructure, both New York City government installing our own charging infrastructure, and the private sector will know based on the Green Rides Initiative, that there are going to be tens of thousands of EVs coming on board in New York City doing high mileage and will have high charging demand in the next six years.

So, if you are a private sector company thinking about where to invest in charging infrastructure, we think the Green Rides

Initiative will make you significantly more likely to invest and build out that infrastructure in New York City.

There is this rapidly evolving market for EVs, as I mentioned, so with price parity in about 2027, we want a slower ramp up until

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that point, of the percentage benchmarks.

And then, after that point, the benchmarks proceed a little more quickly because the vehicles, EVs, will be even cheaper than their gas counterparts. And New York City EV sales mandate starting in 2026 aligns well with that price parity estimation.

Again, on accessibility, we wanted to encourage the continued growth of the WAV fleet. We want drivers to have options to not just have to drive an EV over time, but also they will continue to have that WAV option, and the companies will continue to have the requirement to dispatch to wheelchair accessible vehicles, at least until there are electric WAVs available and then we can, you know, consider making changes at that point based on the existing market.

We also did analysis of how often FHVs turn over or retire. So, we found that the figure is about seven years with higher mileage vehicles turning over more quickly, so that leads us to roughly the 2030 timeline, where this gives the opportunity

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for people, vehicle owners, to, the next time they buy a new vehicle, get an electric vehicle, but not have to go run out and get one tomorrow.

And to the element of new licenses, we do have the option of issuing new licenses that are specifically for electric vehicles. Currently, we issue new licenses only for wheelchair accessible vehicles, and we've seen how that has helped the WAV fleet grow, and that may also help spur the growth for EVs as well.

And then, finally, the actual benchmarks, so a hundred percent of trips dispatched by high-volume companies, which are currently Uber and Lyft. But any new high-volume company would also have to comply with these requirements; must be either EV or WAV by 2030, and we have benchmarks and evaluation along the way to ensure that steady progress. So, it's not, you know, in 2029 everybody is playing catch up to hit the number.

We want to make sure that we see gradual progress along the way, with 2024

1	being five percent; 2025, 15 percent; 2026,									
2	25 percent, and then proceeding more quickly									
3	after that with 40, 60, 80, and 100 percent									
4	in the final four years. The compliance									
5	percentage will be determined on that									
6	calendar year basis, so we'll look at all of									
7	the trips that a company dispatch in a									
8	calendar year before evaluating how they did									
9	in that year. And if the company does not									
10	meet the benchmark, there are fines and also									
11	a requirement for a corrective action plan,									
12	to show how they will meet the upcoming									
13	benchmarks after that point.									
14	So, that completes my presentation.									
15	I'd be happy to answer any questions you									
16	have.									
17	CHAIR DO: Commissioners, are there any									
18	questions?									
19	COMMISSIONER BADER: I do have one									
20	question.									
21	Where does plug-in hybrids fit into									
22	this proposal?									
23	MR. DIGIOVANNI: That's a great									
24	question.									
25	Plug-in hybrids are not included. The									

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only vehicles that are included here are in the rule is zero-emission vehicles, which plug-in hybrids would not satisfy. And one, and the largest component of that, is electric vehicles, so it has to be fully battery electric. It cannot be gas-powered at all.

COMMISSIONER BADER: Thank you,
Commissioner.

CHAIR DO: Commissioner Velazquez.

COMMISSIONER VELAZQUEZ: Hey, there.

Thank you very much, James, for the presentation. I just wanted to ask, and I know I'm probably going to get testimony about this shortly.

But just from your perspective and the TLC's perspective, because there is not a lot of the charging infrastructure in the outer boroughs where a lot of the drivers reside, what do we know about, potentially, the private sector, some of these, you know, whether it's, you know, Revel or some of these other -- Tesla, who -- private companies, private industry that has charging infrastructure, are there any plans? What

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has -- has the TLC been coordinating? How do you foresee that kind of growing out? If you could talk about that a little bit.

MR. DIGIOVANNI: Sure. Yeah, so I'll give a little more detail on the charging infrastructure as a whole.

So, within New York City Government, you have the City DOT that has done a lot of the charging infrastructure on the public side, and, you know, we expect just like gas stations, New York City is not going to own or operate all of the EV chargers. It's going to have to be a significant private sector input, but the City DOT has really been great partners for TLC on the issues of electrification from the commissioner on down.

They really understand TLC issues and are being mindful of their own efforts, emphasizing outer boroughs communities of color, areas where people are more likely to live in apartment buildings, which means they're parking at the curb, rather than in their garage. New York City is just a very different beast compared to most other places

in the United States.

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So, you know, they have discounted charging programs for TLC-licensed drivers. They created a survey just for TLC-licensed drivers to get input on where EV charging should go, expecting that drivers will want it in their neighborhood or where they hang out, and they'll be able to get -- DOT will be able to get a lot of insight from the drivers' perspective. And we've also worked closely with them on some grant applications for the federal government to try to install EV charging in the areas that would be most useful for TLC drivers, and they use a lot of TLC data to inform those applications. So, that's sort of the public side.

On the private side, I'll say there has been -- since our Charged Up report, there's been a lot of interests from the private sector in talking to TLC about the needs of the TLC-licensed industry, how they can get involved in the market, where they'd, you know -- the data that we've released on where drivers live, where the trip patterns are, I think seems to have been very useful for a

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lot of companies that are interested. You have a large company like Revel that is really rapidly installing charging infrastructure all over New York City, and it takes years to install charging infrastructure with all the complications of, you know, conduit and all the -- like, the sort of Con Ed side and the utility side, that I won't pretend to be an expert on, but those plans really are very active right now.

There are some private sector chargers, like a lot of the Revel stuff because they started working on it a few years ago, it's already up. But between them and other major companies, there's a lot that's in the works, and we're in constant communication with them to try to emphasize how important the TLC aspect of the private charging market is going to be in the coming years.

COMMISSIONER VELAZQUEZ: And just a quick follow-up on the grants, the grant applications. I guess I don't know if it's a question as much if it is a kind of statement, but I'm making an assumption.

Some of those grant applications to some of

1 the -- to access some of the federal funds 2 that have become available for this, and I 3 guess just, you know, asking or maybe just saying, you know, if there's -- you know, to 4 5 ensure that we have, as an agency working with the sector, identified all of those 6 7 opportunities and figured out how to chase those down. I think that's really important, 8 9 so I just wanted to say that. 10 MR. DIGIOVANNI: Yeah, absolutely. It's something that TLC is very focused on, 11 12 City DOT, City Hall, the deputy mayor's office, federal funding for these kinds of 13 14 big initiatives is incredibly important. So, 15 yes, we're paying very close attention to any 16 opportunities and doing our best to obtain 17 and make good use of any funds that become 18 available. 19 COMMISSIONER VELAZQUEZ: Thank you very 2.0 much. 21 MR. DIGIOVANNI: Thank you. 22 CHAIR DO: Thank you, Commissioner 23 Velazquez. 24 Commissioner Kaufman. 25 COMMISSIONER KAUFMAN: Hi. Thank you

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so much for the presentation. It was really helpful to learn more about the program.

I guess I'm wondering, on top of what Commissioner Velazquez was just asking, what plans are in place or in the works to collaborate with other city agencies, especially in the areas of workforce development, to ensure that these vehicles can be maintained and repaired as necessary?

And also, as the sidewalk charging culture gets developed, what kind of traffic enforcement will be put into place to ensure that EVs get priority in these spots? Are there already agreements in place to help manage and enforce these sidewalk charging locations can be prioritized for EVs?

Thanks.

MR. DIGIOVANNI: Yeah, great questions.

So, I think on the question of enforcement, it is a very good and a very important question. I think from the TLC's perspective, we want to really work with City DOT and the Police Department on enforcement because it's likely, and I think in the scenario that you're imagining, it's a

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TLC-licensed driver with an EV who's trying to get into the spot, and it's some private vehicle that is gas-powered that is taking up that spot. So, there would not be a direct opportunity there for TLC enforcement of a non-TLC-licensed vehicle, but it is something that I know is an emphasis for City DOT and PD because City DOT can install tens of thousands of curbside chargers, but if they're never available for EVs, then it's a lot of money without any payoffs.

So, it is something that, as that curbside program continues to expand, there's going to be, I think, more and more emphasis placed on ensuring that it's used properly.

CHAIR DO: And I would just add,

Commissioner, is that we work very closely
with NYPD's transportation unit, in

particular traffic, for a lot of our relief
stands and our taxi stands across our city,

to ensure that they're available for drivers
who drive either for-hire vehicles or

traditional taxis. So, that partnership will
continue to develop and, indeed, make sure
that when curbside charging becomes more

1 widespread, that it's enforced so that they are quote/unquote not ICE'd or blocked by 2 3 internal combustion engine. 4 Second question, James. 5 MR. DIGIOVANNI: Sorry. You'll have to remind me what the second question is. 6 7 COMMISSIONER KAUFMAN: Is there a workforce development program in place? 8 9 Because these vehicles are new and there may 10 not be a maintenance and repair workforce in 11 place or there likely is not just yet, so are 12 there plans to work with other parts of the City to help develop that workforce? 13 14 MR. DIGIOVANNI: It's an important point, and something that I'm not 15 16 particularly familiar with, so I don't want 17 to speculate too much. But it's something 18 that I can follow up with you and the other 19 commissioners for sure. I know that there 2.0 are some efforts by other city agencies to 21 focus more on workforce development, but I'll

COMMISSIONER KAUFMAN: Thank you.

have to get the details there and get back to

CHAIR DO: All right. If there are no

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you.

other questions, I'm going to go ahead and move on to our public hearing today.

Today's public hearing is to hear from our community, and we are not voting on these rules today. And so, without further ado,
I'm going to turn it over to our general counsel to begin the public hearing.

Sherryl.

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MS. ELUTO: Good morning. When I call your name, you can unmute your microphone and begin your testimony. Each speaker will be allotted three minutes to speak. The time limit will be strictly enforced. A 30-second warning will be provided, and then you will need to conclude your testimony when your time limit is up. The video of this hearing and copies of all written comments will be provided to the Commissioners prior to the vote on these rules at the next Commission meeting.

And with that, we will begin our public hearing. Our first speaker is going to be Jessica Cruz from the Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice. She will be followed by David Chernack and Patrick

McClellan.

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So, Ms. Cruz, you can unmute your microphone and begin.

MS. CRUZ: Good Morning, Commissioners. My name is Jessica Cruz. I work as a senior advisor for the Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice. I'm here to testify in support of the newly proposed rules for the TLC Green Rides Initiative, requiring high-volume for-hire services, like Uber and Lyft, to have fleets comprised entirely of zero-emission vehicles or wheelchair accessible vehicles by 2030.

Currently, vehicles licensed through
TLC make 250 million trips and produce
approximately 600,000 metric tons of carbon
dioxide a year, accounting for roughly
four percent of the citywide transportation
emissions. Adoption of the Green Rides
Initiative would have a profound impact on
reducing New York City's greenhouse gas
emissions and improving our air quality.

Reducing PM 2.5 levels from sources like transportation are critical to protecting the health of New Yorkers. We

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know that particulate matter from emissions contributes to a multitude of health issues, including asthma, heart disease, and lung cancer. Improving air quality, especially in our environmental justice neighborhoods, can help reduce the number of emergency room visits New Yorkers experience today.

In April of this year, our office released our climate strategic plan, PlaNYC: Getting Sustainability Done, which outlines initiatives to reduce emissions from buildings, waste, and transportation, including cutting our transportation emissions in half by 2030. We have committed to electrifying the city fleet and ensuring that all New Yorkers are within 2.5 miles from a charging station by 2035.

Our plan highlights the importance of New Yorkers that must drive, should drive electric. And the Green Rides proposal is critical to meeting our transportation and air quality goals. The Green Rides roadmap takes advantage of unprecedented new incentives for purchasing electric vehicles and will help expand charging infrastructure

1 in the City. The benchmarks and goals in the 2 proposal also proactively help New York City 3 meet electric vehicle requirements. It is a big step in helping combat climate change 4 5 while providing accessibility, mobility, and good jobs for New Yorkers. 6 7 Thank you, Commissioners. MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 8 9 Our next speaker is David Chernack from 10 Empire Clean Cities. 11 Mr. Chernack, you can unmute your 12 microphone. MR. CHERNACK: Hello. Hi, thank you. 13 14 Yeah. My name is David Chernack. I'm here from Empire Clean Cities. Empire Clean 15 16 Cities is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit 17 environmental organization in the designated 18 U.S. Department of Energy Clean Cities 19 Coalition for New York City and the Lower

We work to reduce transportation
emissions and petroleum usage in our region.
Our mission is to ensure clean air for future
generations by providing citizens and
stakeholders with reliable information about

Hudson Valley.

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alternative fuels and advanced vehicle technology. ECC applauds the TLC's commitment to transitioning New York City's rideshare fleet to zero-emission vehicles by 2030 and strongly supports the Green Rides Initiative.

The success of ECC's recent electric vehicle ride and drive event, held on August 29th, in partnership with the TLC, at Revel's superhub in Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn, was a testament to the growing interest and enthusiasm about electric vehicles among New York City's for-hire vehicle drivers. In total, 60 drivers took over 100 test rides and attended charging demonstrations at the event for electric vehicles.

Based on ECC's broad experience, we are sharing a few key points that we believe will be critical in the Green Rides Initiative's success: The first is infrastructure, expanding public charging infrastructure, especially DC fast charging sites, is not only imperative for the GRI program, but it will have the ancillary benefit of supporting

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vehicle electrification across New York City.

The need for reliable EV charging

infrastructure is especially acute in

neighborhoods where for-hire vehicle drivers

live, including the Bronx, Eastern Queens,

and Southern Brooklyn.

Second, the expansion of the for-hire vehicle sector in New York City is a trend that is expected to continue and presents an unprecedented opportunity to transition to zero-emission vehicles and mass. The impact of retiring internal combustion vehicles will have an outsized impact on vehicle emissions, reductions, and public health in the City.

Third, the Green Rides Initiative recognizes that the purchase price of electric vehicles is higher than zero-emission -- is higher than ICE vehicles, and is predicted to reach parity in 2027. Although, there are incentives offered to defray the upfront cost of purchasing an EV, the higher cost of EVs can be a deterrent for for-hire vehicle drivers. As such, we recommend that TLC-licensed drivers received an additional discount at publicly-owned

charging stations until '27, at which time it 1 2 could be phased out. 3 Fourth, and finally, in order to scale 4 up the use of zero-emission vehicles, the TLC 5 should issue additional EV-only licenses for --6 7 THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining. MR. CHERNACK: -- for-hire vehicle 8 9 drivers, beyond the 1,000 issued earlier this 10 year by the TLC. TLC has a valuable resource in the form of approximately 3,000 expired 11 12 licenses from the long-term FHV storage 13 program. These can be repurposed to promote clean rideshare. 14 ECC looks forward to continuing to 15 16 support the TLC during this transition, and 17 we encourage the TLC to lean on our nonprofit 18 and our DOE resources to make reliable, 19 unbiased information on EVs available and 2.0 charging infrastructure available to drivers, 21 fleets, and riders. 22 Thank you. 23 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 24 Our next speaker, Patrick McClellan,

from the New York League of Conservation

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Voters.

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MR. MCCLELLAN: Good morning. Thank
you for the opportunity to testify. My name
is Patrick McClellan. I'm the Director of
Policy at the New York League of Conservation
Voters. We're a statewide environmental
advocacy organization that's based in
New York City.

NYLCV strongly supports the Green Rides
Initiative, and we commend the TLC for
proposing these regulations to advance the
previously announced goal of having one
hundred percent of high-volume for-hire
services be either zero-emission vehicles or
wheelchair accessible vehicles by 2030.
Transportation is one of the largest sources
of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution
in New York City, behind only buildings, with
the subsector of for-hire vehicles accounting
for approximately four percent of all
transportation emissions.

Therefore, electrifying for-hire vehicle fleets is important to achieving the City's statutory goal under Local Low 66 of 2014, of reducing greenhouse gas emissions

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80 percent by 2050. The proposed rules are well-considered and clearly demonstrate that HVFHSs will be able to comply with the escalating ZEV and WAV requirements between now and 2030 without hardship.

Furthermore, electrifying FHV fleets on an advanced timetable, compared to a business-as-usual alternative will, help to accelerate the decarbonization of other light-duty vehicles in the City. First, most of these vehicles and drivers are based in the outer boroughs, where a relative paucity of direct current fast chargers is a major contributing factor to the limited uptake of new zero-emission vehicles, despite light-duty zero-emission vehicles rapidly approaching cost parity with internal combustion engine vehicles, and the state and federal purchase incentives for these vehicles.

The Green Rides initiative will lead to a significant build out of DCFCs in the outer boroughs, benefiting not just TLC-licensed drivers, but also their neighbors who may be considering purchasing a zero-emission

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vehicle. And second, we know that increased consumer awareness of zero-emission vehicles leads to increased interest in owning them as personal vehicles. So, the Green Rides Initiative will dramatically increase the number of zero-emission vehicles that most New Yorkers see on a daily basis, and will be the reason why many New Yorkers take their first ride in a zero-emission vehicle.

So, this initiative could lead to increased consumer interest in zero-emission vehicles in the five boroughs. I'll note here that we can't drive our way out of the climate crisis. We must reduce our total vehicle miles traveled by mode shifting to mass transit, micromobility, and walking. But that does not free us from our responsibility to transition the vehicle miles traveled that we are still making to zero-emission vehicles as rapidly as possible --

THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

MR. MCCLELLAN: -- and we believe that the Green Rides Initiative will help to accelerate that progress. NYLCV supported

the TLC's decision earlier this year to release 1,000 EV-only licenses from the long-term FHV storage program. While the addition of more TLC-licensed vehicles to the streetscape must always be considered in the context of congestion, especially with the congestion pricing set to finally take effect, the TLC should consider, again, releasing some number of these warehouse licenses as EV-only licenses.

Thank you.

MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

The next three speakers will be Andrew Greenblatt, followed by Bhairavi Desai and Julian Kline.

So, Andrew Greenblatt from IDG, you can unmute your mic and begin.

MR. GREENBLATT: Hi. I'm Andrew
Greenblatt. I'm the Policy Director of the
Independent Drivers Guild. I'll be
submitting written testimony that explains
more about our organization and some other
things. But I want to respond to the
presentation that James gave earlier and
raise some issues that I haven't heard being

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raised. The first is about charging stations.

I want to make sure that the Taxi and Limousine Commission is actually looking at charging stations that are available to FHV drivers. So, I couldn't see the details on the slide, but I want to make sure we're not counting things, charging stations that, for example, are in parking lots and only available to people who are, you know, monthly users of the parking and things like that.

Also, I want to point out that with congestion pricing coming online, more and more trips are going to be taking place outside the central business district. And so, looking at charging stations only inside the central business district isn't going to get the job done. More and more trips are going to be taking -- or a higher percentage of trips are going to be taking place outside of the central business district.

I also want to raise some issues that haven't been raised already. For example, getting repairs done to electric vehicles can

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be a problem sometimes. Tesla, for example, is notorious for taking months to get parts for their cars, and dealing with that by giving owners access to loaner cars. But if you're a TLC driver, you need special plates on your cars, and having a loaner car for five months that doesn't have the right plates means you're not earning a living.

The TLC needs to come up with some way that they can have temporary plates for these loaner cars during repair time. I also want to point out that yellow cabs should be included in this program. There's no reason why Black Cars can make this transition but yellows can't. Black Cars are already disadvantaged by having higher taxes on all kinds of rides and things like that. This would be another unbalancing of the market that — and there's no reason for that.

I also want to point out that any new EV licenses that are put out into the market should go first to drivers, and only be made available to fleet owners if drivers don't pick up the licenses that are available. There's no reason why this third-party

1 industry that just lives off of preying on 2 drivers who couldn't get access to licenses 3 should be able to draw money off of this 4 industry and put in the --5 THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining. MR. GREENBLATT: -- pockets of 6 7 investors, rather than into drivers. Thank you very much for your time. 8 9 You'll be getting written testimony from me 10 soon. 11 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 12 Our next speaker, Bhairavi Desai, from NYTWA. 13 14 MS. DESAI: Good morning. My name is Bhairavi Desai. I'm the Executive Director 15 16 of the New York Taxi Workers Alliance. 17 You know, I mean, there's no question 18 that we fully support the goals of this 19 program, as the chairman laid out. Who does 2.0 not want a world that's more sustainable? 21 You know, and that means we have to tackle 22 climate change; there's no doubt about it. 23 Drivers not only suffer these issues on the 24 streets, many drivers have serious 25 respiratory illnesses as a result of being on

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the streets. But, also, we're a workforce that, you know, comes predominantly from the parts of the world that have been on the front lines of suffering the impact of climate change.

Having said that, I feel that this approach is a bit disingenuous. I'm really kind of shocked and really disappointed to hear from environmental activist who would actually come on here and suggest that putting more vehicles on the streets is somehow, you know, logical with their position, that at the same time, we need to address congestion and the impact of more vehicles on the streets.

You can do this in a way that does not harm the drivers. We feel that there needs to be an alternative approach to this. Right now, your proposed rule really puts the control in the hands of the companies. You do not need to align these goals with management of the trips. Instead, what you can easily do, as the TLC, is require that when the companies are onboarding a new driver after, let's say, 12 months after the

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effective date of these rules, that that driver must have a vehicle that's either EV or WAV. And when a current driver changes their car, that the new car must be either EV or WAV. If you believe that there's going to be a natural transition, anyway, within the next seven years, then you allow drivers to control this transition, rather than drivers being left insecure about, you know, needing to rush to buy a new car, especially when they won't have saved up enough money to buy that car.

I don't think, Chairman Do, from, you know, from the work that you have done on the raise rules, or any of you on this Commission --

THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

MS. DESAI: -- want to harm drivers economically. And so, we ask you strongly to consider this new approach, and we would look forward, Chairman Do, to working with you and your staff on this approach. We believe it is within your legal realm, and we believe it will also achieve the same goals of transition, but leave the drivers harmless

without having to spend for a new car. 1 2 Secondly, you cannot issue new plates. 3 You're going to undo --4 THE TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired. MS. DESAI: -- with one hand what 5 you're trying to do with the other. Please 6 7 take these issues seriously. We can have climate justice, and we can have worker 8 9 justice. Do not sell us out for the sake of 10 a larger goal. We breathe the same air and 11 have those same goals for our larger society. Thank you. 12 13 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 14 Out next speaker is Julian Kline from Tech: NYC. 15 16 MR. KLINE: Good morning, Commissioner. 17 I'm Julian Kline, Head of Policy at Tech: NYC, 18 a nonprofit member-based organization 19 representing New York City's tech ecosystem. 2.0 Earlier this year, rideshare providers, 21 Uber and Lyft, committed to converting their 22 fleets to be entirely electric vehicles or 23 wheelchair accessible by 2030, and Revel 24 already operates EVs exclusively. The 25 for-hire vehicle sectors helping to lead EV

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adoption in New York City, especially as a statewide requirement for all new car sales to be electric, doesn't begin until 2035.

For-hire vehicles also account for nearly four percent of transportation emissions in New York City, and this electrification will reduce over 600,000 tons of carbon dioxide annually, as mentioned by others before me.

Tech:NYC applauds the TLC for proposing rules to codify this commitment, in creating a plan to increase the number of electric and wheelchair accessible FHV rides completed leading up to 2030. While this plan and timeline is realistic, the proposed rules do not prescribe how TLC will implement this conversion to electric and wheelchair accessible vehicles.

The proposed rules focus on the number of rides dispatched and do not reflect a breakdown of for-hire vehicle licenses, which are assigned to either internal combustion engine, zero-emission, or wheelchair accessible vehicles. While some drivers will transfer their license to EVs as their current vehicle leases or financing

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concludes, others will need the TLC to actively issue new EV for-hire vehicle licenses. Additionally, there are roughly 5,000 for-hire vehicle licenses in the TLC's long-term FHV storage program, prior to the program recently ending, which poses an opportunity to reissue those new licenses to drivers of EVs.

To help the City meet its EV goals, it will also be important for the TLC and other city agencies to address charging infrastructure. It is critical that future plans for EV charging infrastructure take into consideration where for-hire vehicles will be traveling and parking, balancing the needs to install both slow L2 and fast L3 EV chargers throughout these areas. Chargers can be installed in a variety of places, including curbside and parking lots and garages, and dedicated EV lots, like those built by Revel.

At the moment, there are roughly 200 fast chargers in New York City. But in accordance with these rules, there will be roughly 80,000 electric for-hire vehicles on

1 city streets in 2030 --2 THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining. 3 MR. KLINE: -- which greatly increase demand. 4 5 Thank you for your consideration. And Tech: NYC looks forward to supporting New York 6 7 City Taxi and Limousine Commission, as it seeks to electrify its for-hire vehicle 8 fleet. 9 10 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 11 The next three speakers will be Joseph Rappaport, Mary Barber, and James Parrott. 12 So, Joseph Rappaport from the Brooklyn 13 14 Center for Independence of the Disabled, you can begin. 15 16 MR. RAPPAPORT: Good morning. I am Joe 17 Rappaport, the Executive Director of the 18 Brooklyn Center for Independence of the 19 Disabled. 2.0 BCID is a longtime member of the Taxis for All Campaign, a coalition of disability 21 22 groups that won a lawsuit against the TLC 23 ten years ago. In that settlement, the TLC 24 committed itself to making 50 percent of 25 yellow taxis wheelchair accessible. Later,

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we won accessibility commitments for for-hire vehicles. Our groups haven't gone away, and for good reason. The TLC talks a good game, but it has faltered in its commitment to accessibility. It's fallen seriously beyond — behind on its commitment to yellow taxi accessibility, in spite of an extension we granted in 2021. And FHV accessibility is far behind the promise of equivalent service the TLC says it seeks.

It's also significant that the TLC never once talked with disability groups before making this proposal, even at a meeting with advocates a few weeks before it made the proposal. Yesterday, we submitted comments about the proposal from all of the groups involved in the Taxis for All Campaign and several other groups as well, including the Tri-State Transportation Campaign and the Riders Alliance. The Drivers Cooperative also signed on, after I sent the letter to the TLC.

I urge the Commissioners to read our comments. Our groups applaud the proposal to move toward a zero-emission fleet. We all

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breath, so cleaner air is essential. And through the -- cleaner air through the increased use of electric vehicles will benefit everyone. And cleaner air is of particular importance for the many disabled people who have conditions that are exasperated by particulate pollution.

But out view is that the Green Rides proposal is seriously flawed because the City and TLC are missing an extraordinary opportunity. Yes, the proposal would mandate the use of electric vehicles, but it does nothing, absolutely nothing, to increase the number of wheelchair accessible FHVs, or yellow taxis for that matter. You gotta take another approach. You've got to alter this proposal, to make it the green and accessible rides initiative, so that every for-hire vehicle in New York City is both electric and wheelchair accessible --

THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

MR. RAPPAPORT: -- by 2030. We also urge you to work to reach a hundred percent accessibility in medallion yellow taxi fleets. You take this new approach, you have

the potential to revolutionize the nature of the for-hire industry, not only in New York, but across the country, by making accessible electric vehicles the norm. If you assert your influence, you'll have -- the vehicle manufacturer will have a strong incentive to produce accessible electric vehicles.

THE TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired.

MR. RAPPAPORT: A hope won't do that.

A mandate will.

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Thank you.

MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Mary Barber from the Environmental Defense Fund.

MS. BARBER: Good morning.

Again, my name is Mary Barber, and I'm the New York State director for the Environmental Defense Fund. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Green Rides Initiative. EDF supports the Green Rides Initiative, which will require the transition of New York City's rideshare fleet to either zero-emission vehicles or wheelchair accessible vehicles by 2030. The TLC's Green Rides Initiative continues the fight against

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climate pollution, since the transportation sector is the second highest source of greenhouse gas emissions in New York City, with most of those emissions coming from passenger cars.

The Initiative's aggressive yet achievable goals set a high bar for climate action in the City and the region. While reducing greenhouse gas emissions is critical, zero-emission vehicles will also improve air quality by reducing fine particulate matter, a major contributor to health issues, including asthma and other lung diseases.

EDF recognizes the challenges related to charging infrastructure, including the need to ensure the electric grid is able to accommodate the additional load and is built out in a cost-effective manner that doesn't overburden ratepayers, especially the most vulnerable ratepayers.

EDF is engaged at the Public Service

Commission and in discussions with key

stakeholders, including utilities, on a best
paths forward, and believes that this

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infrastructure can be available to support the Green Rides program, as well as the other city and state electric vehicle goals, including goals to electrify medium and heavy-duty vehicles critical to climate and clean air, and look to the -- it's really a Whole-of-Government Approach. All the agencies should be working together with the utilities, to ensure this all moves forward in an equitable way. The importance of transportation equity can't be overstated, and the Green Rides Initiative to increase accessibility of for-hire vehicles is so important, and hopes the Commission will, of course, take into account the comments by the previous speaker. The Green Rides Initiative together with modern and reliable subways, buses, and ParaTransit, will move New York City closer to an equitable and zero-emission transportation system.

Thank you very much.

MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

James Parrott from The New School.

MR. PARROTT: Good morning. James

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Parrott, Director of Economic and Fiscal
Policies at the Center for New York City
Affairs at The New School. Thank you for the
opportunity to testify on the proposed Green
Rides Initiative.

Along with Professor Michael Wright of the University of California, Berkeley, I was coauthor of the 2018 and 2019 studies that were the basis for the TLC's high-volume for-hire vehicle minimum pay standard, that took effect in February 2019. Professor Wright and I also prepared a similar report for the City of Seattle.

I support the TLC's Green Rides
Initiative to set annual percentage
requirements for electric and wheelchair
accessible vehicles. My testimony discusses
three concerns; one, the availability of
sufficient charging infrastructure; two, the
importance of adequate reimbursement to
drivers for the cost of acquiring and
operating electric vehicles and WAVs; and
three, the importance of direct licensing of
vehicles to drivers. Uber and Lyft have both
committed to use only EVs by 2030. Revel now

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has a fleet of 500 EVs in New York City operated by 1,200 employee drivers, and has installed 40 public fast charging stations with ambitious expansion plans.

The GRI is part of a broader set of public policies, that promises to reduce the cost of owning and operating EVs and help to dramatically reduce emissions in the process. Speeding up the adoption of EVs and expanding charging infrastructure go hand in hand. Since few New York City drivers have driveways where they can park their vehicles while being charged, the build out of an accessible and affordable vehicle charging infrastructure is essential.

Factors that should be considered in signing charging vehicles -- charging facilities, include areas adjacent to high-demand districts, including airports and neighborhoods where high concentrations of drivers live. It will be critical to make adjustments, if needed, in the mileage component of the pay standard, to ensure that drivers are able to cover all of the costs of acquiring, maintaining, and operating an

electric vehicle. 1 2 THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining. 3 MR. PARROTT: The TLC and the companies need to ensure that drivers are adequately 4 5 reimbursed through the pay standard, so that they will not be deterred from acquiring an 6 7 EV in line with the proposed EV and WAV phase-in schedule. The TLC should prioritize 8 9 making any new licenses available directly to 10 drivers. The TLC notes that leasing expenses 11 per drivers, "may be higher than the cost of 12 owning one's own TLC-licensed vehicle." It is very encouraging that the recent issuance 13 of a thousand new EV licenses set aside 600 14 for individual drivers --15 16 THE TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired. 17 MR. PARROTT: -- who had been leasing a TLC-licensed vehicle. 18 Thank you for the opportunity to 19 2.0 testify this morning. 21 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 22 Our next three speakers are Anthony 23 Willingham, Adalgisa Payero-Diarra, and 24 Herbert Harris. 25 So, Anthony Willingham of Electrify

America, go ahead.

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MR. WILLINGHAM: Greetings,

Commissioners. I'm Anthony Willingham, State

Government Affairs Manager at Electrify

America, and I appreciate the opportunity to

testify today in support of the Taxi and

Limousine Commission's Green Rides

Initiative.

The transition of the high-volume for-hire service fleets to EVs is a huge step forward in the electrification of New York City's transportation sector. Electrify America is the largest open direct current fast charging network in the U.S. and is investing two billion or ten years in EV infrastructure. Our network has grown to include over 3,500 chargers across 800 stations nationwide. In New York City, Electrify America has 16 chargers across three stations.

To meet the growing demand for fast and convenient EV charging, Electrify America continues to invest in the deployment of public charging infrastructure, particularly chargers providing 350-kilowatt charging

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speeds, capable of recharging EVs in minutes. Fast charging speeds are critical, not only for the City's larger electrification goals, but also for electrifying rideshare vehicles whose drivers cannot afford to spend a lot of time at a charging station.

In order to realize the objectives of Green Rides and to support the expansion of fast charging infrastructure in New York City, we encourage the TLC to issue exclusive FHV licenses dedicated to EVs, empowering drivers and accelerating the broader electrification of the industry. The TLC already released 1000 EV-only licenses earlier this summer and should continue to evaluate additional licenses needed to electrify the for-hire fleet.

This aligns with the overarching goal of fostering greater inclusivity for drivers interested in transitioning to EVs. We also note there are only 200 direct current fast charging stations currently operating within New York City. Of those 200, only a few have the number of chargers and provide charging speeds compliant with the National Electric

1 Vehicle Infrastructure investment plan, or The current number of DCFCs in 2 NEVI. 3 New York City cannot support the high-volume of for-hire vehicle service -- cannot support 4 5 the high-volume for-hire vehicle service transition to EV adoption. 6 7 We ask that the TLC work with the City to expand charging access through 8 9 public/private partnerships and through RFPs 10 of City-owned land. We also suggest that the 11 Commission amend the proposed rules to tie 12 percentage of EV rideshare trips required each year to match DCFC infrastructure to the 13 14 number of rides. Electrify America commends the TLC for its Green Rides Initiative, as it 15 16 represents a significant stride towards 17 electrifying transportation in New York City. 18 Thank you. 19 Thank you. I think our MS. ELUTO: 2.0 order of speakers switched up a little, so 21 next up is Herbert Harris. 22 Mr. Harris, you can unmute your mic. 23 (No response). 24 MS. ELUTO: Mr. Harris, go ahead, sir.

Yes.

My name is Herbert

MR. HARRIS:

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Harris. I'm a TLC-licensed driver here in New York City. And I just wanted to give a few points on my journey to try to comply with the EV mandate so far. The main deterrent to compliance is the price of the vehicle. And like the price includes the basic down payment for EV vehicle, visa vee (phonetic), the down payment for an ICE vehicle, which is almost triple the amount. So, that increase in cost is a threat to my basic yearly, weekly, monthly income, and, thus, my economic survival while doing this job.

And that's for a vehicle that will likely be smaller than the vehicle that I currently drive and have to fit passengers into, which leads to another question; what about much larger vehicles, like suburbans and Highlanders, people who drive those type of cars, are those cars currently on the market?

Because what's happening is that we are going to be currently charged starting in 2024, that five percent of rides are not coming to us, assuming that there are a lot

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of rides, and that we're not struggling to find rides at the moment as it stands. So, if we're going to be charged, then maybe they should push it back just 12 months, to give us a chance to save up the money, so we can purchase a larger vehicle or as larger vehicle as we're driving now, as they come you know, into play in the marketplace.

And a lot of the other things people brought up about the charging stations -- I live in the Bronx -- are also relevant to me and have been pointed out well before I began speaking. So, the main cause -- the main thing is the actual cost of the vehicle. And if anything goes wrong, like the percentage rate for the interest rate for the loan, that also brings your income down from week to week. And the time you spend charging your car will also bring your income down from week to week.

So, these things need to be out in front, so people understand the practical cost of driving an EV vehicle, you know, when you actually comply with the rule.

Thank you very kindly.

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1 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 2 Our next speaker is Justin Wood from 3 the New York Lawyers for the Public Interest. MR. WOOD: Good morning. Hi, can you 4 5 Okay, sorry. hear me? MS. ELUTO: Yes. Uh-huh. 6 7 MR. WOOD: Hi, good morning, Commissioners. My name is Justin Wood. 8 9 the Director of Policy at New York Lawyers 10 for the Public Interest. I'm going to try to keep my comments brief, and we've just 11 submitted a full written statement as well. 12 13 We strongly support the goals of 14 increasing accessibility and electrification in the Green Rides program. However, we join 15 16 with Taxis For All and other transportation 17 disability and environmental justice groups 18 in issuing strong concern about the TLC's 19 either-or approach to electrification and 2.0 accessibility, that we've been hearing some 21 other testimony about. Instead, we urge the 22 City to support the development and rapid 23 adoption of vehicles that are both fully 24 accessible and zero-emissions. 25 NYC is one of the largest markets in

the world for Uber, Lyft and for-hire vehicles, and we currently only have 3736; that's the latest number published by TLC, accessible WAVs in the FHV fleet. We see the disparities in wait times every day. We see the impact this has on the Access-A-Ride program which contracts with these fleets to provide ParaTransit trips.

So, we urge the City to be a global leader in accelerating the development and rapid adoption and setting firm benchmarks by the TLC, for the deployment of fully accessible electric vehicles. I'm going to read a few of our recommendations, and we'll submit a full written statement.

We urge the Mayor and the TLC to push for state legislation, authoring an FHV surcharge on trips that would subsidize the purchase and operation of fully accessible EVs. Second, we urge the Commission to take steps to incentivize the development of these vehicles, and send a strong signal to auto manufacturers and retrofitters, that New York will be a robust global market for fully accessible electric vehicles.

1 Third, we urge the TLC to adopt a 2 benchmark for the adoption of these vehicles 3 and to guarantee specific subsidies for drivers to purchase, lease, and operate 4 accessible EVs effective as soon as these 5 vehicles are available on the market. 6 7 Fourth, we're concerned about the environmental justice implications, of 8 9 course --10 THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining. MR. WOOD: I'll just say that as 11 12 hundreds of thousands of new electric vehicles come on the grid, we urge the TLC to 13 14 work with other city agencies to ensure that the electricity used to charge these vehicles 15 16 is 100 percent renewable, and that this 17 doesn't increase the use of dirty peaker 18 power plants and other focil fuel energy, 19 that will have a disproportionate impact on 2.0 environmental justice communities where both 21 these vehicles and those power plants are 22 concentrated. 23 Thank you very much for the opportunity

to testify.

MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

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1 Our next speaker is Israel Acevedo. 2 Mr. Acevedo, you can unmute your mic 3 and begin. 4 MR. ACEVEDO: Good morning. 5 Can you hear me? MS. ELUTO: Yes. 6 7 MR. ACEVEDO: Good morning. My name is Israel Acevedo, and I'm an owner/operator. 8 9 Mayor Eric Adams, Commission David Do, Uber, 10 and Lyft support this because they do not purchase or maintain vehicles, and they know 11 12 nothing about the true lives of for-hire drivers in New York City. 13 14 I keep hearing Uber and Lyft's fleet. We are not Uber and Lyft's fleet. We are 15 16 New York City TLC drivers, and we are 17 independent contractors. I reside in a 18 residential building in Brooklyn where there 19 are no EV chargers. Monday through Saturday, 2.0 I wake up at 2:00 a.m., leave my house at 21 2:40 a.m., get gas, coffee, pick up my sister, drop her off, and then start my day 22 23 around 4:00. I try to be home by 2:00 p.m. 24 That's ten hours, six days a week. 25 What works best for you; should I wake

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up at 1:00 a.m. so I could sit inside my EV and charge it? Or should I stay out and sit in my car after work, so I can charge it?

In addition, do you know that EV batteries could cost between 15 to \$20,000? That is way more than a \$200 battery for a gas car. Did you know that from the moment a driver buys an EV, he has to begin to save money for that battery? Did you know that if a driver buys an EV, that vehicle must be brought back to its respective dealership for service because offsite mechanics are not equipment to service those vehicles?

Did you know that Toyota charges \$179.99 an hour to service their vehicle?
Did you know that for a job that may take one hour, a car dealership may charge that customer four hours of labor? Did you know that most drivers take their vehicles for service to an outside mechanic because they cannot afford to service their vehicles at a dealership? Did you know that many drivers buy aftermarket parts for their vehicles because they cannot afford OEM parts?

I'm mentioning these things because

these are some of the realities of drivers in 1 2 New York City that you may not be aware of. 3 These are some of the things to consider when forcing EVs on us. My question for New York 4 City and the New York City Taxi and Limousine 5 Commission -- because it seems like you want 6 7 to force the EVs on us, right? And Uber and Lyft supports this wonderful idea, right? 8 9 But what has the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission done to prevent Uber and 10 Lyft from unfairly deactivating their 11 12 Because the moment a rider makes a drivers? 13 false report on a driver, Uber and Lyft --14 THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining. MR. ACEVEDO: -- will deactivate that 15 16 driver, and that driver will be stuck with 17 that debt of that EV, so what has the TLC done? 18 19 Thank you for allowing me to talk. 2.0 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. Our next speaker is Adalgisa 21 22 Payero-Diarra. 23 You can unmute your microphone and 24 begin. 25 MS. PAYERO-DIARRA: Good morning,

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Commissioners. Good morning, Commissioner

Do. Thank you for letting me speak. Many

drivers and other members have already said

most of the things that I would like to say,

so I'm just going to reiterate a little bit.

We understand this proposal is for the environment, and we agree on that. But we do not -- we oppose the way that the TLC wants to implement it. We think that a seven-year program is not going to make it. The City is not really prepared. The industry of the EV has a lot of questions. People have a lot of question where the demand that will create the charging stations, the time to repair car, like the previous taxi driver said. So many things that need to be taken in consideration.

But right now, we have thousands of drivers that just finished paying their cars, that are under the legislation of 144B, and they have a waiting of three months or more, waiting for the plates to be processed.

Those drivers are incurring on extra charges and struggling to support their family because they need to have that car parked in

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a parking lot until they wait for their process to be done, while they have to rent another car.

I think that TLC needs to concentrate on also helping those drivers before they move forward and analyze this proposal better. Yes, we want the changes, but I think that seven-year period is not enough time, and it's going to force so many drivers and their family to a more struggling situation than they are right now, so it needs to be reconsidered.

Like I said, I agree with most of the speakers previously. So, we support helping the environment, but the program needs to be reanalyzed, and drivers need to be helped now with the struggles that they have, before we are forced to turn into a greater debt than we already have, many of us.

So, thank you for your time and have a good day.

MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

Our next speak is Shannon Dulaney, and she should be followed by Florian Xhuti and Jean Ryan.

Ms. Dulaney, go ahead.

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MS. DULANEY: Thank you so much.

My name is Shannon Dulaney, and I'm the Urban Development Director at Itselectric, a curbside EV charging start-up headquartered at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

Itselectric is EV charging
purpose-built for cities. In New York City
alone, one million drivers park on the
street, many of them for-hire vehicle
drivers. If we want all New Yorkers to have
access to electric mobility, we must provide
them with convenient and affordable public
charging options where they already park, the
curb.

Itselectric sets theirselves apart in two ways; how we connect to the grid and our hardware. First, instead of connecting directly to the grid, we connect behind the meter, harnessing spare electrical capacity from nearby buildings. In exchange, we give host properties 20 percent of the charger revenue. Second, our level two charging hardware is sleek and unobtrusive, designed to complement the urban landscape with a

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small footprint and a detachable cord.

Now, turning to the Green Rides Initiative, a policy that we support. According to a recent study, 54 percent of Uber drivers park on the street, and, thus, do not have ready access to overnight charging. It is not surprising that access anxiety is particularly acute for these drivers who rely on their vehicles to earn a living. Drivers need to have confidence that they can start their shifts with a fully charged battery, and have a place to reliably charge at the end of the day.

In the recent Charged Up report, the Commission projected that TLC drivers will use DC fast chargers 70 percent of the time and level two chargers the remaining 30 To us, this seem precisely concession to the reality that many Uber and Lyft drivers do not have access to off-street significant time and cost associated with installing DC fast charging infrastructure,

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opportunity cost that drivers would incur with frequent usage of DC fast charging.

We urge the Commission to reconsider the rule that curbside charging can play in serving this population. Itselectric is supportive of policies that will ensure the transition to EVs is a success. We support the Commission issuing additional EV-only plates to incentivize drivers to make the switch to EVs, but we know that many drivers live in multifamily housing in Queens, Southern Brooklyn, and the Bronx, neighborhoods that do not yet have sufficient public level two chargers available.

It will be difficult for Uber and Lyft drivers to confidently make the switch to EVs until this situation is rectified. In the meantime, Itselectric supports parking regulations that reserve overnight access to curbside EV chargers for Uber and Lyft drivers in places where the Commission --

MS. DULANEY: -- and City DOT determine is appropriate. Finally, Itselectric welcomes the opportunity to work with you in

THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

launching a charging accelerator, similar to the program that was envisioned in the Charged Up report, with the focus on offering curbside solutions to communities without off-street parking.

Thank you for the work you are doing to accelerate the transition to EVs in New York City. We look forward to working with you to make this vision a reality.

MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Florian Xhuti.

You may begin.

MR XHUTI: Hello?

MS. ELUTO: Hello.

MR XHUTI: My name is Florian Xhuti. I work full-time Uber driver, and I have a very good high rating. I'm a longtime TLC car renter. I start to rent the car since

November 2019, and I pay right now \$2,420 per month for rent for the car. I work six days per week from Monday to Friday, around

60 hours during the day. I should work at least 20 hours per week just paying the TLC car rent, which means two days. After doing money toward the rent, I start to work for

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myself and my family.

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When I heard the Commissioner about the Green Rides Initiative, I thinking to join it and to give my modest contribution by buying an electric car or wheelchair vehicle, and I would like to have my own TLC plate, to change my -- to change positively my financial situation.

Thank you so much for listening.

MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

Our next speak is Jean Ryan from Taxis For All Campaign.

MS. RYAN: Hi. I'm Jean Ryan. I'm president of Disabled in Action of Metropolitan New York, and we are a founding member of Taxis For All Campaign.

While the environmental goals of the Green Rides Initiative are very worthy in discounting the need for precious metals and the impact on the communities which mine them because we all need clean air. And we are concerned that, again, disability access to for-hire vehicles and taxis will eventually decrease, as the price of EVs and their batteries eventually goes down and EVs become

very popular and mandated.

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We are concerned that the possible bump up in accessibility will be temporary. Why pit disability access against clean air when you could have both and mandate a wheelchair accessible vehicle that's electric? If that isn't available now, you could look into hybrid accessible vehicles for the interim; that's better than nothing, as long as they're accessible.

Without a mandate from our city, which has many thousands of for-hire vehicles, manufacturers are going to want to continue making and selling the easier, inaccessible electric vehicles. They will think that there is no market for an EV WAVs. It's up to the TLC to create that market. Instead of the TLC always being reactive on accessibility, this is a chance for the TLC to be an active -- to be active and bold on accessibility.

The only way we will truly reach

100 percent accessibility, so that everyone
can take any vehicle, is by mandating it.

As years go by, of course, there are new

1 inventions and problems to solve, but lasting 2 accessibility should not always be an 3 afterthought and something to catch up on. TLC commissioners have been promising a 4 5 hundred percent disability access since 2001. That's a long time to wait, and we still do 6 7 not have it. We are afraid that accessible for-hire vehicles will almost disappear with 8 9 EVs, unless accessible EVs are mandated by 10 the TLC. 11 THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining. 12 MS. RYAN: Everyone can use accessible vehicles. They are not restricted to 13 14 wheelchair users. Respectfully submit, Jean Ryan. Thank 15 16 you. 17 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 18 Our next speaker is Dawood Mian. 19 MR. MIAN: Hi, Commissioners. Thanks a 2.0 lot for the opportunity to speak. I wanted 21 to mention something. So, a lot of people 22 are talking about issuing new EV-only TLC 23 plates, and I think something that's 24 forgotten in that discussion is, right now, 25 there's four to 5,000 inactive taxi

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medallions. And so, it's kind of confusing why that is not targeted as a way, number one, to electrify the fleet, and why the TLC would decide to issue more TLC plates, when there's four to 5,000 inactive taxi medallions. And the active taxi medallions also are currently single shifts, so to really have a healthy taxi medallion sector need double-shifted taxis.

And so, before one new TLC plate is issued, I would say that the four to 5,000 medallions that are in storage should be target for electrification in them. So, similar to the storage program that said that -- okay, on August 31st, all the plates have to come out of storage, maybe a similar thing can be done with the taxi medallions industry where it says -- okay. Why are these taxi medallions inactive? And how do we get them out of storage? So, I think that's a point that very few people are missing in this, that there are four to 5,000 inactive taxi medallions.

Another point I wanted to make is: For a healthy taxi medallion sector, things have

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to be double-shifted. And so, in the 2013
Bloomberg Report, so the Bloomberg
Administration very nobly wanted to
electrify, I think, one-third of the taxi
fleet back in 2013, and they did analysis on
double-shifted cars and how that would affect
battery degradation and things like that.
And so, that analysis is not being done in
the most recent reports.

But I do commend the TLC. There's a lot of good really data in the Charged Up report, but that double-shifting point is not really addressed there. Because that's what's going to happen, cars are going to be double-shifted. And so, can charging infrastructure support double-shifted cars?

The last point I want to make is a more technical point. It's on insurance. A lot of people right now -- and there's a lot of news articles on this. A lot of TLC drivers and fleets do not have physical damage insurance. And so, I actually kind of agree with the conclusion that EVs are cheaper to maintain. When you talk about routine maintenance, there's less moving parts.

1 There's no oil changes; all of that makes 2 sense, but --3 THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining. MR. MIAN: -- a thing that's missed is 4 5 that, what if a fender bender happens, or something like that? And so, if Uber and 6 7 Lyft are -- there's a claim that Uber and Lyft will -- well, that will be on Uber and 8 9 Lyft. In the driver minimum pay formula, the 10 cost of physical damage insurance is not embedded into that, so I think that's 11 12 something that needs to be embedded. Thank you very much for the time, and I 13 14 appreciate the opportunity to speak. Thank 15 you. 16 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 17 Our next speaker is Sharob Panjiyev, to be followed by Cara Liebowitz, and then Aziz 18 19 Bah. 2.0 MR. PANJIYEV: Yes, good morning. My 21 name is Sharob Panjiyev. I am Uber/Lyft driver. And now, I have rental car, I pay 22 23 514 weekly. You know, it's, for me, very 24 expensive. I have three kids, big family, five-person family. I have no note payment. 25

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Rental is over 8,000 because, you know, I only I work the money going to rent, and then Con Edison company, you know, food expensive, you know, everything, you know. In 2012, I applied to TLC, then I take to -- I have heart surgery with the money. That's a problem.

Then, I -- 2018 or '19, I take TLC license. And how many times I applied to TLC, to SHL, EV. EV is, you know, when I go online, after five -- like five minutes, it's full, no space to fill out the application.

I -- SHL, I fill out form and I go to Department of Council, it's Shianna and Rita Joseph, he's helped me to apply. When I call to TLC, he says he doesn't have nothing, information. You not fill out form. You know, problem is that TLC have -- don't take my application. Very difficult, you know.

I have my -- over 10, 20, times I call and report also to TLC, "I don't have own TLC plate," and no -- just pay for the rental car, gas, everything expensive. It's all money, money. I work and usually I no work

1 full-time. I work part-time because I have 2 kids I take to school and bring back, also, 3 you know, money problem. And I need my own 4 plate, please, because some company have over 5 2,000 plates. Why doesn't have -- for poor people, nobody doesn't have -- for poor 6 7 people, doesn't have own plate, you know? It's very hard for me. I ask if you 8 9 can please help me to own plate. SHL also 10 for me was no problem, but I applied and it's 11 again, too many wheelchair in the street. 12 Wheelchair car is expensive, you know? Wheelchair car --13 14 THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining. MR. PANJIYEV: -- 95,000 price. Also, 15 16 for EV car, also too many -- I live 17 apartment. If I -- EV car also very hard for 18 No space to parking and it's not space 19 to charging. 80 percent the driver live into 2.0 apartment house using EV. For me, hybrid is 21 good, you know? Always, I think my idea is 22 hybrid is good for New York and also save 23 money, also. You know, please, if you can 24 help me for my own plate, please. 25 THE TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired.

MR. PANJIYEV: Thank you very much.

Thank you. Have a great day.

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MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Cara Liebowitz from the Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled.

MS. LIEBOWITZ: Good morning. My name is Cara Liebowitz. I'm the Advocacy Coordinator at the Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled. I'm also a wheelchair user who does not drive due to my disability. I rely on the subway and areas where it is accessible, buses and wheelchair accessible for-hire vehicles; such as Uber and Lyft.

The TLC's new proposed Green Rides

Initiative needless pits climate change
activists and wheelchair users against each
other. By requiring that for-hire vehicle
fleets become 100 percent zero-emission or
wheelchair accessible by 2030, the rules sets
up a false dichotomy. Moreover, the proposed
rule offers incentives for converting to
electric fleets, but no incentives for
converting to wheelchair accessible fleets.

This shows a clear bias on the part of the TLC toward converting to electric, rather than wheelchair accessible fleets.

While the TLC says it will continue to enforce its for-hire vehicle accessibility rules, it has not proposed a reduction in the response times for wheelchair accessible vehicles, service already is inadequate.

Ultimately, this new rule would result in pressure on the TLC to reduce the number of accessible vehicles or to find noncompliant companies. But why use the stick of fines after these companies deliver poor service?

Why not, instead, use the TLC's influence to encourage the development of accessible electric vehicles, so we get decent service in the first place?

Revising the rules will require fleets to become one hundred percent zero-emission and wheelchair accessible, and giving fleets more time to reach the goal would benefit all involved. The TLC has an opportunity to advance innovation and help bring wheelchair accessible electric vehicles to the U.S.

25 market.

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New York City could lead a wave of wheelchair accessible electric vehicles in cities across the world. In the meantime, there are more ecofriendly wheelchair accessible vehicles on the market here; such as a wheelchair accessible hybrid vehicle made by Toyota. Encouraging the move to accessible hybrid vehicles would be a great interim step, while manufacturers and policymakers work together to create a wheelchair accessible electric vehicle that meets ADA standards.

The TLC's commitment to reducing dispatch times for wheelchair accessible vehicles is admirable. No one wants to wait three times as long as a non-disabled person for an Uber or Lyft. But the only way companies will meet and exceed dispatch goals for WAVs is if they have the vehicles to fulfill the requests. Giving companies the option to --

THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

MS. LIEBOWITZ: -- convert fleets to electric, instead of wheelchair accessible, is not moving -- making progress; in fact,

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it's moving backwards. We're all committed to cleaner air. Air pollution both creates and exacerbates disability. But making accessibility and clean air an either-or preposition benefits no one. Let's do this right and find a solution that is better for the planet and better for the wheelchair users who live in the City.

Our next speaker is Aziz Bah from IDG.

MR. BAH: Good morning, everyone. name is Aziz Bah. I am a driver and the organizing director of the Independent Drivers Guild. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment on this proposed rule.

The IDG supports a cleaner future for our city, and we appreciate Mayor Adams' promise in this -- in his Working People's Agenda unveiled last January, that our city's hardworking drivers wouldn't bear the cost of this initiative. However, the proposed rule fall short by neglecting to shield drivers from price fluctuation and inadequate charging infrastructure. These rules

unfairly shift compliance responsibility onto hardworking drivers, while high-volume FHV companies, like Uber and Lyft, escapes obligation to assist. Their support remain vague on addressing affordability and charging infrastructure concerns.

The mandate to transition to entire -the entire fleet of high-volume FHVs to EV
and WAV vehicle by 2030 face significant
challenges and concerns related to overall
planning, charging infrastructure,
affordability for drivers, enforcement
parking logistics, and inequitable treatment
within the industry. Given that exempting
taxis from these rules creates a big industry
inequity.

TLC's approach unfairly place
responsibilities on high-volume companies
which do not own or lease the vehicles.
While exempting medallion owners with the
means to comply, given that medallion fleet
owners actually have parking lots and garages
that can easily provide for the installation
of hundreds, if not thousands, of charging
stations; TLC has more explaining to do on

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this.

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TLC must also think about issuing more vehicle licenses to individual drivers over leasing companies and fleet to empower drivers and combat exploitation. This will expedite wider adoption of the EVs. And while incentives like the New York State Drive Clean Rebate and federal tax credit are generous, they may not fully alleviate upfront cost.

Please allow me to share just a story as a driver, a personal story. I've been a proud, you know, non-Tesla electric vehicle owner since 2019. One day, after a long day of work, I found myself with just eight percent battery charge left, while desperately searching for a charging station.

THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

MR. BAH: The nearest one was a few miles away, and I was worried, you know, hoping and praying I wouldn't hit traffic as I sped to get there. Finally, when I arrived there, there were four level three charging terminals, three of them were out of order with one car in line -- with four cars in

1 line, besides the one plugged on to the only functioning port. At that moment, it was 2 3 clear to me that I would be there for at least five hours, which means sacrificing 4 5 four very precious hours that I would be spending with my family. 6 7 THE TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired. MR. BAH: The question should not be, 8 9 "How frequently does this happen?" Instead, 10 the focus should be on ensuring easy access to charging stations, and guaranteeing that 11 12 when an exhausted driver arrives after a long day of work, the charging station must be 13 14 operational and ready to serve their need. IDG stand ready to work with Commission Do 15 16 and his very capable team, to address all 17 these concerns. 18 Thank you very much. 19 CHAIR DO: Thank you, Aziz. 2.0 Sherryl, we'll take a five-minute break 21 after the next set of speakers. 22 MS. ELUTO: Okay. All right. 23 CHAIR DO: Do you want to --24 MS. ELUTO: Oh, take a break now? 25 CHAIR DO: Not yet. So, a couple more

1	speakers.
2	MS. ELUTO: Okay. Sure.
3	CHAIR DO: And then, we'll take a
4	five-minute break. Just as a FYI for our
5	commissioners, your mic will continue to be
6	live.
7	So, let's do two or three more
8	speakers, Sherryl.
9	MS. ELUTO: Okay. Next up is Saif
10	Aizah, followed by Julieta Poghosyan.
11	Saif Aizah, I hope I am saying that
12	correctly. Yes, go ahead, please.
13	MR. AIZAH: Yes, can you hear me?
14	MS. ELUTO: Yes.
15	MR. AIZAH: Okay. That's good.
16	My name is Saif Aizah. I'm a member of
17	the NY New York Taxi Workers Alliance.
18	And I've heard a lot of stories of the
19	struggle and the misery and the agonies that
20	we have to go through all of this, from
21	finance and worrying about paying our rent
22	and all other expenses that we have to go
23	through and struggle.
24	And most of us, especially me, I just
25	have like at least \$30,000 to pay my finance

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on this vehicle. So, by the time I finish paying it, I gotta worry about buying a new electrical vehicle, which is another loan added to all the expense and the struggle we have to go through just to make ends meet, besides other living costs. And we are just independent contractors, you know. We have no job security. We have zero job security.

Like one of the brothers before me said that you can be deactivated the next day, and then you're going to be stuck with this loan, and then you're going to, like, be by yourself. So, the swift and quick transition to make from gas vehicles to EV vehicles is a short time, you know. At least, if I can suggest, you know, give us until 2030 to switch to hybrid vehicles or anything like another alternative, besides just switching quickly to electric vehicles, and then we have to worry about this new loan.

And besides, if you can do that, you know, the swift and quick transition and you're only giving us like seven years, I mean, at least help us with some kind of grants or funds, you know, to make the switch

to electric vehicles.

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And another thing a lot of brothers mentioned before me is adding new permits, you know. When you add new permits, it's like you're chasing drivers that's already in the fleet. Uber and Lyft doesn't care. They, you know -- they'll just add new workers or like, you know, that's how -- because we don't work for Uber and Lyft. And, you know, and it's better for them when they deactivate us. They don't -- it's like less worry for them to just get rid of a driver and, you know, because the new one will put up with them, so please, you know, give us a break --

THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

MR. AIZAH: Yeah. Please give us a break and understand the struggle we go through and the expense as drivers, that we have no job securities. And then, all of this, you know, rules and new things are just added up on the back of the drivers, and we are just, you know, trying to live a nice, normal life and trying to make ends meet, and we are struggling as is.

1 Thank you. 2 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 3 Next speaker is Julieta Poghosyan. 4 MS. POGHOSYAN: Hi. My name is Julieta 5 I am a TLC driver. Thank you for Poghosyan. the opportunity to speak up. I will be 6 7 speaking up from the drivers' side. So, there are too many wheelchair 8 9 accessible cars, and there is a slack in for-hire vehicle market now. And so, Uber 10 and Lyft don't care about it. They -- so, if 11 12 I do hundred rides per week, only two and three of them are wheelchair accessible cars. 13 14 I mean, there is not really high demand for wheelchair rides. 15 16 And, also, TLC increased drivers pay a 17 little bit, but instead there is the prices 18 for gas and everything increased. So, this 19 impact drivers economically and financially. 2.0 And Uber, also, doesn't give long rides. It 21 gives short rides, so the situation for 22 drivers now is not good. 23 So, please, I want to -- I want TLC to pay attention, also, for existing drivers. 24 25 They don't get rides, and the pay compared to

1	living is not high is not good, I mean.
2	So, please pay attention on the slack for
3	wheelchair car in the market now.
4	Thank you.
5	MS. ELUTO: Thank you.
6	So, I think now is a good time for a
7	five-minute break.
8	CHAIR DO: So, yeah. So, we'll go on a
9	break. So, Commissioners and team members at
10	the TLC, please remain on mute, as mics will
11	still be live. We'll take a five-minute
12	break. We'll come back at 11:45.
13	Thank you.
14	(Whereupon, a short break was
15	taken.)
16	CHAIR DO: All right. Sherryl, let's
17	go ahead and begin.
18	MS. ELUTO: All righty. So, our next
19	speaker is Ibrahim Zoure.
20	MR. ZOURE: Yes, can you hear me?
21	MS. ELUTO: Yes.
22	MR. ZOURE: Yeah, hi. My name is
23	Ibrahim Zoure. I'm a member of NYTWA, and I
23	Ibrahim Zoure. I'm a member of NYTWA, and I drive for Lyft and Uber.

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that we all in support of climate justice, but the problem here is that in our profession, we're already struggling with our finances. If Uber and Lyft go in support of the proposal, so they should contribute of us getting these vehicle, and they should contribute in helping us to really be in position to get loans from the banks to purchase the vehicle.

Why I'm saying that, because as a taxi driver, this profession is not even recognized by the financial institution to get a loan. So, how, all of a sudden, we -- it need to be imposed on us to get electric vehicle which is expensive, so expensive that not every driver making enough money to be able to go and buy one cash and even to get the down payment for it. And, also, it's a problem to the charging stations.

So, I think before we implement this rule, we need to come into a better technology when the vehicle could recharge themself, you know, or to have a spare charger in our vehicle. 'Cause if all taxis, Uber driver and Lyft driver, turn into

electric vehicle, it's going to be a problem to get into the line to charge your vehicle.

And Uber is not a secure career. It's not a safe job 'cause driver is being deactivated for minor problems left and right. So, if TLC force us to get into debt and the next day we are deactivated, so it's going to be a crisis in the driver community. So, we have family to raise, we have kids to send to school, so we need a safe job, a safe career. As yet, this job, this profession is not safe.

THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

MR. ZOURE: So, no one should impose on TLC, Uber driver, and Lyft driver to get into debt when their profession is not secure.

So, we need to think of better technology and safe profession, before we try to impose this rule on Uber and Lyft drivers.

Thank you very much.

MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Alpha Barry, to be followed by Robert Hidalgo.

Mr. Barry, you can unmute your mic and begin.

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MR. BARRY:

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MS. ELUTO: Yes.

MR. BARRY: Okay. Hi. My name is

Alpha Barry. I'm an NYTWA member. I've been

driving for almost 20 years.

I think this is a good idea, you know, for everybody. We all -- nobody -- everybody wants to have an electric vehicle, by the way. They're easy to drive, is more convenient for the environment, and we all know what happened in Libya. They have so many people died. We all -- nobody oppose to have electric vehicle. But most of the people that's advocating this, they have never been a cab driver. They don't know what is on -- what it is on the street. They don't know how -- what is -- how we -- our picture. They don't know what we're going through.

Hello. Can you hear me?

So, setting up a time limit for a driver to have electric vehicle, I think that's not a good idea. We don't have enough charging stations. We don't have enough mechanics to fix this car. We don't have -- where's the money? We don't have the money.

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Some drivers still have to pay off their car.

They don't even have finished paying off
their car.

And then, the other lady came out about the accessible for wheelchair. You know, all this need to be done. Nobody has -- oppose to have an electric vehicle, but we need to do it the right way, so nobody have to be left out in the, you know -- so, my own thing is that drivers -- it should be a plan that -- okay. If you do this, we're going to give you this. If you do this -- but there should be no time limit set up for a driver to get an electric vehicle. I think that's going to be too much pressure on us because it's not every driver that will have the money to buy an electric vehicle.

We all know the electric vehicle is very expensive, very expensive. And most of the people that I'm talking about, some of them don't even have electric vehicles. We all come here, we talk, we talk, we talk. But the implementation, that's the thing, but we need to do it the right way.

THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

1 MR. BARRY: Thank you very much. 2 That's all I have to say. Thank you. 3 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 4 Our next speaker is Robert Hidalgo. 5 Go ahead, sir. MR. HIDALGO: Hello. 6 7 MS. ELUTO: Yes. MR. HIDALGO: Hi, there. My name is 8 9 Robert Hidalgo. How are y'all doing? Thank 10 you for the opportunity to talk. I am a 11 driver. I advocate the drivers as well, and 12 I'm an owner/operator. I'm lucky. I'm one of the lucky ones. I'm one of the blessed 13 14 ones. I have my own TLC vehicle license, you know, it's very coveted. And I feel for a 15 16 lot of the drivers who don't have that who 17 have to rent. 18 And I know much has already been 19 discussed, much has already been said before. 2.0 A lot has been stated. A lot of great points have been brought up already, issues around 21 22 the charging infrastructure, you know, the --23 oh, the auto body shop infrastructure as 24 well, insurance costs that are going to be 25 way higher for electric vehicles, things like

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that. But I wanted to talk about the cost of the EV vehicles themselves.

I think that drivers are mostly motivated by financial circumstances. I have a lot of friends in the industry, and I know that that's what this is about. We've heard from the other drivers who have said that, who have said as much. And I think the idea here for the Green Rides to expand -- (Inaudible) -- the seven years.

The only way to really do that is to provide incentives, incentives for the drivers. And, specifically, two sets of drivers, the ones -- (Inaudible). Firstly, the ones who are renters, the ones who -- (inaudible) -- vehicle license, that want their own license plate. They should be the ones targeted, specifically, with incentives to pay for those electric vehicles which are much, much, more expensive right now. Let's face it, the parity for vehicle types is just not the same between the ICE vehicles and the EV vehicles.

And the other group that I think should be targeted, specifically, for incentives are

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those who already have -- like me, the hybrid vehicles, the plug-in vehicles, like we are ready to invest in environmental protection.

We paid more for our vehicle. We have done our part, and we should have incentives brought towards us, so we can make the next transition to these fully zero-emission vehicles.

And how can some of these things be paid for? Obviously, there's grants, the city budget can allocate for this, there are federal and state grants, there's --

THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

MR. HIDALGO: -- a great number of organizations. But, you know, there's also the opportunity -- you got it -- from electric utilities who stand to profit immensely from this. Even those organizations, like Electrify America, who spoke earlier, and Itselectric, these people stand to make a lot. So, they should be the ones who are also offering opportunities for drivers to get electric vehicles.

I actually want to say to all of my people, you know, we have work hard -- you

1 know, my people are the drivers. I'm talking 2 really to the drivers. You know, we have to 3 work hard. We have to play fair with all the 4 other players in the industry who have a 5 stake in this industry. We have to fight warriors. We have to think like business 6 7 people --THE TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired. 8 9 MR. HIDALGO: -- and we have to love 10 each other. Peace and love, everybody. 11 Thank you. Thank you for the time. 12 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. Next up is Zubin Soleimany from NYTWA. 13 14 MR. SOLEIMANY: Good morning. My name is Zubin Soleimany. I'm a staff attorney at 15 16 the New York Taxi Workers Alliance. 17 So, an ambitious timeline for the electrification of the fleet is a good and 18 19 just thing, and it must be achieved. But the 2.0 method that TLC has chosen for the transition 21 in the GRI is not the right approach. 22 Unlike, for example, Revel, most 23 owner/drivers are not well-capitalized 24 businesses, but they are low-waged workers. 25 And they're going to need clarify and

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predictability about when this transition will actually affect them. That is, when they will be effectively required to drive an EV in order to keep working full-time for Uber and Lyft. They need this so that they can budget and save for a new vehicle on a predictable timeline, and this proposal does not provide that.

The proposed rule regulates trips dispatched by the companies instead of the vehicles, and it passes off the responsibility for that timeline onto the companies themselves. The problem with this approach is that drivers will have no idea when the companies may start to require them to have an EV in order to keep receiving dispatches, to keep receiving as many dispatch as other drivers, or to avoid being locked out of the app during periods of low demand.

We know the companies have a history of making unilateral changes to driver eligibility policies. We have seen them claim that the utilization rate and driver pay rules force them to limit app access in

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response to TLC regulation. And we are very concerned that the current proposal in this form incentivizes this dynamic again.

For the drivers who bought vehicles this past year, there's no assurance here that they will actually be able to use their vehicles through 2030. Given that Uber recently pushed for an effective five percent decrease in the utilization rate, it seems they don't want to come close to the margins. They don't want to worry about bumping up against the fines that this rule impose.

So, looking at, for example, the 60 percent benchmark in 2028, it's reasonable to believe they would want to surpass that, maybe perhaps go to 65 percent. That can only happen, even assuming a 60 percent EV fleet, by giving a disproportionately low number of trips to the drivers who, at that point, even before 2030, haven't transitioned yet. And this proposal doesn't, it just doesn't give drivers the assurance they'll get the full life of their vehicle and not have to put that car into early retirement, that they won't be able to save for.

1	Compare this to in the past when TLC
2	proposed the transition for a 50 percent WAV
3	taxi fleet, owner/drivers had a clear
4	understanding of
5	THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.
6	MR. SOLEIMANY: when exactly their
7	vehicle would phase out, when exactly they'd
8	be required to get a new vehicle, and there
9	were programs in place to defray those costs.
10	TLC can and should pursue an ambitious
11	timeline for electrification to combat
12	climate change, but it must address the
13	impact this transition will have on the
14	80,000 drivers who for high-volume for-hire
15	vehicle services.
16	We look forward to working with you and
17	seeing a version of this proposal that can
18	serve both climate justice and worker
19	justice.
20	Thank you for the time.
21	MS. ELUTO: Thank you.
22	Our next speaker is Mimmos Mohammed,
23	followed by Aleksandra Tkach.
24	Mr. Mohammed, go right ahead.
25	MR. MOHAMMED: Hi. My name is Mohammed

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Mohammed. I'm driving for Uber and Lyft and a member in Taxi Workers Alliance.

About, you know, the EV, of course, I agree about the idea, but I'm against the mandate to force the driver to have it, even after six years. We have to vote different between the fleet and the individual driver like me. I own my car. The fleet work to make more profit, and the driver work to make his living. And since the COVID, we still suffering and paying, you know, our debts.

And not only that, I'm thinking to retire after, you know, six or seven years.

Why you enforce me or you mandate to change my car and I'm going to be retired after, you know, six or seven years or eight years or any some other driver like me, 55 years old, or 50 years old, 58 years old; why you forcing him to change his car and you put him in a struggle financially, especially after, you know, we have a lot of debts?

Secondly, I had couple trips out of town, like in Connecticut by Hartford. It's like 125 miles from Brooklyn to Hartford, took like two hours to go there. What's the

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guarantee that if it was even like 11:30, 11:30 in the morning, okay, what's the guarantee when I reach, you know, the other destination there my battery, I have enough charge to go back to the City, or even if I have another fare to give, you know, lift another passenger?

So, you have to work with infrastructure first, you know, the EV infrastructure first, make sure that you have enough, you know, station everywhere, even the tristate area; like Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Long Island, and Connecticut because this is the area that we serve, so you have to keep your mind in that area. You don't leave the driver up in the air over there and suffering, and you don't know how he's going to go back.

Should I go, like, stay one hour to charge my car? Or I take the passenger with me and tell him -- oh, excuse me, I'm going to -- you stay with me half an hour to charge my battery? So, there's a lot of issue you have to think about.

Also, the mechanical, why you force us

in future to go only for the dealer to fix our car? And everyone know about the dealers how they rape the driver about expenses. You should give the chance for the mechanic shops to understand about electric cars, how to fix electric cars. You're also going to put the mechanic out of business. You're going to see a lot of people taking welfare or, you know, that's the message for the -
THE TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired.

MR. MOHAMMED: So, also, what's -- what

MR. MOHAMMED: So, also, what's -- what about the charge, you know, infrastructure has to be enough for all the drivers, only for the drivers, not for the private car. So, please help us, not the big corporate, like the car dealer or the banks. You serving them, not the driver, not the poor driver.

Thank you.

MS. ELUTO: Thank you.

Next up, Aleksandra Tkach.

MS. TKACH: Hello. My name is

Aleksandra Tkach, and I'm a Uber and Lyft

driver for one year. And I was so lucky to

own one of those EV plates, and I was so

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happy to run and buy a car, and was originally so happy to become owner/operator instead of rent and paying \$575 a week for the car. So, I don't even know how TLC and my city that I lived 20 years, like failed me with that. Because with the renting car, it took me three minutes near any gas station, and I can actually work as much as I can and never run out of gas as I run right now out of energy in my car.

Right now, I'm not sure if I mentioned,
I have my own car. I kind of happy, but I'm
not able to even use it because we don't have
enough fast chargers in the City. And when I
say it's not enough, we have only seven
locations in the City with about 60 chargers.
Out of the 60 chargers, about maybe
30 percent are broken, and there is no even
signs on them.

I listened to Mr. James Giovanni (sic) who presented report. And as always, any report sounds great, and he threw there a lot of great words, like great, good. Someone also mentioned like 200 chargers throughout the City, 200 fast chargers throughout the

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City; this is absolutely incorrect. I'm sorry.

So, I'm not sure if I mentioned, I'm single mother. So, right now, my child is in school. I work in Uber and Lyft as a part-time, and because I need to watch my child. I need to bring her at school at 8:00, start my work right after I bring her to school, and I have to be back by the school at 2:00 p.m. sharp.

So, now, instead of start working, I actually forced to go and find charger. And believe me or not, closest fast charger from me, from South Brooklyn, which is Coney Island area, is at JFK Airport. So, and just to get to JFK in the daytime, you know, it take you like almost what, 45/50 minutes just to get there and it's about 20 miles.

Plus, my car --

THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

MS. TKACH: Plus, my car takes about hour and a half to charge, so I basically not able to work, all the time I'm charging.

Just recently, I was working at night, I had a ride. I was going home. I had about

50-mile charge left. I had a ride for about 1 2 45 minutes. I thought maybe it's going to be 3 home, you know, closer to home. So, I came 4 to my rider and she happens to go to Bronx. 5 I was 35 miles from where I was supposed to pick her up. And imagine, I have left 50 6 7 miles charge --THE TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired. 8 9 MS. TKACH: -- in my vehicle, and I 10 have to bring this girl home in Bronx in the middle of the night, and then I would be 11 stranded somewhere in the Bronx without 12 13 enough energy to get back home. So, and this 14 is reality we face right now. So, I'm not sure -- I'm not sure, but it doesn't work 15 16 right now, and I doubt it's going to work in 17 seven years. You guys have to do something 18 with the infrastructure first and support us 19 a little bit better, instead of just talking. 2.0 Thank you so much for allowing me to talk. 21 22 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 23 Our next speaker is Abderrahmane Anes. 24 Okay. Go ahead. 25 MR. ANES: Hello?

MS. ELUTO: Yes.

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MR. ANES: My name is Abderrahmane

Anes, and I've been, like, listening to this

since it started at 10:00 a.m. Hello,

Commissioners. How are you?

I'm a New York City TLC driver as well.

I work for Uber and Lyft. And I was
listening about like, you know, releasing the
electric vehicles by 2030. Me, myself, I
rent a car. I rent a car. It's like almost
like 500 weekly. It's like 2,000 a month. I
actually wanted to like, you know, go and
start with the wheelchair, so I can purchase
my own plate. And now I'm listening about
the electric vehicles.

If I have the chance to get me an electric vehicle, I will still get it. Even though I know there's not, like, much electric portables here to charge your car and stuff, but you still have the time to charge it afterwards, like later at night, early in the morning or like, you know, the next day because it's your personal car. You don't have to worry about, like, every Monday to go like, you know, pay your rental car

every week.

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If I had my personal car, the electric car, like I would worry less. It's not like when you rented the car. Like, imagine if you rent an electric car and then you waste all that time where you have to go find where to charge your car, and then go spend like hours or make a line to go charge your car; that's like a waste of time and a waste of money. Me, myself, if I have the chance to go purchase the wheelchair car or the electric car, I would go for it right now, instead of renting it.

With the wheelchair, it's kind of difficult right now. If you go buy or purchase a new one, you put the down payments, like around 80, 90,000, and I don't know if these rules are going to change, if they're going to go to electric soon by 2030. I don't know what's going to happen. What are you going to do a the wheel -- with a car that's like 80, \$90,000?

Are we able to like, you know, change the model? Like, I don't know what's the like -- what's going to be the purpose

afterwards? Are we going to be able to return the car, get the money back, purchase the electric one? Or like -- that's like I'm kind of stuck. It's kind of frustrating.

So, I'm actually waiting, and I don't know when -- when are we going to have the chance, maybe, to get our own plates for us to purchase like, you know, an own personal electric car? That's what I'm waiting for right now.

That's all I think I have to say, and it's just kind of different. It's just kind of different, people who have their own plates, people who rent their own cars weekly. It's kind of different. It's kind of difficult. You have to put in much more hours, sometimes the business could be slow, sometimes, like, you know, you make the day. Sometimes you don't make the day --

THE TIMEKEEPER: 30 seconds remaining.

MR. ANES: And I appreciate this talk with you guys. I've been waiting for a while to talk right now.

Thank you.

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1 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 2 Our next speaker is Barbara Osowski, to 3 be followed by Cynette Wilson. 4 Ms. Osowski, you can unmute your mic 5 and begin. MS. OSOWSKI: Hello, can you hear me? 6 7 MS. ELUTO: Yes. MS. OSOWSKI: Good Afternoon. I am the 8 once owner/driver for almost four decades. 9 10 (Inaudible) develops license to 2026. Once profitable industry, now turns out 11 to shambles. It is a shame that the TLC are 12 still issuing, under pretense of the EV 13 14 vehicles, new plates. We still have at least about 5,000 plates in the storage. And why 15 16 we saturate the market with cars, especially 17 when we are thinking about the pollution, we 18 put new cars on the road? 19 Please, Commissioner, take that under 2.0 consideration and stop issuing new plates. 21 That really create a corruption. Some people 22 got hundreds of plates, and really, really, 23 the corruption is unbearable. So, might as 24 well, you should put stop on issuing new hack 25 license. Let the drivers who are in this

1 business for decades make some living, 2 please. 3 Thank you. 4 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 5 Our next speaker is Cynette Wilson from 6 The Drivers Cooperative. 7 MS. WILSON: Good evening, or afternoon, everyone. I will be brief. 8 While the transition to electric is 9 10 commendable and anticipated and we're all looking forward to it, the time frame is 11 12 skewed, as we've heard from many, many drivers. I am a driver. I own two electric 13 14 vehicles. I was an early adopter of electric, so I won't -- many of the concerns 15 16 are quite valid, and I would invite the TLC 17 to ensure that they have electric driver 18 representatives as they're making these decisions moving forward. Because it's one 19 2.0 thing to create policy and another thing to 21 live the policy. 22 Secondary to that, I am also active 23 with the Green Transition Authority which is 24 working with New York City Council Member 25 Farías, and we've begun -- we've submitted a

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bill which has gotten traction at the state level, which comprises a public/private solution to some of these issues that have been raised. So, the City and the TLC should make sure they are reaching across to all interested parties and we're not duplicating the wheel and squandering resources. We're spreading our resources thin.

As a driver, and speaking to the time it takes to charge, the availability of chargers, et cetera, while we're all for electric and zero-emissions, a hybrid option is far more practical from a driver perspective. It allows the driver to get the mileage that they need. And with the cost of gas, they are way more likely to fill up electrically and only sparingly utilize their takes; from every hybrid owner I've talked to, this seem to be the case, where they're getting 500 miles of range, versus an EV where most drivers are topping out at about 250 miles, which doesn't take you through a full eight-hour shift.

So, to allow drivers to continue to make a standard of living where they can

1 actually afford to live and remain and work 2 in New York City and contribute to our 3 vibrant city, we have to consider a transition that makes sense. Most EV cars 4 5 are out of reach price-wise. The repairs, 6 which I have personally experienced, you 7 know, insurance companies don't want to provide collision and comprehensive. They 8 9 will drop you after the first claim, 10 especially if it's a Tesla. 11 The rates have gone through the roof 12 after the flood impacted the majority of 13 those fleets in Queens. Costs are just sky 14 high and unsustainable for the average driver. And as others have mentioned, 15 16 drivers are independent contractors, they are 17 not employees. So, unless we're looking to 18 change that, the drivers --THE TIMEKEEPER: Time has expired. 19 2.0 MS. WILSON: Thank you. 21 MS. ELUTO: Thank you. 22 Ms. Wilson was our last speaker, so 23 that concludes our public hearing.

you, to close out the hearing.

Commissioner Do, I'm turning it over to

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CHAIR DO: Thank you so much, Sherryl. 1 And we heard a lot of diverse voices 2 today, and the TLC continues to look at all 3 of our public comments, reviews them, and 4 consider them as we go towards a vote in a 5 few weeks. I thank everyone for their 6 7 comments. I also thank our commissioners 8 and, of course, our general counsel and our assistant commissioners for their 9 presentation today. 10 11 And with that, at 12:17, I'll call this 12 public hearing to an end. 13 (TIME ADJOURNED: 12:17 p.m.) 14 15 16 17 18 19 2.0 21 22 23 24 25

1	CERTIFICATE
2	
3	STATE OF NEW YORK)
4	:SS
5	COUNTY OF QUEENS)
6	
7	I, Sabrina Brown Stewart, a shorthand
8	reporter within and for the State of New York, do
9	hereby certify that the within is a true and
L O	accurate transcript of the statement taken on
11	September 20, 2023.
L2	I further certify that I am not related to
L3	any of the parties to this action by blood or by
L 4	marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the
L 5	outcome of this matter.
L6	IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
L7	hand this 24rd day of September, 2023.
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20	Sabrina Brown-Stewart
	Sabrina Brown Stewart
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