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The Honorable Corey Johnson
New York City Council
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

RE: Second Quarter Report on Impact of Local Law 147

Dear Speaker Johnson:

Section 1(a) of Local Law 147 of 2018 (Local Law 147) requires the Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC) to report to the Council quarterly on the impact of the year-long moratorium on the issuance of new for-hire vehicle (FHV) licenses on vehicle ridership throughout the city. This is our report for the second quarter of the moratorium, from November 15, 2018 through February 14, 2019.

FHV Licensing Volumes After Enactment

Pursuant to Local Law 147, TLC stopped accepting new FHV license applications in August 2018, with two exceptions, outlined below. Between November 15, 2018 and February 14, 2019, 5,599 vehicles were authorized to join the over 122,000 existing licensed FHVs. This is due to the two exceptions under Local Law 147, in addition to licenses approved for applications pending as of August 14, 2018.

Local Law 147 allows for new license applications for wheelchair-accessible vehicles (WAVs). During the second quarter of the moratorium, TLC approved 92 applications for new WAV licenses. Figure 1 illustrates the cumulative number of FHV WAVs in service by month, from pre-moratorium to February 14, 2019. The total number of licensed FHV WAVs as of the end of the second quarter was 388.

The second exception to the moratorium is for those drivers who have been leasing a vehicle under a conditional purchase agreement in place before August 14, 2018, and who subsequently take title to the vehicle pursuant to the terms of the agreement. Because FHV licenses are not transferrable, when title to the vehicle is passed from the lessor to the driver, the driver must obtain a new FHV license to continue operating the vehicle for hire. Since the moratorium began and up until the end of March 2019, TLC has approved 95 applications under this exemption.

Figure 1. FHV WAVs in Service by Month



Renewal of Existing FHV Licenses

One anticipated outcome of the moratorium was that more FHV owners would hold onto a license instead of letting it expire. Prior to the enactment of Local Law 147, an average of roughly two-thirds of licensees with FHV licenses up for renewal decided to renew (e.g., 68 percent in July 2018). For owners with licenses up for renewal between November and mid-February 2019, 73 percent have renewed so far. This is a slight increase from the first quarter’s 69 percent. TLC provides a grace period of 60 days after the license expiration date, so these preliminary numbers may still increase over time.

Ridership Before and After Enactment

Average daily trips performed is a key metric used to analyze the impact on ridership during the moratorium. Figure 2 displays trip counts throughout three time periods: 1) One-and-a-half months before the moratorium began; 2) the moratorium’s first quarter; and, 3) the moratorium’s second quarter up to February 14, 2019. These trip counts are also broken out by the following geographic zones: Manhattan Core, Inner Ring, and Outer Ring.

Daily trips continued to grow in all parts of the city when compared to last year, suggesting that the moratorium has not significantly impacted service availability so far. However, it is still too early to draw definitive conclusions so TLC will continue closely monitoring trip trends. Through August 2019, TLC and DOT will continue to evaluate options for future policies to reduce the negative impacts of FHV’s on transit ridership, congestion, and emissions while protecting service availability for the riding public and driver welfare. To do this, both agencies are working closely with a team of transportation engineers and economists to evaluate several policy options designed to address congestion and its various impacts following the moratorium.

A second key metric to assess ridership impact during the moratorium is average wait times. Local Law 149 of 2018 gave TLC the authority to collect these data as of early 2019. Accordingly, TLC is still collecting and evaluating wait time data, and it is too early to draw conclusions. As noted in the prior report, however, TLC also directed HVFHS bases to provide wait time data for the year prior to the moratorium (August 2017 to July 2018), which establishes a baseline for TLC analysis. We note again that several factors suggest wait times will not be significantly impacted, including the high number of for-hire vehicles already in service, the number of applications accepted before Local Law 147’s enactment, and trends in for-hire vehicle license renewal rates.

Figure 2. Average Daily FHV Trips, July 2018 – February 2019, according to geographies in graphic below

	PREVIOUS YEAR			CURRENT YEAR		
Outer Ring	5/14/17 – 8/13/17	112,444		5/14/18 – 8/13/18	211,825	
	8/14/17 – 11/13/17	130,802		8/14/18 – 11/13/18	220,130	
	11/14/17 – 2/13/18	167,562		11/14/18 – 2/13/19	231,768	
Manhattan Core	5/14/17 – 8/13/17	188,238		5/14/18 – 8/13/18	245,262	
	8/14/17 – 11/13/17	214,364		8/14/18 – 11/13/18	268,727	
	11/14/17 – 2/13/18	234,978		11/14/18 – 2/13/19	279,933	
Inner Ring	5/14/17 – 8/13/17	83,330		5/14/18 – 8/13/18	127,925	
	8/14/17 – 11/13/17	93,658		8/14/18 – 11/13/18	137,173	
	11/14/17 – 2/13/18	105,654		11/14/18 – 2/13/19	140,222	
Airports	13,343	5/14/17 – 8/13/17		18,594	5/14/18 – 8/13/18	
	14,397	8/14/17 – 11/13/17		20,449	8/14/18 – 11/13/18	
	14,370	11/14/17 – 2/13/18		19,363	11/14/18 – 2/13/19	





**Taxi & Limousine
Commission**

Based on these factors, TLC would not support the issuance of any additional for-hire licenses for special geographic areas at this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bill Heinzen", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Bill Heinzen
Acting Commissioner