



**PRESS RELEASE
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**TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVES
PLANS FOR 50% WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE TAXI FLEET BY 2020**

Meera Joshi
Chair/Commissioner

Allan J. Fromberg
*Deputy Commissioner
Public Affairs*
212-676-1013
press@tlc.nyc.gov

33 Beaver Street
22nd Floor
New York, NY
10004

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) board of commissioners today unanimously voted to approve a package of groundbreaking proposed rules that will achieve a 50% wheelchair accessible taxicab fleet by the year 2020. The historic vote took place at a monthly meeting of the TLC at its 33 Beaver Street headquarters in Manhattan.

Today's vote signals the most significant expansion of the number of accessible cabs on city streets in the New York City taxi industry's 107-year history. By 2020, half of all yellow taxis—7,500 total—will be wheelchair accessible. The new rules call for a 30-cent per-ride Taxi Improvement Surcharge to be integrated into the yellow medallion taxicab fare as of January 1, 2015. A similar surcharge in green Street Hail Liveries will support improvements for those vehicles. The new wheelchair accessible cabs will begin to join the fleet starting in January 2016, joining the existing 631 accessible medallions that exist today.

The rules approved today codify the steps necessary to satisfy the terms of a settlement with disability advocates to ensure greater access and equity for New Yorkers with disabilities.

"This is about recognizing the fundamental rights of New Yorkers with disabilities. Our transportation systems should open doors, not close them," said Mayor Bill de Blasio. "This plan is fair and equitable—and most importantly, it's achievable. I commend the Taxi & Limousine Commission and its chair Meera Joshi for advancing this vital change for thousands of New Yorkers."

"The actions taken today by the Taxi and Limousine Commission as a unified body represent the most significant advancement in equality for persons with disabilities in the taxi industry's history," said TLC Chair and CEO Meera Joshi, who today presided over her first public meeting. "It was a privilege to vote alongside my fellow commission members for this empowering and timely initiative."

"The Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities applauds the TLC Commissioners for voting to make NYC cabs accessible for all," said Victor Calise, Commissioner of MOPD. "Advocates, MOPD and TLC have worked hard and long to make this day a reality. This vote clearly puts forth Mayor de Blasio's progressive agenda in providing services for the most vulnerable populations."

Taxi operators bringing accessible taxis into service in 2016 will be eligible for grants to subsidize the cost of accessible taxi conversions, with additional funds being made available on an annual basis to defray the higher maintenance costs associated with accessible vehicles. The approved rules also contain a driver training component, providing that all new, incoming taxi drivers who apply for their taxi operator's ("hack") license after June 1, 2014 must receive wheelchair passenger assistance training. All taxi drivers must receive training by the time of their first license renewal after January 1, 2016.