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PUBLIC HEARING
TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION
TAXICAB LEASING AND LEASE CAPS
40 RECTOR STREET
5TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2006
10:00 A.M.

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1 P R E S E N T:

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3 MATTHEW DAUS, Commissioner, Chairperson

4 CAROLYN CASTRO

5 SAMARA EPSTEIN

6 CHARLES FRASER

7 PANSY MULLINGS

8 ANDREW SALKIN

9

10 Also Present:

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12 Osman Chondhary

13 Bhairavi Duai

14 Ethan Gerber

15 Neil Greenbaum

16 Bill Lindauer

17 Victor Salazar

18 Beresford Simmons

19 Michael Woloz, MTBOT

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Good morning
3 everyone. Thank you for coming. As you can see,
4 we have a new board of commissioners here, newly
5 appointed.

6 Seriously, we did invite, several
7 times, many of our commissioners. None of them
8 have opted to come to this meeting. That doesn't
9 mean they're not concerned about the issues or
10 interested in them. It is an optional meeting.

11 We elected to spend more time gathering
12 information; and all of your testimony today, as
13 well as the investigation that we have done so far
14 on leasing issues, as well as what investigation we
15 do afterwards, will be provided to them in and a
16 detailed staff presentation and report that will be
17 made public.

18 We will have the ability to openly and
19 publicly debate all of the issues. Everything you
20 say here today will be provided in many shapes and
21 forms to all of our commissioners before we
22 consider taking or not taking any policy or
23 rule-making action on any of these efforts.

24 As you know, this is the mandatory
25 meeting that is required by Taxi and Limousine

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2 Commission rules every two years, about whether the
3 lease cap is fair, the one that's been in place;
4 and whether a variety of factors that the law
5 enunciates are being met.

6 We're required to explore those three
7 factors and, as in the public notice and in our
8 rules, there are three criteria that we would ask
9 you to focus on in your testimony.

10 Number one, taxicab operating expenses;
11 number two, taxicab driver earnings; and three, the
12 retention of experienced drivers under the current
13 lease cap.

14 We've done a lot of investigation and
15 research to date and have received many calls and
16 complaints anonymously and on the record from
17 folks. I want to acknowledge and thank the work of
18 my staff who is up joining me here today.

19 To my far right is Deputy Commissioner
20 Pansy Mullings from Enforcements; Samara Epstein;
21 Andy, our First Deputy; as well as Kirsten, and
22 Chuck Fraser and David and Carolyn Castro.

23 Samara has done a very good job with
24 her staff of, I think, researching, along with
25 Chuck Fraser, some of the contracts that are out

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2 there, some of the issues we have been hearing
3 about. And we have also put on the website and
4 have copies out there for you, as well, very
5 detailed questions and surveys which will be
6 helpful to us in doing a complete analysis.

7 It was Andy's idea, and a good one, to
8 have the time to spend on making written comments
9 because you only have three minutes to testify
10 today. I urge you to touch on the essence of your
11 concerns or points about the leasing situation; and
12 if there is time, to give the data that we are
13 looking for in response to those questions.

14 We appreciate if you can do that in
15 writing. We're going to hold open the comment
16 period and you can submit them any time over the
17 next month or so. Please take your time in
18 answering the questions.

19 Based upon the information that we have
20 obtained, there are a couple of areas of concern
21 that I have that I'm going to be talking to the
22 other members of my board about. I would hope you
23 would address some of the issues here today when
24 you are testifying.

25 There seems to be a difference of

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2 opinion as to hidden or other charges and whether
3 they are legal or not; or whether they are
4 consistent with the spirit and intent of the laws
5 passed by the commission many years ago.

6 A couple of examples; if you can
7 address whether charging drivers for sales taxes
8 and other administrative fees does not violate the
9 lease cap law, I would appreciate if you could
10 expound on that; whether it's the owners or the
11 drivers.

12 We also uncovered that there are
13 different interpretations of what a week is. That
14 is troubling and concerning to me. I found out
15 about that a few days ago. A week is 7 days, in my
16 opinion.

17 Apparently some -- from interpreting, a
18 week is 5 days. I believe that we need to take a
19 look at that legally, and most importantly, let's
20 find out what the practice is to see whether it's
21 appropriate or needs to be changed or not.

22 Lastly, not least, I'd also like to
23 hear from you on whether there is a widespread
24 practice of folks who are in a long-term leasing
25 environment, who are selling the vehicles to the

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2 drivers, whether they are inflating the cost of the
3 vehicle purchase and/or the loan rates, in order to
4 basically get around the lease cap.

5 For instance, if you were ordinarily
6 charged a certain percentage rate on a loan that
7 you're taking out or a purchase being made on a
8 vehicle, a lease or rental -- is that amount being
9 inflated as a means for charging more than what the
10 lease rates are?

11 In particular, I'm talking about lease
12 agents that also are involved -- some of them are
13 out there -- in selling the vehicle to the driver,
14 as well as the driver actually leasing the
15 medallion through that agent.

16 That's an area of concern that's been
17 brought to our attention. I haven't formed any
18 judgments on whether these things are legal or not
19 yet. We'd like hear your opinion. Is it a
20 practice? How widespread is it?

21 As my first deputy reminded me, I think
22 it's important for us in our comments to address
23 the impact on the other side. I truly mean that.
24 We've had hearings like this before with follow-up
25 and questions and answers; and it gets very

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2 contentious.

3 The pot gets stirred up and never
4 settles down. It gives everybody a little angina.
5 I think what I would like to see today is a calm,
6 reasonable discussion; respect for one another. I
7 remember people yelling and screaming and cheering
8 for one another.

9 People have a right to do that, but it
10 doesn't make for a particularly productive meeting,
11 getting at the facts and doing the right thing and
12 giving myself and the staff the ability to,
13 basically, weigh the options and make a decision in
14 the best interest of everybody.

15 What do I mean by that? If the drivers
16 are going to testify that the lease cap is too high
17 and needs to be lowered, I would like them to
18 testify what the impact would be on the taxi
19 owners.

20 Likewise, if the taxi owners feel
21 they're not getting a fair deal, that it hasn't
22 been raised in a long time, that there are
23 legitimate concerns, what would the impact
24 potentially be on the driver pool? Would that lead
25 to more or less drivers? Do you think that the

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2 market is able to withstand that?

3 We actually need to look at what you
4 believe the trend will be in your opinions, in
5 terms of the driver pool going forward in this
6 potential recession.

7 People have different opinions on what
8 happens to the taxi industry in a recession. I've
9 seen, at least historically, that it ends up being
10 something that is good for our industry in
11 particular, because, unfortunately, people lose
12 their jobs and do come to work as taxi drivers from
13 other industries.

14 Is that possibly something that could
15 happen here? What are your expectations and where
16 do we go from here?

17 I'll turn it over to Chuck. He's going
18 to talk about the legalities, and we'll start the
19 hearing.

20 MR. FRASER: You've covered it all.

21 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: We will go right to
22 the hearing, unless you have anything to add?

23 MR. SALKIN: In addition to the remarks
24 of the Chair, we're interested in getting
25 information. Another item that we're interested in

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2 exploring whether today or in the future is
3 consistency of language in different leases, and
4 ensuring that from lease to lease to lease, from
5 scenario to scenario to scenario, that the
6 information communicated to the person who is the
7 lessee and lessor is clear.

8 We have seen many different kinds of
9 leases with different levels of detail. We have
10 been looking into different standards that are out
11 there, whether federal or state standards out
12 there, how leases can happen. We're curious if
13 anyone has thoughts on language and what language
14 might be necessary to be included.

15 One of the things we've heard over the
16 years, certainly the last time we had this hearing
17 two years ago, is that it's not always clear what
18 the individual who is doing the leasing is getting
19 and what the money is for.

20 If anything, we can certainly support
21 clear communication between all parties. That's
22 another item people have comments on.

23 Again, if it can't all happen today,
24 we're happy to meet with people in the coming weeks
25 to further understand the different scenarios.

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2 Don't feel you have to get it in all today, by any
3 means.

4 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Any other comments?

5 We'll go right to the testimony. The
6 first speaker is Michael Woloz, from MBTOT.

7 MR. WOLOZ: I'm actually going to read
8 the testimony of Ron Sherman who couldn't be here
9 today.

10 "Good morning. I'm Ron Sherman,
11 President of the Metropolitan Taxicab Board of
12 Trade, a 55 year old trade association comprised of
13 28 yellow medallion taxi fleets located in Queens,
14 Brooklyn, the Bronx and Manhattan. We represent
15 3300 yellow medallion taxis, approximately
16 25 percent of the taxi industry.

17 "Most of our taxis are double shifted
18 and run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a
19 year. We have more than 14,000 drivers.

20 "Double shifted taxi fleets provide an
21 essential service for the riding public and for
22 taxi drivers. We provide the riding public safe,
23 reliable 24/7 service with new or nearly new
24 vehicles. We provide drivers with the unique
25 opportunity to lease a taxi without having to pay

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2 toward the purchase of the vehicle or the
3 medallion.

4 "In return for a lease fee, drivers
5 receive a vehicle which is maintained by the fleet
6 and repaired by the fleet, as well as the exclusive
7 right to pick up street hails in New York City.

8 "Very importantly, fleets provide
9 steady, flexible and reliable work that provides
10 great income potential, helping to recruit and
11 retain a quality taxi driver work force.

12 "Indeed, you will find that many of the
13 most experienced drivers in the taxi industry
14 choose to lease from our fleets, precisely because
15 it's a convenient and reliable way to earn a living
16 in this business.

17 "Traditionally, fleet owners and
18 drivers have split fare increases fifty-fifty.
19 That is no longer the case. In 1996 the split was
20 60-40 in favor of the drivers. In 2004 the drivers
21 received 85 percent of the fare increase. In 2006,
22 drivers received 100 percent of the fair increase.
23 So it is no surprise that driver income is up
24 considerably.

25 "At the last lease cap hearing in

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2 March 2006, we reminded the commission that MTBOT
3 lobbied for drivers to receive the lion's share of
4 the 2004 rate fare increase in order to attract and
5 retain drivers.

6 "After receiving 85 percent of that
7 fare increase, driver earnings increased
8 34 percent. And the number of licensed medallion
9 taxi drivers increased 22 percent.

10 "The combined average daily and weekly
11 lease rates have increased 7.5 percent. Fleets
12 have a tremendous amount of costs. In order to run
13 the large 24/7 garage operations that effectively
14 serve the driver population and the riding public,
15 fleets must employ full-time mechanics,
16 administrative staff and contribute to other direct
17 and indirect employment.

18 "Fleets often keep large inventories of
19 parts and incur lost shifts in down markets and
20 during inclement weather or other circumstances
21 that deter manpower.

22 "Operating costs continue to rise.
23 Over the next few weeks we plan to present the TLC
24 the actual costs in great detail. These costs may
25 or may not warrant an increase to the lease cap or

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2 the rate of fare.

3 "However, in preliminarily reviewing
4 the state of our industry, we can report an overall
5 increase in the cost of doing business; and in
6 looking to the near term and long term future, we
7 see many more costs ahead, some considerable.

8 "While the Taxi and Limousine
9 Commission issued an aggressive October 2008 mandate
10 for 25-mile per gallon taxis, which will cost more
11 in parts and maintenance, and then face another
12 costly mandate in October 2009 for 30-mile per
13 gallon hybrid taxis, the TLC has not increased
14 lease rates to help offset those costs.

15 "This is in sharp contrast to San
16 Francisco, which mandated alternative fuel taxis by
17 2011 and accompanied the mandate with lease rate
18 increases that acknowledge the high costs
19 associated with a mass vehicle changeover.

20 "Now the Traffic Mitigation Commission
21 wants to charge a \$1 surcharge on all taxi fares in
22 the central business district, none of which would
23 go to offset taxi operations, but will fund 'mass
24 transit,' which we thought we were a part of.

25 "Some legislators even called for taxi

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2 surcharges of \$8, reflecting a very disturbing
3 ignorance of the taxi industry.

4 "MTBOT is worried about the future of
5 our industry. We are regularly met with increases
6 in our operating costs. We are often asked by the
7 city to absorb costly mandates which we have no
8 control over, and then we are not provided with the
9 tools we need to offset the costs.

10 "Without a sustainable taxi industry
11 where owners are able to efficiently run their
12 operations, we will be unable to effectively
13 provide job opportunities for drivers and provide
14 the service the riding public deserves.

15 "We hope the Taxi and Limousine
16 Commission takes this serious issue into
17 consideration as we approach the October 2008 25
18 MPG mandate, which is 6-months away.

19 "Finally, I want to point out our
20 feeling that lease rates should be dictated by the
21 market. There are hundreds of fleets and lease
22 managers that all compete with one another for a
23 relatively small driver pool.

24 "If one fleet or lease manager is
25 charging above market rate for their taxis, those

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2 drivers would surely move around the corner or down
3 the block for a more favorable rate.

4 "Like any artificial limitation on the
5 free market, these caps have consequences on
6 service to the riding public and our drivers. One
7 possible remedy that should be considered is to
8 impose an aggregate weekly lease cap that could
9 more accurately reflect market conditions for each
10 shift, based on the actual demand.

11 "We are open to other options. Our
12 primary concern is to run an efficient operation.
13 We can't do that if the lease caps don't reflect
14 the market."

15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Thank you.

17 The next speaker is Ethan Gerber.

18 MR. GERBER: Good morning. I'm from the
19 Greater New York City Taxi Association. That the
20 taxicab operator's expenses have increased
21 dramatically is a fact. We will document this in
22 writing.

23 Fares have gone up dramatically. That
24 the drivers have gotten the lion's share of the
25 increases is also a fact. These facts will be

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2 documented in our written responses.

3 Rather than go over these details which
4 we will be submitting, I would like to discuss
5 general principles.

6 We are assembled here to inquire as to
7 the current lease caps. It is well and good for
8 you to do so.

9 While the Taxi and Limousine Commission
10 is charged with protecting the riding public and
11 setting fares for the riding consumer as part of
12 its core mission, so that fares are consistent, the
13 notion of interjecting itself between the driver
14 and the manager in the form of an artificial
15 ceiling in lease rates is relatively new, I believe
16 originating with the commission presided over by
17 Commissioner Lynne.

18 At the time it was first imposed, lease
19 caps were set well above the market rate to allow
20 the market to adjust itself. That is no longer so.

21 From Smith to the founders who
22 incorporated the contracts clause enclosed in
23 Article I of the Constitution, to economists as
24 diverse as Maynard Keynes, John... and Milton
25 Friedman, the notion that the government should

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2 tread lightly when interfering with the private
3 right to contract has been embedded in the studies
4 of economics.

5 It is well known that the interference
6 usually does more harm than good, and that the ugly
7 law of unintended consequences rears its ugly head.
8 I submit that the burden for those who seek such
9 interference with the market is on those who want
10 to justify it.

11 The groups claiming to represent
12 drivers and those that do represent drivers will
13 always demand low caps. I don't blame them. We
14 would all like to pay less than the market will
15 bear for everything.

16 Under the current system, market forces
17 are quashed. Since the caps are unreasonable low,
18 especially on some issues like weeklies, all
19 managers operate in the margins. Good behavior is
20 not rewarded. The manager with the cleanest garage
21 or the most desirable cars or the best location
22 cannot profit from these choices.

23 To profit at all, the manager, like all
24 managers, must charge within dollars of the lease
25 caps. There simply is no room for market factors

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2 to work.

3 Similarly, the market to lease cabs to
4 drivers shifts just as inevitably as any other
5 market does... fluxes, popular days to lease,
6 shifts change, long before the government can react
7 to the changes. If there are caps at all, they
8 must be large enough to incorporate the market
9 forces.

10 Any questions?

11 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Is your organization
12 of the opinion we should not have a lease cap at
13 all?

14 MR. GERBER: The last speaker said it.

15 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: You believe that
16 there would be no adverse effect on the driver pool
17 in the industry if we eliminate lease caps?

18 MR. GERBER: When we first had lease
19 caps they were set so high that many of the
20 managers never reached close to the lease caps.
21 We're at a point now where they're all at the
22 margins.

23 I think some of the things you
24 mentioned in your opening statements are directly a
25 result of pushing the managers and the owners right

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2 up to the very margins of what they could possibly
3 afford to make the system work.

4 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: And you're also
5 compiling expenses to provide to us. We greatly
6 appreciate that information. If you could give
7 some advance insight into the major areas that led
8 to the increased expenses?

9 You mentioned the MPG requirements.
10 Are there any particular items, general areas,
11 where this has caused --

12 MR. GERBER: We are subject to every
13 economic indicator. We are subject to inflation
14 and to increased demand, increased labor costs on
15 our repair shops.

16 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: The taxi meter shops
17 or the mechanics?

18 MR. GERBER: The mechanics who repair
19 the vehicles. All manners of costs. This
20 commission has increased the quality of the taxi
21 industry, to its credit. But all of the increases
22 have brought concurrent costs with them. And the
23 owners have borne all of that cost. It has not
24 been on the drivers.

25 The increases, as documented by MTBOT,

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2 which I fully concur with -- every increase in rate
3 of fare, the lion's share, has gone to the drivers.
4 The last raise in fare went completely to the
5 drivers.

6 It is the owners' and managers' costs
7 that have gone up. I am sympathetic to every hard
8 working New Yorker; but our rates have gone up, and
9 all we ask is that the margins reflect -- one of
10 the concurrent problems with this is that, when we
11 set very specific limits for the days of the week
12 and whatnot, the market changes.

13 Preferred days change. Preferred
14 attitudes of the drivers of whether they like
15 weeklies or dailies are subject to market forces
16 and changes, as well. The industry should be able
17 to react just as any other market is able to react
18 to those forces, to those changes, and adjust
19 accordingly.

20 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Have the costs of
21 repairs gone up, in terms of parts?

22 MR. GERBER: Absolutely.

23 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Would you say that
24 you have more than enough or not enough drivers at
25 this point in time? What are you expecting over

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2 the next year or so, or two years?

3 MR. GERBER: For the most part, we have
4 a decent driver pool right now. The economy -- I
5 agree with your opening statement as to the markets
6 forces and what happens generally in the economy.

7 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Thank you.

8 MR. WOLOZ: On the peak shifts there are
9 often a lot of drivers and you're turning drivers
10 away. On the off-peak shifts, there's often a
11 dearth of drivers. When we are presenting an
12 option for the TLC to look at, the aggregate weekly
13 cap which would allow for those shifts and the
14 market to be reflected in what a fleet or a garage
15 can offer. That's what we are talking about.

16 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: To clarify, your
17 organization's ultimate preference at the top of
18 its wish list would be to get rid of the lease cap?

19 MR. WOLOZ: We want to do what is
20 possible to offset our costs that are here now, and
21 that we foresee in the very near future.

22 There's an argument to be made that the
23 lease cap as set now, or the concept of the lease
24 cap, is not working as well as some other system
25 could work for our industry; in recruiting and

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2 retaining good quality drivers; in ensuring that
3 large operations are able to sustain themselves.

4 I think that there is a good argument
5 to be made that we don't need that kind of a
6 system, that there could be better systems in
7 place. The aggregates -- we are looking at all of
8 the options, and we are more than willing to work
9 with the TLC staff to find the best way for us to
10 get the drivers, recruitment, retention, and for us
11 to be able to sustain ourselves in this business.

12 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: I want to commend the
13 fleets. Certainly on the last two fare increases,
14 I think we're looking at the bigger picture in
15 terms of helping drivers and bit the bullet in
16 pushing very hard for lease caps.

17 In fact, the last increase went
18 100 percent to the drivers for the first time in
19 New York City history.

20 Over the last two years, are any of
21 your member fleets charging fees outside of the
22 lease cap? Is that not a practice that pertains to
23 the fleets, at all? It's more of a different
24 practices in other areas of the industry?

25 MR. GERBER: Such as?

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2 MS. EPSTEIN: Taxes, administrative
3 fees, licensing fees? We looked at leases and a
4 lot of fleets and agents charge a few dollars in
5 tax... in the lease cap.

6 MR. WOLOZ: The only thing I was made
7 aware of is a sales tax. Certainly I have never
8 heard of any kind administrative fees.

9 MR. SALKIN: Maybe it's best not to put
10 you on the spot. We are more interested in the
11 MTBOT, as well as the Greater New York City Taxi
12 Association -- when you provide comments, or anyone
13 provides comments, that you could offer your
14 thoughts on what exactly should be included with
15 the lease cap.

16 Should it just be cost for the vehicle,
17 not including taxes? Should it be not including
18 administrative costs or other creative financing
19 people have been able to think of?

20 The Chairman alluded to the thought
21 from our end that a lease cap is the cap and you
22 shouldn't be charged more if you're a driver. I
23 think we've heard from a lot of drivers and seen a
24 lot of leases from all parts of the industry that
25 indicate clearly there are additional costs being

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2 levied.

3 When you look at the rules, one can
4 make arguments that these charges are probably
5 acceptable, and others can make arguments that they
6 don't seem acceptable.

7 Some comments towards that?

8 MR. WOLOZ: I think the fleet operation
9 has a fairly simple system. It's not financing
10 your vehicle. You are really just paying a lease
11 fee for the shift and you're getting everything
12 that comes with it; the vehicle medallion, the
13 right to pick up, all the amenities and services of
14 the garage.

15 The business incurs those expenses; and
16 repairs, maintenance, towing, things of that
17 nature. It's a simple arrangement, as far as the
18 fleets are concerned.

19 MR. SALKIN: Those are the kinds of
20 things we'd be interested in seeing that should be
21 included. For every fleet and lease situation with
22 a medallion getting leased on a short term basis,
23 maybe the lease should say that, everything you've
24 been saying.

25 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: I thought the purpose

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2 of this meeting was to come with this information.
3 With all due respect, we will leave the window
4 open.

5 I think that we owe it to, not just the
6 drivers, but we owe it to other fleets and
7 operators. There's a lack of clarity, I think.

8 If you look at the rules and use common
9 sense, the spirit of the rules is, a lease cap is a
10 lease cap. I think, when the commission voted, the
11 exclusive charges would go to the drivers.

12 I'm not saying it's right or wrong that
13 there are these other fees that should or should
14 not be; but my number one concern is that we
15 ultimately come up with some clarity about what the
16 deal is; whether it's an interpretation of our
17 rules, an industry notice, passenger rules to make
18 it clear -- it only creates bad will and animosity
19 and the perception by drivers that they're getting
20 the raw deal, if they don't know if it is right or
21 wrong.

22 I think they have a legitimate argument
23 that the rules don't speak to this, so why the
24 fees? I'm not saying all of you guys do it or
25 whether it's a practice in the management part of

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2 the industry; but if we are not prepared to testify
3 about it today in your responses, I would
4 appreciate if you could, number one, if you could
5 identify the extent of the practice; number two,
6 whether you believe it's right or wrong and whether
7 it should be something separate from the lease cap
8 and if we decide to keep the lease cap in there;
9 okay?

10 MR. WOLOZ: Another issue discussed was
11 the notion of tips in the lease cap, and should
12 they be part of it?

13 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: By "tips" you mean --

14 MR. WOLOZ: To get in front of a line,
15 to get a car cleaned, for gas.

16 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Tipping the
17 dispatcher?

18 MR. WOLOZ: Maybe the lease cap should
19 be higher, what the tip rate should be, so that
20 fleets can pay the people who work there more
21 money. I don't know what the right answer is. I
22 think it's understanding what all the charges are
23 so that they are incorporated in there.

24 We are looking into submitting more
25 extensive written comments as per the window we

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2 have; and we are willing to work with the Taxi and
3 Limousine Commission on all those questions.

4 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: There's two weeks to
5 do so. If we have to extend the period, we may.

6 MR. SALKIN: In the two testimonies
7 we've had so far, I think the Greater New York Taxi
8 Association noted the issue of potentially getting
9 rid of lease caps and using the economic forces to
10 determine what the rate should be.

11 And then also, in the further
12 testimony, the question of just actually making
13 sure that the margins are covered. I think it's
14 two different philosophies and when you respond,
15 anyone, if you are going to suggest changes to the
16 lease cap, if it's a margin change to cover cost or
17 an additional cost or a change to the fundamental
18 workings of how the industry should work -- whether
19 it's getting rid of the lease caps or capping lease
20 caps, I think it would be helpful to get that
21 information and make it clear what you are
22 suggesting.

23 There are a lot of different ideas and
24 they shouldn't be thrown around. We should really
25 explore them, certainly if it's something people

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2 would think would work better.

3 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Any other questions?

4 Thank you. We spent some extra time
5 because you represent large numbers of people.

6 Mr. Victor Salazar?

7 MR. SALAZAR: Good morning. Before I
8 was an owner-operator I was leasing my cab from
9 different fleets and companies. I believe that the
10 lease cap should definitely remain in place
11 because, thanks to the lease cap, I was able to
12 save some money in order for me to come up with a
13 minimum amount to purchase a medallion.

14 Leasing a car in New York City is even
15 more expensive. The gasoline prices went up pretty
16 much. I understand that the fleet companies, the
17 big ones like Mr. Sherman's, have their own
18 mechanic shops and through the years have made
19 millions of dollars. I'm quite sure they don't see
20 the impact of the small operators like myself.

21 For us it is really different, in terms
22 of expenses and repairs. I brought some receipts
23 of my expenses of 2007 and 2008. I would like to
24 illustrate some of the facts.

25 For example, in repairs, in 2007 I

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2 spent over \$11,300, without including car wash and
3 some other cosmetics on the car. In 2008 alone, so
4 far I spent a little bit above \$2,500. I would
5 like to submit them to you to make copies and
6 return them to me.

7 That's some of the facts.

8 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Were those expenses
9 for in general, or a particular problem with the
10 car?

11 MR. SALAZAR: The car is -- the problem
12 is with the roads of New York. They are not in
13 very good shape. The car gets a beating.

14 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: But \$11,000 is a lot
15 of money. Was there a structural problem or an
16 accident that occurred?

17 MR. SALAZAR: No accident occurred in
18 2007. But the situation is that we have to go
19 three times a year for Woodside [sic] inspections.
20 Just for the check engine light, we have to spend
21 money in oxygen sensors to change quite often.

22 The inspections don't really -- it's
23 very difficult to pass inspection.

24 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Did you want to give
25 us that?

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2 MR. SALAZAR: You can take copies of it,
3 but I need it back today.

4 (Indicating.)

5 I think it would help. It is expensive
6 to maintain the vehicle in New York City.
7 Apartments are very expensive.

8 Mr. Commissioner, you mentioned before
9 that the week has 7 days. Indeed, we have 7 days;
10 but for us drivers, we sit in the car for 11 or
11 12 hours on a shift. Usually, the seventh day is
12 tiring for us, so we have to take a little break on
13 the seventh day, although it's considered part of
14 the week.

15 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: In terms of the
16 lease?

17 MR. SALAZAR: It's more difficult to
18 come up with the money to complete the lease.

19 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Thank you for your
20 testimony. We will make copies of this and give
21 the originals back to you.

22 MR. SALAZAR: I must say the lease cap
23 definitely helped me before to become an
24 owner-operator. I believe because of oil prices
25 the lease should be readjusted to the reality we

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2 live in today. The cost of living in New York City
3 is far more expensive than it was 8 years ago.

4 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: What car do you have?
5 A Toyota Sienna?

6 MR. SALAZAR: Precisely.

7 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: You have a lot; this
8 is extraordinary.

9 MR. SALAZAR: This is to keep up with
10 the Woodside.

11 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Unbelievable.

12 MS. EPSTEIN: Thank you for the
13 information. We appreciate that. Do you have a
14 second driver that leases from you?

15 MR. SALAZAR: My brother and I work the
16 vehicle. We try to do it 24 hours, but it's
17 humanly impossible. We do our best to maintain the
18 car in the best shape as possible to comply with
19 the TLC inspections.

20 MS. EPSTEIN: Having a second driver,
21 the lease cap works okay for you? You shouldn't be
22 charging more for that either? That's okay for you
23 as an owner? You testified as a driver, as an
24 owner-operator, you don't have an issue with the
25 lease caps? They are fine?

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2 MR. SALAZAR: It's different for an
3 owner than when you lease. When I leased a car
4 from different companies I had to wake up early to
5 get the best car possible. I used to tip the
6 dispatcher and in some events my car would break
7 down.

8 I use to wait three hours or more for
9 them to tow my car. I wasn't really paid properly
10 that particular day. When I returned to the garage
11 I had to tip the mechanic to get the car as quick
12 as possible back on the road, to make some of the
13 two or three hours to pay for the gas. All these
14 things considered, I definitely believe the lease
15 cap must remain in place.

16 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: At its current state?

17 MR. SALAZAR: It should be readjusted,
18 because it's more expensive in New York than many
19 years ago.

20 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: You're talking about
21 the general cost of living?

22 MR. SALAZAR: For every single New
23 Yorker. We have a decrease in customers now
24 because -- I guess the price of living in New York
25 City is very expensive and affecting all of us.

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2 Definitely you have to consider that, that we live
3 in a reality where the economy is going down.

4 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Fair enough. Thank
5 you, Mr. Salazar.

6 MR. SALAZAR: I received a few days ago
7 a renewal fee. I pay it every two years in the
8 amount of \$1,410, the renewal fee. I would like to
9 find out, to ask you why don't you take Visa,
10 MasterCard or American Express? It says here, the
11 Taxi and Limousine Commission requires only check
12 or money order.

13 (Indicating.)

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. EPSTEIN: I thought we accepted
16 credit cards. Maybe we need to update the form. I
17 think you can go to the window at Licensing to do
18 that.

19 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Licensing probably
20 failed to update the forms. Shame on us.

21 The next speaker is Neil Greenbaum.

22 MR. GREENBAUM: Good morning. I'm
23 speaking as a charter member and past president of
24 the Committee for Taxi Safety. The committee is an
25 industry group representing medallion owners,

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2 agents, brokers and lenders.

3 As medallion managers, we understand
4 the complexity and the ways to put taxis on the
5 road and keep them servicing the public. We want
6 to thank Chairman Daus and his staff for this
7 chance to review the lease caps and keeping up to
8 date with the evolving world and city we live in.

9 We believe the drivers and the public
10 are the lifeline of the taxi industry. The taxi
11 drivers of New York deserve respect and need to
12 make the generous income; since studies show driver
13 retention is directly related to income and
14 respect.

15 We believe the lease caps should be
16 increased directly to the cost of living and lease
17 cap maximums should leave each category similar to
18 net incomes to drivers and owners or agents.

19 We believe that the taxi commission
20 should better define a DOV, a driver owned vehicle.
21 Driver owned vehicles are vehicle owners who drive
22 a taxi alone with or without additional drivers and
23 are also long-term drivers.

24 Long term drivers and DOV drivers,
25 according to studies, are the safest drivers;

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2 52 percent of DOV drivers now have paid off their
3 vehicles and are still leasing medallions.

4 DOV drivers can earn 40 percent more
5 under the present lease caps than shift drivers.
6 Owner-agents who manage DOVs should be allowed to
7 have standby vehicles to reduce costly down time
8 for drivers and provide continuous service to the
9 public.

10 The inspection process for vehicle
11 transfer of a DOV or long term driver must be
12 addressed. It is an antiquated process that has
13 not kept up with vehicle retirement and new car
14 hack-up procedures. It is a very costly and
15 cumbersome process for drivers and owners who want
16 to switch a vehicle from one medallion to another.

17 The natural evolution for many drivers
18 in this industry is to start driving a shift for a
19 fleet. Some continue, some move on to drive as a
20 DOV and take responsibility and start their own
21 business. Then they plan to buy their own
22 medallion and live the American dream.

23 I'm proud to be an active part of this
24 taxi industry for 30 plus years and see many new
25 arrivals to our country start as drivers and

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2 continue to put their children through college and
3 have successful careers.

4 Some of the most successful, loved
5 people I know started as taxi drivers. I thank God
6 my father was one before me. His hack license was
7 0003137 and his medallion number 6857.

8 I thank you for this opportunity to
9 share my thoughts on behalf of the Committee for
10 Taxi Safety.

11 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Thank you. Your
12 father certainly made a profound effect on the
13 industry, as well. In your supplemental comments,
14 I would like you to address the proposed
15 definitions and how would you propose to define the
16 terms of the rules as an alternative.

17 Number two, you mentioned studies. If
18 you could elaborate on what particular studies you
19 are referring to that long term lease drivers, in
20 particular, are safer?

21 MR. GREENBAUM: I believe it's in the
22 design trust study; in the fact book. If you need
23 something else, I have it in my briefcase. We also
24 had submitted papers to Samara showing the
25 discrepancy in lease prices; which also addressed

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2 some of the other costs and some of the types of
3 categories you have leasing in, such as
4 medallion-only.

5 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Thank you very much.
6 The next speaker is Bill Lindauer.

7 MR. LINDAUER: Good morning. Talk about
8 the driving pool. Drivers are in the drowning
9 pool, drowning in debt. I don't feel for the fleet
10 owners or the brokers. Let them show us at the
11 Taxi Worker's Alliance the true earnings. I'm sure
12 they make millions a year despite their whining.
13 I'm sure each of their owners can go out and buy a
14 condo and pay for it in cash any day of the week,
15 totally.

16 I checked with the United States
17 government. Since 1996, for the New York City
18 metropolitan area, inflation has been 35 percent.
19 Since 2004, up to the beginning of 2008, that
20 figure is 14 percent of that 35 percent.

21 That doesn't include the higher prices
22 for food, heat and gasoline. When we got a fare
23 increase back in 2004, gas was 1.80 a gallon. I'm
24 sure today it is possibly exactly double that, if
25 not more. They're predicting it will be \$4 a

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2 gallon sometime this summer. Drivers are
3 suffering.

4 And the system, the so-called GPS
5 system, takes a big chunk out the drivers' income,
6 despite the delusional statements of the Chairman.
7 They don't get higher tips. They have expenses to
8 pay for in many cases for the system; and people
9 have the notion that if the credit card doesn't
10 work, it is the driver fault.

11 You make that public. You demonize
12 drivers when the system -- it is not a glitch, it
13 is systemic nonsense. It doesn't work. It's not a
14 glitch; it is a botch. And when the credit card
15 doesn't work, many people think it is okay to say,
16 "It's your problem, I don't have to pay in cash.
17 It is not my problem."

18 Drivers are suffering because of the
19 ridiculous system. The public doesn't want GPS;
20 they want credit cards, yes. They don't want GPS.
21 It's too expensive and breaks down.

22 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Next is Beresford
23 Simmons.

24 MR. SIMMONS: Good morning. I'm
25 Beresford Simmons, a member of the Taxi Workers'

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2 Alliance and an ex-owner of a mini fleet
3 corporation, which I lost a few years after 9/11.
4 Now I'm a DOV operator, working out of Mystic
5 Brokerage.

6 Definitely, the lease cap has to stay.
7 It has too stay because we, the drivers, are
8 working very hard and losing a lot of money; and
9 with the advertisement on the top of the cab, we
10 have lost that to the owners.

11 We have lost a lot of income since the
12 GPS system has come in. I personally lost about
13 three fares from the meter not working with the
14 equipment and people get out of the cab, "That's
15 not my problem."

16 I'm driving over 35 years when I was
17 getting paid by these owners who are crying today.
18 They have nothing to cry about. You know, Mr.
19 Commissioner, I have driven one the first
20 wheelchair cars, and I had to get rid of it over a
21 2 1/2 year period.

22 I'm still my own broker, driving a
23 Dodge Caravan. You know I'm up to my neck in debt
24 and have a family to feed. I do not have any
25 documents here because I'm working so hard. I'm

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2 the only driver on my car. Once in a while my son
3 helps me out when he's broke.

4 Believe me, I paid up to \$1350 a week
5 from the last debts on my Ford Free Star towards
6 this Dodge Caravan I'm driving now.

7 The lease cap is definitely something
8 we need right to maintain drivers and good quality
9 drivers in this industry. The mechanic repairs,
10 believe me, is enormous. I have to pay -- I put
11 four transmissions in the last car I had.

12 The Dodge Caravan is very much low to
13 the ground and I expect to pay more and have a lot
14 of problems with the Taxi and Limousine Commission
15 at the inspection site, because every pothole that
16 I pass through, the bottom of the car hits the
17 ground.

18 Thank you very much. Any more
19 information I will submit to you within the next
20 two weeks or so.

21 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Thank you very much.

22 That Dodge Caravan is wheelchair
23 accessible?

24 MR. SIMMONS: Yes.

25 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Did your mechanic

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2 attribute the problems in the repairs to the fact
3 it was a retrofitted vehicle? Did it have anything
4 to do with the ramp being installed?

5 THE SPEAKER: No; the car is extremely
6 low to the ground. For instance, if I'm coming up
7 a street where they're doing a lot of work, I'm
8 guaranteed to hit the bottom. If I'm going to get
9 gasoline and go up a ramp, it hits the ground.

10 I don't know what I have to do. As a
11 matter of fact, I was told to ask if we can expand
12 on the springs or bigger tires. I don't know what
13 we can do about that.

14 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: You will submit a
15 supplemental response?

16 MR. SIMMONS: Maybe within two weeks.

17 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: If you could also
18 elaborate in your response about the loss of income
19 to the owners as a result of the advertising.

20 MR. SIMMONS: If we haven't completely
21 paid for the car, we don't get paid for the
22 advertising on top of the car. A lot of drivers
23 are paying a \$20 -- another thing is, when anything
24 goes wrong with the meters, it is up to us to fix
25 it. We are responsible, and most brokers charge an

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2 extra \$20 in tax stamps. Cab drivers -- the DOV
3 drivers are paying an extra \$20 in tax stamps.
4 All of that is going to the drivers.
5 We are losing a lot of money. Take it from me, I
6 speak to a lot of the drivers. I do a radio
7 program and a lot of the drivers are crying. If
8 you get rid of the lease cap, I think you'll have a
9 lot of quality drivers getting out of the business.

10 MS. EPSTEIN: You mentioned problems
11 with the Dodge. Do you like it better?

12 MR. SIMMONS: It's a better driving car,
13 but lower. You hit bottom every time you go down
14 55th Street or one where they are doing
15 construction work.

16 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Thank you, sir.
17 The next speaker is Osman Choudhary.

18 MR. CHOUDHARY: Good morning. I'm a
19 member of the New York...

20 The lease cabs should stay in the same
21 place, because the last eight years we got a fare
22 increase, some... cars \$800... how come?

23 Now they're charging \$800... lose
24 business... garage cars... working... breakdown
25 sometimes... no engine oil.

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2 A lot of problems, headlight broken, go
3 back to the garage... The garage car is not a clean
4 car. The wash is \$8 but they give you only \$2 back
5 from the garage. Do they think how many 12-hours
6 you're working?

7 We need to make money for lease money.
8 My lease is \$132 and... \$50 gas and car wash
9 initial costs. How am I making money?

10 The physical condition... and another
11 thing... 20 years a medallion... how much?
12 \$100,000, this up to \$200,000 at the time...
13 mortgage... \$180 not \$600.

14 Who pays? All the drivers are paying
15 this who work hard, working 7 days, 12 hours...
16 weekly... medical, everything...

17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Thank you.

19 Our last speaker is Bhairavi Duai.

20 MS. DUAI: Thank you. Good morning.

21 I actually want to address the list of
22 questions that you had outlined, Commissioner Daus.
23 I think they were excellent questions and I'm very
24 glad we're having this hearing.

25 It goes without saying, obviously, we

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2 are in favor of having lease caps. The idea that
3 there is no free market in this industry is pure
4 nonsense.

5 In industries where the workers do not
6 have collective bargaining, on the other hand, the
7 industry has trade associations which can
8 collectively bargain and set rates for themselves;
9 of course that is the very notion of free market.

10 Even after the 2004 raise, it is
11 another myth that only the drivers got the lion's
12 share or in 2006 they got 100 percent of the raise.

13 That may have been the intention of the
14 TLC, but the practical reality in the industry is
15 that after the 2004 raise, most of the fleets,
16 particularly MTBOT fleets, as was said, in his own
17 experience, did away with weekly leasing and were
18 charging, instead, steady drivers by the day.

19 When you add up, for example the night
20 -- the daily night lease cap. You go across the
21 board, it's over \$800, well above \$667. The fleets
22 were charging above \$667 and they continue to do
23 so.

24 The other thing that's happened after
25 the 2006 adjustment, brokers began to implement the

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2 tax stamp. This has traditionally been an
3 owner-only expense. This is the first time we saw
4 in this industry that drivers have had to bear that
5 cost.

6 Again, there's a correlation; whenever
7 there has been an increase in the rate of fare,
8 leases have gone up. Garages found loopholes in
9 the existing language of the cap, and that's why we
10 would strongly recommend that the loopholes very
11 much need to be tightened and clarified in the
12 language, that a weekly cap, as you said, a weekly
13 lease, must be six or seven shifts.

14 It cannot be five shifts. We don't
15 think it should be six shifts. Secondly, for the
16 medallion only lease cap, it must be every single
17 medallion cost that is paid for by the drivers.

18 Lease caps in general, whether
19 medallion only or at the garages, the cap should
20 incorporate every cost that drivers have to pay
21 out. You don't need to raise the existing cap.
22 They are high enough.

23 Both cost of living -- when owners
24 talked about that their cost of living has gone up,
25 drivers have not only paid more in gas, but often

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2 their own overall cost of living, in terms of
3 apartment rents, food costs. As Bill said, when
4 you only look at inflation numbers, many of the
5 expenses are not calculated under the COL and there
6 is no COLA adjustment in this industry. We
7 actually need one.

8 If we are going to talk about every
9 study Mr. Greenbaum said, long term leasing, long
10 term drivers, and the majority of the drivers in
11 the industry are long term workers. Even if they
12 go to the fleet and may be charged by the day, the
13 drivers' practice is very much to work long term.

14 The TLC, in order to retain that, the
15 career driver, does need to tighten the loopholes;
16 secondly, there should be a separate weekly lease
17 cap for the day shift.

18 We find now that most garages will take
19 \$667 and double it, and much of that burden is
20 borne by the night drivers. And even in the
21 daytime, where, given traffic, given that there is
22 not a surcharge and they book less money, but
23 still, because the lease gets combined, the day
24 drivers end up paying more than they should when
25 you look at the amount of booking.

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2 We would argue that some of these
3 numbers need to come down. Also for hybrids, we
4 have an example that for hybrids there are drivers
5 paying up to \$800 a week, way above \$667.

6 Whatever benefit drivers are supposed
7 to be getting through the hybrid, it's going in one
8 hand and out the other, straight to the garage
9 owner.

10 As the industry converts more and more
11 to hybrids, there must be a specific lease cap to
12 ensure that drivers are able to benefit from the
13 reduction in gas costs; it shouldn't be, therefore,
14 that their lease has to go up in return.

15 Thank you for the extra time. A few
16 quick points.

17 Andy said, in terms of defining the
18 contracts, it is an absolute necessity. There are
19 some contracts that are purely unconscionable,
20 where they explicitly state, even in cases of
21 theft, fire, complete collision where the car is
22 completely totalled, the driver is still
23 responsible.

24 On the other hand, if the owner or the
25 broker decides to sell that medallion early, the

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2 driver is left waiting for either a new car, or,
3 when they have to go in for inspection, it's a much
4 stricter inspection by the TLC, more expenses to
5 the car repair.

6 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Is it your
7 organization's position that we should be
8 prescribing all the terms of the contract, or just
9 certain terms or prohibiting certain terms, or
10 maybe -- which is, one of the thoughts we were
11 kicking around was having a mandatory paragraph or
12 paragraphs that go in every contract that basically
13 prescribe the rights and obligations of the owners
14 and drivers.

15 What is your organization's position on
16 how involved we should be in an area where we're
17 not that involved? And I'm not sure how advisable
18 it is for us to get too involved.

19 MS. DUAU: There should be much more
20 involvement. To a great extent, the TLC is already
21 involved. For example, if a broker would sue a
22 driver in small claims court and there's a judgment
23 against the driver, the broker is able to bring
24 that letter to the TLC, and the TLC will send a
25 letter to the driver threatening suspension.

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2 There are cases where the brokers will
3 bring claims against drivers in TLC court. On the
4 other hand, we have numerous examples of drivers
5 who want to bring claims against brokers. They are
6 then told it is a private matter.

7 There's a double standard that very
8 much has to be addressed and remedied. I do think
9 that in an industry where you don't have collective
10 bargaining on the one hand, which essentially means
11 that drivers don't have enough leverage
12 individually to really win a conscionable contract.

13 On the other hand, we have a
14 hyper-regulated industry. If you can regulate the
15 color of the cars, certainly you should be able to
16 regulate conscionable terms of the contract.

17 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Fair enough.

18 MS. DUAJ: Also, I want to say that,
19 when we talk about driver retention or the number
20 of drivers going up in the industry, the fleets may
21 look at that as well, "There's competition in the
22 market, therefore we should be able to raise the
23 fees to the highest bidder among the drivers."

24 You have to look at the other side of
25 that picture which is, when there are more cars on

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2 the road, there is more competition for drivers;
3 which means an increase not only in traffic, but of
4 course, the number of fares you pick up will come
5 down because of the increased competition.

6 I don't think it is an easy black and
7 white issue. There is an effect on drivers
8 whenever there are more drivers who are retained or
9 increased in the industry.

10 Lastly, the three terms that you
11 outlined about operating expenses, driver earnings
12 and retention of drivers -- it is essential that a
13 fourth term or characteristic be added to that
14 formula, which is the impact on drivers' health.

15 Given there is no health care or
16 retirement pension or paid time off in this
17 industry, drivers pay for all of those three things
18 out of pocket. Not only do they have to pay for
19 the expense, but they also have to forego income
20 for the time they have to take off, because there's
21 no guaranteed income in the industry.

22 For example, since he brought it up, I
23 actually was in the ER with him last night. He
24 took off a week from work. Of course, there's no
25 income coming in. I have seen so many of our

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2 members where -- there's a member right now who had
3 a stroke.

4 He was a DOV operator who had a
5 contract with the car and he had to give it up.
6 Again, there's no term that allows him to just turn
7 in the car. He was able to get another driver on
8 the contract, so that's why I think he wasn't sued.

9 He lost a great deal of time while he
10 was looking for a second driver. Of course he had
11 to pay for all the operating expenses out of pocket
12 while there was no income coming in.

13 Given there is no fund, you have to
14 calculate that these are life expenses which amount
15 to operating expenses for taxi drivers in this
16 industry. We have to set standards that the
17 economic viability must produce good health living
18 for 43,000 men and women in this industry.

19 It can't just be about the dollars and
20 cents. We need to look at the fact that I've seen
21 so many of our members who died of heart attacks,
22 who died really young because they worked 10 to
23 12 hours a day.

24 It's not only the number of hours.
25 It's such a demanding job. You have to constantly

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2 be alert and you're dealing with so many different
3 personalities. It still remains nationwide the
4 most dangerous profession in the country.

5 Drivers are 80 times more likely to be
6 robbed. Again, that's another thing. If you lose
7 your fare, there is still fare beating in this
8 industry.

9 Besides what Bill described in terms of
10 the credit cards, which we are seeing an increase
11 of, another layer of fare beating -- again, that
12 amounts into an operating cost for drivers, because
13 there's nobody to compensate them when the
14 passenger walks out after an hour's ride and
15 doesn't pay a penny.

16 All of these expenses drivers bear, and
17 many of them are hidden. I think it is important
18 in our calculations that we incorporate them.

19 Secondly, the cost that fleets and
20 brokers are charging above the caps which have been
21 hidden costs which you mention in the beginning of
22 your comments -- they very much do exist.

23 We've been in the process of serving up
24 to 300 drivers. We have a sample survey now, but
25 definitely by March 31 we plan to submit both

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1 TLC Lease Cap Hearing - 3/18/08
2 aggregated data, as well as copies of receipts and
3 affidavits and copies of contracts to evidence all
4 these claims.

5 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Thank you. We
6 appreciate that.

7 That concludes the public hearing.
8 Thanks for coming and for your time and additional
9 effort to take the time after the hearing to
10 provide the documents we are requesting.

11 We will be in touch with you and,
12 again, we are available. If you call Samara, if
13 you want to make an appointment to meet and share
14 the information in person as well, we're more than
15 willing to get more information.

16 That concludes our hearing.

17 Thank you very much.

18 MR. SALKIN: It looks like there are
19 four main groups here today. We want to make sure
20 all of the groups here submit information. If
21 there is anyone else who wants to reach out, let us
22 know. We will make sure we contact all four
23 contacts.

24 CHAIRPERSON DAUS: Samara Epstein is the
25 point of contact. See you at the next commission

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1 TLC Lease Cap Hearing - 3/18/08
2 meeting, April 17. The next commission meeting is
3 April 17.

4 Thank you very much.
5 (Time noted: 11:20 a.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, Jeffrey Shapiro, a Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public, within and for the State of New York, do hereby certify that I reported the proceedings in the within-entitled matter, on Tuesday, March 18, 2008, at the offices of the NEW YORK CITY TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION, 40 Rector Street, New York, New York, and that this is an accurate transcription of these proceedings.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this _____ day of _____, 2008.

JEFFREY SHAPIRO

