

Testimony of Conan Freud

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PRELIMINARY BUDGET for FISCAL YEAR 2015

City Council Transportation Committee

March 6, 2014

Good morning, Chairs Rodriguez and Ferraras and members of the City Council Committee on Transportation and Committee on Finance. I am Conan Freud, Chief Operating Officer of the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today regarding the TLC's Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 Preliminary Budget. But before I talk about the budget, I would like to update you on what we accomplished during Calendar Year (CY) 2013 and our plans for Calendar Year 2014.

Our licensing, enforcement, and safety and emissions divisions had an extremely busy year in 2013. The licensing division approved close to 5,000 new drivers. This brings our total number of driver licensees to over 115,000. Additionally, with the sale of new yellow taxi medallions, the issuance of street hail livery permits, and the increases in the for-hire industry, we have licensed an additional 11,000 vehicles in CY'13.

We are also seizing more unlicensed vehicles. In CY'13, our enforcement division seized more than 9,600 vehicles operating illegally without a license, an increase of 59% (or more than 3,700 vehicles) compared to CY'12. Last but not least,

our safety and emissions division saw an increase in both medallion and FHV inspections. The number of inspections in CY'13 grew to 96,600, an 8% increase from the previous year. The increased number of inspections can be attributed to the new street hail liveries, which are required to be inspected by the TLC twice per year.

As you know, on February 18th, Mayor de Blasio announced the Vision Zero initiative to eliminate street fatalities in New York City. On February 24th, I testified before the Committee on Transportation and the Committee on Public Safety about how we plan to contribute to the Mayor's goal and bring our proposals from ideas to fruition. TLC staff is already hard at work on implementing the policy objectives outlined in the Vision Zero action plan. As discussed in detail in the report, the TLC will work toward promoting and ensuring that there are safe TLC licensees on the streets by increasing driver education, utilizing new technologies, and dedicating more enforcement resources. It is our goal to increase the number of safe TLC-licensed drivers on the road by incentivizing and rewarding safe driving, but more importantly, removing unsafe drivers from the road before tragic events occur.

Now I will move on to the Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year '15.

The TLC's Preliminary Budget for FY'15 is just over \$61 million. Of that amount, \$33 million is for Personal Services and \$28 million is for Other Than Personal Services (OTPS). Of the \$28 million in the OTPS budget, \$18 million is allocated for issuing grants for street hail livery permit holders who are bringing a wheelchair accessible vehicle into service. These grants are being issued to cover the additional costs of purchasing a wheelchair accessible vehicle. As of March 3 we have issued 63 grants to

accessible street hail livery permit holders, with close to 100 more in the final approval process.

The agency's head count for FY'15 has also increased from 598 to 609. The eleven additional positions are being added to our safety and emissions division to address the increase in yellow taxi and street hail livery inspections.

This concludes my testimony on the TLC's preliminary budget for Fiscal Year 2015. I thank you for the opportunity to testify today about what we plan to accomplish in the coming year to improve safety for our licensees and the public. At this time, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.