

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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DEPARTMENT OF FOR-HIRE VEHICLES

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FOR-HIRE VEHICLE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

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WEDNESDAY  
OCTOBER 18, 2017

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The Council met in Suite 2032, 2235  
Shannon Place, S.E., Washington, D.C., at 10:00  
a.m., Linwood Jolly, Chairperson, presiding.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

LINWOOD JOLLY, Chairperson  
JASON ARVANITES, Member  
ERNEST CHRAPPAH, Director  
ERIK MOSES, Member  
EVIAN PATTERSON, Member  
JEFFERY SCHAEFFER, Member  
ANTHONY THOMAS, Member  
DOTTI LOVE WADE, Member

STAFF PRESENT:

JUANDA MIXON, SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL  
JONATHAN THORNTON, STAFF IT SPECIALIST  
GERARD BENJAMIN, STAFF IT SPECIALIST

C-O-N-T-E-N-T-S

Call to Order. . . . . 3

Moment of Silence. . . . . 3

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Adjournment. . . . .75

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

2 (10:17 a.m.)

3 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Good morning. I  
4 would like to call this meeting to order. The  
5 time is 10:14. We're at 2235 Shannon Place,  
6 Southeast. We're in the conference room on the  
7 second floor.

8 We've just established a quorum. I  
9 have to apologize for our tardiness. I would  
10 like to call for a moment of silence please for  
11 those who have departed.

12 (Moment of silence)

13 Thank you. Good morning, everybody.  
14 Thank you for taking time and doing this, this  
15 morning for our Advisory Council meeting.

16 I'd like to get right into the agenda  
17 this morning. We're privileged to have our  
18 director with us and at this time I would like to  
19 ask Director Chrappah to do a recap of the Agency  
20 activities and the industry activities that have  
21 been going on since our last meeting.

22 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: Thank you,

1 Chairperson Jolly. There's been a few new  
2 activities I would like to share with the public  
3 for those who have not had a chance to stay  
4 abreast with the news letters, the tweeting, and  
5 the text messages that we've been sending out.

6 At the September conference of the  
7 thirtieth anniversary of the International  
8 Association of Transportation Regulators I was  
9 humbled incredibly from the District of Columbia  
10 in being named the International Association of  
11 Transportation Regulators, Regulator of the Year.

12 It is a --

13 (Applause)

14 It is a testament to what we are doing  
15 really in D.C. in terms of not only expanding  
16 economic opportunities for the entire industry by  
17 looking at ways to make sure that people can make  
18 a decent living in the vehicle for-hire industry  
19 by integrating all modes and also focusing on  
20 passenger ride experiences.

21 Historically technology has been a  
22 barrier in the industry. And now it is a moving

1 force in creating new opportunities. So this is  
2 kudos to not only the members of the public who  
3 engaged with us in having robust conversations  
4 and REVICO, but also industry stakeholders and  
5 now more importantly the For-Hire Advisory  
6 Council that bring different perspectives in  
7 shaping our policies and our regulations.

8 So this award, while I was the one who  
9 had a chance to stand in the front of the cameras  
10 to receive it, it's really for everyone who  
11 chooses to participate in our process so it's for  
12 everyone. Thank you.

13 The second item that I want to share  
14 with everyone here is that we've completed the  
15 installation of two fast charging stations at  
16 Union Station. There are a lot of stations in  
17 just that statement.

18 Union Station, as you all know, is one  
19 of the most frequented or the heavy trafficked  
20 area in terms of our passenger ride volume and  
21 also for activity. And when we started the  
22 electrification of the taxi program some time

1 back one of the things we learned was that there  
2 was an opportunity to expand the charging  
3 infrastructure.

4 So the Department, did not wait for  
5 Superman. We took concrete steps and we've  
6 deployed two fast charging stations to help  
7 drivers who elect to go green adopt better ride  
8 experiences for vehicles and passengers to have  
9 the capability of charging up very quickly. So  
10 that is available taxi only so that they can  
11 quickly refuel and go about there business.

12 The third is we've made incredible  
13 progress on adopting an all-digital platform for  
14 our taxis. The vast majority of vehicles are now  
15 on the digital taxi system that operates  
16 attractive features for passengers as well as our  
17 drivers.

18 So now we are looking at the ability  
19 for people to get electronic receipts, the  
20 ability for the public to be able to get lower  
21 rates by sharing a ride. We now have the ability  
22 to offer different sorts of available or

1 opportunities for drivers to boost their income.

2           So this is a reflection of the  
3 District's commitment to assuring that all  
4 vehicles in the for-hire vehicle system with a  
5 particular focus on taxis are at the level where  
6 they cannot only compete fairly but more  
7 importantly meet the needs of the riding public  
8 which continues to evolve and there's a premium  
9 on digital services.

10           The other item that I would like to  
11 share in terms of recapping activities is that we  
12 completed Fiscal Year '17 on the record note. We  
13 provided more than \$7.5 million in rent to  
14 various companies and drivers.

15           In fact, over 1,800 drivers benefitted  
16 from the grant programs. Our grant programs  
17 enabled people with disabilities to move around  
18 the city in a better channel through the  
19 Transport DC Program.

20           Grants enabled drivers to get tablets,  
21 smartphones, and other technologies to transform  
22 their business and also convert into the digital

1 taxi platform. Our grants enabled residents who  
2 have a need to get treatments whether they're  
3 consultation or something else, have more  
4 affordable options.

5 Our grant programs enabled companies  
6 to transform and expand the channels of business.  
7 We now have companies that, and drivers, company  
8 and drivers who are now transporting children in  
9 foster care as a new revenue channel. This did  
10 not exist before and this is an example of how  
11 taxi companies can evolve to become full  
12 transportation companies.

13 And finally, our grants supported the  
14 electrification of our taxis, of 45 drivers, I  
15 think 45 drivers alone received at least \$5,000  
16 each for the purchase or paying off some of the  
17 balances they have on the electric taxis. And  
18 that's incredible.

19 No other jurisdiction within striking  
20 distance has made this type of commitment to the  
21 for-hire vehicle industry. And it's our position  
22 that transportation as a service today is much

1 closer to reality than ever before.

2 We are fully committed with the For-  
3 Hire Vehicle Advisory Council in ensuring that  
4 the vitality of the industry remains very robust.  
5 Then finally, we launched a video that brings  
6 into focus and summarizes our efforts to  
7 rebranding the Agency.

8 Some of you know that several years  
9 ago we were predominantly focused on taxi  
10 activities as in D.C. taxi cab condition. But  
11 with the adoption of the Transportation  
12 Reorganization Act things have changed.

13 We added for-hire vehicles. So the  
14 video when you get a chance to take a look at it  
15 will highlight the transition for us, what you  
16 should expect in terms of how we're making  
17 decisions based on data and more importantly how  
18 our efforts will be centralized around the notion  
19 of ensuring that customers have choice and they  
20 decide which ride option is best for them.

21 That concludes my summary of the  
22 activities of the Agency and the Council as well.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: At this time I  
3 would like to ask my fellow Advisors if they have  
4 any input or any questions on the report that you  
5 just heard. I guess my only input would be on a  
6 couple of issues.

7 One, as we all know the Department  
8 took on a massive task with the grant program and  
9 a lot of folks were happy and a lot of folks were  
10 upset. Myself personally I attended a lot of  
11 meetings around grants.

12 And I would like to thank the director  
13 because most of the meetings I attended he was  
14 willing to attend as well. He met with a lot of  
15 folks, some are here today.

16 And I will just make this comment that  
17 2000, the FY 2018 Grant Program I know that you  
18 have mentioned to me that we'll also look at a  
19 lot of the missed opportunities, I would say and  
20 look at remedying some of the missed  
21 opportunities.

22 But the grant program was a

1 competitive program and I know that a lot of  
2 folks that I met with while they were upset they  
3 did learn valuable lessons about this grant  
4 program and how to move forward when it is  
5 available in the future.

6 The second issue is on the digital, on  
7 digital media conversion. It is my general  
8 consensus that in talking to a lot of drivers  
9 that I've been meeting with the costs for  
10 operating a business has gone down.

11 And they do appreciate that. There  
12 are still a few lingering issues with people  
13 coming over from Legacy systems. And I was just,  
14 I met with a group of drivers the other day, just  
15 yesterday and they are still having a few issues  
16 with signing on to the new systems and just have  
17 a few questions.

18 But I think all that is being worked  
19 out. But overall my comment is that the general  
20 consensus from the drivers that I've been  
21 involved with which has been a lot, is that the  
22 costs have gone down and they do appreciate that.

1 So thank you for to the Agency and thank you to,  
2 you.

3 So let's move on to the public comment  
4 period which is really brief because I just  
5 summarized a lot of that. But I would ask my  
6 colleagues, you all were here at the, well I know  
7 --

8 MEMBER WADE: I was.

9 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Dotti, you were  
10 here. Would you want to recap what you heard in  
11 the last meeting regarding the traffic problems  
12 that we've been seeing in the District and we've  
13 got our advisor from DPW who may want to comment  
14 on that as well.

15 MEMBER WADE: Yes, well as we all know  
16 traffic in D.C. is horrendous. It is not going  
17 to get any lighter. With the construction of new  
18 housing and office buildings you can anticipate  
19 more traffic.

20 What we are trying to encourage the  
21 public is to use public transportation such as  
22 the for-hire vehicles, bikes and Metro. One of

1 the concerns from the drivers that I talked with  
2 was the fact that there appears not to be enough  
3 taxi stand lanes.

4 But we had to make it clear to the  
5 drivers that for every traffic taxi cab lane that  
6 is established it takes parking away from the  
7 businesses who are complaining that they don't  
8 have enough parking spaces for their consumers as  
9 well as residents who complain about not having  
10 enough parking space for their private vehicles.

11 They pay taxes. They come home. They  
12 want to be able to park their cars. So we are in  
13 a catch 22.

14 So at this point we are asking  
15 everyone to understand what the traffic situation  
16 is, to try and be as cooperative and  
17 understanding that the city has only so many  
18 parking spaces and that we have to be able to  
19 share them.

20 I did notice however, and I wanted to  
21 ask about it, I've noticed a number of non-taxi  
22 drivers, other for-hire vehicles in taxi lanes.

1 Is that legal? Can they actually occupy our taxi  
2 lanes?

3 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: No.

4 MEMBER WADE: And what should we do  
5 when we see that?

6 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: Yes, a couple of  
7 things. Would encourage the public to simply  
8 just snap photos and then send all that to us.  
9 That will help us in taking the appropriate  
10 action whether that means dispatching more of our  
11 vehicle officers to that particular zone or  
12 sending letters to those vehicles owners that if  
13 this practice continues we will keep the mounting  
14 evidence and take the appropriate action.

15 MEMBER WADE: Okay. And so drivers  
16 who witness this and non-taxi's obtaining their  
17 space I would suggest that they not approach them  
18 because we don't want to create any hostilities -  
19 -

20 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: That's correct.

21 MEMBER WADE: -- or in a situation but  
22 that they can call 311.

1                   DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: They can. In fact  
2 I can provide the Watch Commander's phone number  
3 so that in a moment they can call the Watch  
4 Commander or they can tweet us and we'll look at  
5 it and take action.

6                   MEMBER WADE: I strongly encourage all  
7 drivers who experience non-taxi cab in your taxi  
8 lanes that are already very restricted, that you  
9 take appropriate action by first not approaching  
10 the driver, but doing as Director Chrappah  
11 recommended which is to report them.

12                   And two, to not overload the taxi  
13 stands because then you really do encroach on  
14 other businesses. So we all have to live in the  
15 city and work in the city and try to move  
16 throughout the city.

17                   So that's what I've, I know there were  
18 other issues. But that's the one that struck me  
19 most because it's a big concern about this  
20 mounting traffic.

21                   We've just got to understand that it's  
22 going to take a lot more patience and that we are

1 going into one of the largest traffic  
2 metropolises in the country and we're trying on  
3 all sides. You guys play a big role in  
4 mitigating the traffic by encouraging people not  
5 to drive their personal vehicles but to make you  
6 more accessible.

7 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: So I think since  
8 a lot of this evolves around DPW since we've got  
9 Advisor Patterson here can we, and we're having  
10 problems with these microphones trying to get, so  
11 could you, maybe you could, this is as far as  
12 they go.

13 Maybe you can come down and just kind  
14 of, yes, slide on down here and -- thank you.

15 MEMBER PATTERSON: Just for clarity,  
16 the Department of Transportation that we  
17 represent, I thank you to my fellow colleague  
18 about those issues with traffic. Those are  
19 things that we at DDOT deal with daily especially  
20 in the Parking and Ground Transportation Division  
21 which I am associate director of.

22 I want to commend DFHV for working

1 very closely with my colleagues now, Dennis Stark  
2 and Erik Ampadu in creating a partnership with  
3 how to operate, deal with operations for, for-  
4 hire vehicles and our issues with traffic.

5 So one of the things that we look in  
6 parking is what I call repurposing the parking  
7 lane so that we can create safe drop-offs and  
8 pick-ups for passengers.

9 And one of the things that we're  
10 actually launching this week on Connecticut  
11 Avenue and south of Dupont is that, this  
12 repurposing where we would remove parking during  
13 the night life hours to allow for taxis and other  
14 for-hire vehicles to utilize that parking lane so  
15 that passengers are not spilling out into the  
16 travel lane to get their vehicle and that the  
17 for-hire vehicles are not holding up traffic  
18 there.

19 We also encourage the same thing that  
20 you were mentioning use of, alternative uses of  
21 transportation. There's so much that's available  
22 now in the District of Columbia and more to come.

1                   And one of the things that we are  
2 working again closely with DFHV is that, figure  
3 out how we fit not only just new taxi stands for  
4 those that, the public for-hire vehicles but also  
5 these travel lanes, these parking lanes. So  
6 you'll see this more.

7                   We just had a successful partnership  
8 in operation with the opening of the Wharf where  
9 we shut down parking completely on that, on Maine  
10 Avenue just to make sure that we have optimal  
11 flow of traffic and set drop-offs and pick-ups.  
12 And I think that was a successful program and  
13 we're hoping to use some of those, some of the  
14 tools that we got from that.

15                  MEMBER WADE: If you can get the cars  
16 to stop parking. I saw 27 cars ignore the  
17 parking signs but they all they had cute little  
18 pink tickets.

19                  MEMBER PATTERSON: The unfortunately  
20 enforcement issue. That's always the issue.

21                  MEMBER WADE: Yes.

22                  CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: You curtail

1 behavior with those tickets. So hopefully  
2 they'll know not to do that next time.

3 MEMBER WADE: Yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: But thank you.

5 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: I mentioned that  
6 there's a Watch Commander and I want to give out  
7 the number so it's on the public record. It's  
8 202-321-5237.

9 So when anyone has any issue that the  
10 public or anybody wants to report they can call  
11 the Watch Commander's phone and he can take the  
12 appropriate action.

13 MEMBER WADE: Please make sure you  
14 protect your cab lanes.

15 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Thank you. So  
16 let's move forward. So part of our role as,  
17 actually --

18 (Simultaneous speaking)

19 Part of role as an Advisory Council,  
20 our core function is to provide recommendations.  
21 And those recommendations go from this Advisory  
22 Council to the Director for the Department of

1 For-Hire Vehicles.

2 And over the last few months we've  
3 been formulating some recommendations. We're  
4 almost at the point where we're ready to make  
5 some formal recommendations to the director and  
6 put them in writing.

7 And I thought that this would be an  
8 appropriate time to just share with you just some  
9 general ideas of where we're going with those  
10 recommendations and also offer my colleagues the  
11 opportunity to add to the list.

12 One of the main recommendations that  
13 we're working on and that we've heard over the  
14 last few months from drivers is that they do need  
15 and they do appreciate the steps that the  
16 Department is taking in terms of automation.

17 I think we all agree through a bunch  
18 of meetings that we've had that drivers are now  
19 being able to really articulate the amount of  
20 time that they're spending at this building  
21 physically during the day when they could be out  
22 there making money.

1                   And the Agency has started making  
2                   some, in my opinion, some very good moves toward  
3                   automating functions that, some of which are more  
4                   web-based, but the idea is to allow drivers to  
5                   remain in their vehicles during the day and not  
6                   have to come over here as much and look for  
7                   parking.

8                   And I noticed today was a cleaning day  
9                   and they're out their just giving out pink  
10                  invitations all day long out there. And drivers  
11                  get caught and then we hear that.

12                  So that's one of the areas of  
13                  recommendation and we're still formulating that.  
14                  But we've been discussing that for quite a while.

15                  The second is in terms of what we just  
16                  talked about, more taxi stands. And I've ridden  
17                  with the enforcement teams and I've seen it  
18                  where, for example, in front of the Smithsonian  
19                  there was one taxi stand that I think only three  
20                  cars could fit in.

21                  And, you know, the fourth taxi just  
22                  kind of comes up and waits for that one guy to go

1 and sometimes it could be an enforcement issue.  
2 Generally there isn't. But the point is that a  
3 lot of the stands need to be revisited and I'm  
4 glad we have Advisor Patterson with us and we're  
5 working on that.

6 And this is just another general area  
7 where we're looking at formulating some more  
8 recommendations around that. And a lot of this  
9 comes from what we hear when drivers are here  
10 testifying to us and letting us know what they  
11 see out there in the streets.

12 The third area is an interesting area  
13 and it's a big area and it still is around the  
14 general feeling amongst drivers that they are  
15 still over-regulated and the competitors are  
16 under-regulated. And there has been some  
17 movement in terms of, you know, leveling the  
18 playing field if you could call it that.

19 But we are working on issues or  
20 recommendations around that topic. Now what does  
21 that entail? You know, it definitely entails a  
22 lot of things that make, that recognize that it

1 is difficult being a taxi driver. That's one.

2 We know that. There's a changing  
3 environment. It's just, the business model has  
4 changed. One of the areas that I thought was a  
5 good outcome was switching to DTS.

6 A lot of people weren't happy about  
7 that move. But that move made drivers very  
8 happy, brought the costs down. I think it's 2.75  
9 now.

10 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: Yes, 2.75.

11 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: 2.75, brought it  
12 down significantly. So, you know, there is not a  
13 lot that we have on this right now. But we are  
14 formulating this and I thought it would be  
15 appropriate just to let you know these are the  
16 directions that we're going in.

17 Big issue. But nevertheless, drivers  
18 have been passionate about this and we've heard  
19 and we are discussing it. And we're always  
20 meeting with drivers representing different  
21 groups. The other area --

22 MEMBER WADE: And before you move from

1 that --

2 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Go ahead.

3 MEMBER WADE: I just wanted to also  
4 mention that the reduction in the fines have had  
5 a big impact on the drivers. I've heard  
6 appreciation for that.

7 I've heard still too many fines. But  
8 the fact that many were eliminated and those that  
9 we did have, remained were reduced dramatically  
10 by 50 percent or more. So that also impacted the  
11 driver's ability to earn revenue and to keep more  
12 in their pockets.

13 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Okay, thank you.  
14 So then there's another area and that is the area  
15 of electric vehicles. And we've heard a lot of  
16 discussion around electric vehicles.

17 The owners of a group of electric  
18 vehicles got together, met with us many times,  
19 expressed their concerns of lack of charging  
20 stations. Some even expressed their concerns  
21 that they felt as though we previously as a Taxi  
22 Cab Commission may have led them to buy a car

1 which we did not do.

2 But nevertheless that's some of the  
3 opinions they expressed. But what we're doing  
4 now is working to formulate some recommendations  
5 around that topic as well.

6 What has happened though since then  
7 and the director has talked about some charging  
8 stations that have been put up, is there is an  
9 intentional focus on charging stations in the  
10 city.

11 There's an intentional focus on  
12 looking at the charging stations that are not,  
13 how should I say this, being a good citizen  
14 because we've had some issues with charging  
15 stations that have decided for one reason or  
16 another that they do not want taxis utilizing  
17 their facility.

18 And taxi drivers who have limited  
19 charge during the day and need to charge quickly  
20 during their lunch hour so they can get back out  
21 and make money have had issues. We understood.  
22 We heard it and we're still working.

1                   But we're formulating some  
2                   recommendations around that. And there are still  
3                   a few folks that have been emailing me,  
4                   particularly with concerns around that. But the  
5                   good news is that there are some things that are  
6                   moving forward and I thought it was appropriate  
7                   to let you know that as well.

8                   And then the last one that I have and  
9                   then I'll open it up to my colleagues, is around,  
10                  actually it was around enforcement. But I think,  
11                  Dotti, you covered that pretty well.

12                  Chief Starks has done a great job in  
13                  terms of working with us and helping us  
14                  understand the challenges and the balances of  
15                  doing that. I will say this, on enforcement it  
16                  has been brought to my attention by many drivers  
17                  that they are concerned that competitors with  
18                  very tinted windows tend to remove their trade  
19                  logos when they think there is an infraction  
20                  impending and police or the inspectors don't come  
21                  after them because they just pull it out of the  
22                  window or wherever.

1                   And it's the beginning of a  
2                   conversation that I think we will continue to  
3                   have. But the purpose of this is to let drivers  
4                   know that when you come here and you testify we  
5                   hear and we are working on it.

6                   A lot of times it is just not  
7                   appropriate to respond right away on what the fix  
8                   could be because there's a lot things that are  
9                   going on behind the scenes to really understand  
10                  the problem and then come to an appropriate fix.

11                  But this is another general area of  
12                  enforcement that we're working on. And I think  
13                  that Chief Starks always is willing to, well I've  
14                  gone out with the enforcement team a couple times  
15                  just to see what this thing looks like.

16                  And I've been out on the weekend.  
17                  I've been at night and during the day. And it's  
18                  amazing what's going on out there. And there's  
19                  infractions on both sides. So I'm not saying  
20                  that one is better than the other.

21                  But we are working to understand both  
22                  sides of it and come up with some

1 recommendations. So at this time I would like to  
2 open it up to my colleagues for any other  
3 recommendations they may have been working on.

4 I know, Anthony, you were working on  
5 something a while back. I think it was around  
6 training, was it?

7 MEMBER THOMAS: We had talked about  
8 training.

9 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: You probably need  
10 to come down so we can get it on the record.  
11 Sorry about that.

12 MEMBER THOMAS: I had made a  
13 recommendation about training moving forward for  
14 some of the grant applicants that weren't  
15 approved or, you know, doing more resource  
16 training. And I know that some of that has taken  
17 place.

18 So that for the upcoming fiscal year  
19 those who were disappointed can reapply and  
20 hopefully receive funds. So I know that the  
21 resource center is now operating and all the  
22 drivers have been talked to. So, yes.

1                   MEMBER WADE: Anthony, could you  
2 explain some of the reasons why the funding was  
3 not granted for some of the applicants? Is there  
4 a category of reasons?

5                   MEMBER THOMAS: I think some of it  
6 could have been just like technicalities with the  
7 way that their applications were --

8                   MEMBER WADE: Inaccurate applications.

9                   MEMBER THOMAS: -- structured and  
10 things of that nature. So, yes, I was  
11 recommending, you know, more training and  
12 outreach, you know, in the beginning right  
13 before.

14                   And that of course is important for  
15 people to attend those sessions if there are  
16 informational sessions beyond initial application  
17 meetings. And I would also make a recommendation  
18 in terms of training and enforcement it's hard to  
19 sort of train other private for-hire vehicles.

20                   But I think from what I've heard from  
21 some of the Facebook blogs over the past few  
22 months is that some people know all about the,

1 you know, that this is the regulatory agency  
2 that's over the rideshare companies. Other  
3 drivers do not know or they don't take it  
4 seriously.

5 So I was in a ride the other day and  
6 actually an MPD officer I was told that they  
7 issued up to \$700 in fines to a driver that was  
8 not, like he had several infractions. So it's  
9 not, I realize it's not only DFHV inspectors.  
10 But MPD has been cracking down heavily for  
11 rideshare drivers over the last few months.

12 Yes, and in particular one of the  
13 safety areas that I've been seeing is in that  
14 corridor of U Street and particularly 14th and U  
15 where the Trader Joe's is. And there's been an  
16 increased enforcement with the bike lanes.

17 So it is technically illegal if you  
18 pull into a bike lane and you're sitting there.  
19 You're impeding traffic. And so, and then from a  
20 driver perspective sometimes it's just not,  
21 there's nowhere to go so calling the passenger  
22 and saying, hey, you know, we need to, you know,

1 I can pick you up on a side street versus, you  
2 know, the main street, on 14 Street.

3 And I do know that some areas it's  
4 possible to like geo-fence those non-safe pick-up  
5 locations so that everybody is safe all around.

6 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: And let me ask  
7 you, do you have some ideas on how we could  
8 improve our outreach to all for-hire drivers who  
9 would like to explore that route because last  
10 fiscal year we did a lot of webinars and tele-  
11 town halls to educate on a number of issues.

12 But it's still difficult to have  
13 meaningful penetration because of all the driver  
14 base because drivers don't register here.

15 So if you have some ideas on how we  
16 could increase our awareness about training that  
17 we will provide in general to any driver whether  
18 they are a rideshare driver, a limo driver or a  
19 taxi driver I think that would help increase the  
20 general awareness about areas where it's just a  
21 lot of work because you just can't park in the  
22 bike lane or if there is going to be any targeted

1 campaign to address issues they are at least  
2 aware this is what we're going to be on the  
3 lookout for.

4 If there is any change in the  
5 regulation we will let them know. You should  
6 have your trade sticker. When it peels off, go  
7 to the store and get another one and put it back  
8 on. The little things.

9 So we would love to hear more about  
10 how we can increase our outreach to inform them  
11 about what they need to know.

12 MEMBER THOMAS: I think that webinars,  
13 I know the one we had the DTS, the call in there  
14 was a good representation of drivers on that  
15 call. And so especially for drivers it's hard to  
16 assemble everyone in one place.

17 But, you know, maybe like a training  
18 brochure, an electronic brochure that can go out  
19 to drivers to just kind of talk in general about  
20 enforcement. And in addition to like, I think,  
21 town hall meetings are useful as well.

22 But I think to start to get the word

1 out sooner webinar, phone call type base or, you  
2 know, electronic brochure would work.

3 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: Okay, thank you.

4 MEMBER PATTERSON: And understanding  
5 the training. I understand that the digital  
6 system allows for types of messaging.

7 So if you're getting it out to the  
8 public for-hire vehicle community through the  
9 system it's something that we've worked with that  
10 the other for-hire vehicle and also with your  
11 staff. And so I'm wondering if that's also a way  
12 that you can sort of message the types of what  
13 we'll call safety messages or things like this.

14 And if that's something that can be  
15 utilized and we maybe come up with a campaign of  
16 sorts on safe drop-offs and pick-ups, you know,  
17 not blocking the bike lane, things like this.

18 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: Yes, definitely.  
19 That's one of the great features of the digital  
20 platform. Not only the ability to send like a  
21 graphic or specific content but also do photo  
22 ops.

1           So we've been able to do some text  
2           complaints. We've been able to do some voice  
3           message complaints. And we plan on utilizing the  
4           platform for increasing the awareness on safety  
5           issues explanations.

6           So perhaps we can figure our  
7           internally by some type of editorial calendar  
8           where on a bi-weekly or a monthly basis or  
9           whenever something new comes up we just point it  
10          out to all drivers. I think that would help in  
11          making them generally more aware of what is  
12          happening.

13                  MEMBER PATTERSON:   DDOT would be happy  
14          to partner with you on that.

15                  CHAIRPERSON JOLLY:   Okay, thank you.  
16          Did you have --

17                  MEMBER WADE:       Yes. I'm back to the  
18          cab stands, bike lanes and idling vehicles.  
19          There was a mention police crackdown. I do work  
20          as an ANC Commissioner.

21                  And in our commission in particular we  
22          are in the Columbia Heights area. We have a

1 severe problem with blocking 14th Street, 11th  
2 Street and U Street with not just taxis but also  
3 other for-hire vehicles.

4 And we're working with MPD in our area  
5 to actually enforce ticketing. Taxis are  
6 horrendous. There is a taxi stand on 14th  
7 Street. It's not where the taxis want it because  
8 it's not right in front of Target. It's down the  
9 street from Target.

10 They won't, many, many, many days I'm  
11 up there the taxi stand is empty but taxis are  
12 idling in front of Target. For anyone who knows  
13 14th Street now it's only one traffic lane in  
14 each direction at all times.

15 There are some left lanes at some  
16 major intersections on 14th Street. But  
17 basically it's a single lane. So when you're  
18 idling you're blocking not only a very busy bike  
19 lane but you're also blocking the traffic lanes.

20 It is just so bad up there. We had to  
21 involve MPD because we don't have enough  
22 inspectors to handle the load up there on 14th

1 Street. They would have to be up there from 7:00  
2 until 9:00 every day.

3 I mean it's just that bad. And they  
4 idle. They are not, and they also take parking  
5 spaces, the little 15, 30 minute parking spaces  
6 and are not using the taxi stand which is a  
7 little bit down the street.

8 So what would be reasonable is for  
9 them to stay in their taxi stand and then if they  
10 see people coming out with big things pull up.  
11 They don't do that. They just actually and  
12 that's not just for Target but that's on both  
13 sides of the street up and down 14th Street.

14 Keeping in mind we've got a major fire  
15 station there that is zooming up and down  
16 creating more hazard. So we're asking all of the  
17 drivers to please be aware of the city, our  
18 traffic rules, our bicyclists who we went to  
19 great expense and great training to create these  
20 lanes for them but when vehicles take those lanes  
21 what happens is the bikes have to veer out into  
22 the main traffic.

1           So the whole purpose of the safe bike  
2 lane has now been removed because other  
3 businessmen want to maximize their revenue. But  
4 we can't do it at the expense of everybody else  
5 in the city.

6           So that's a major issue and I'm going  
7 to be working with our Council and with MPD to  
8 come up with a way. We need to get that message  
9 out that it's going to be strictly enforced, that  
10 ANC Commissioners throughout the city are working  
11 with the Council on these, on this particular  
12 issue.

13           It's just that bad. And you drivers  
14 know it. You experience it. Because of the  
15 violations of idling in the lanes now police are  
16 enforcing, how did that happen. Excuse me, guys.

17           They're enforcing the drop off. So  
18 now after you pull over to drop off and you block  
19 a bike lane you're liable to get a ticket when  
20 normally that would be permissible.

21           But because of the idling it's no  
22 longer permissible. So that's something all of

1 us need to be aware of.

2 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Thank you. Okay.  
3 So let's move forward. And look, I'm one of  
4 these people I look at an agenda and I hope that  
5 everybody will go by the agenda.

6 But I intentionally skipped over the  
7 public comment period because I thought the  
8 dialogue was so good because a lot of what we,  
9 our recommendations were about were sort of in  
10 direct response to the recap for the Agency and  
11 some of the activities.

12 So, Ms. Mixon, when I gave you the  
13 agenda, you know, next time I'm going to keep it  
14 flowing better this way. So now let's move on to  
15 public comment. Ms. Mixon, you can call our  
16 witnesses, our guests.

17 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay. The first one  
18 I have is Dawit Dagneu. So you may approach the  
19 podium. Thank you for bringing your statement.

20 MR. DAGNEW: Good morning, Members of  
21 the Department For-Hire Vehicle Advisory Council.  
22 Mr. Chrappah, congratulations on your

1 achievements.

2 On August 2nd the Director and the  
3 Chairman were kind enough to hold a follow-up  
4 meeting with me myself and three other drivers  
5 that represent a group of approximately 75  
6 drivers that submitted grant application and were  
7 rejected.

8 During that meeting we were led to  
9 believe that we would be receiving additional  
10 information on upcoming grant opportunities and  
11 to date we haven't received any details. We  
12 learned valuable lessons from the last round of  
13 grant opportunities.

14 And we have corrected many of the  
15 mistakes of the past and we are prepared to  
16 compete for future grant opportunities. Today  
17 only, I'm simply asking the time line for follow-  
18 up so that I can inform colleagues about any  
19 upcoming grant opportunities that provides  
20 incentive for drivers.

21 On other note, it should be mentioned  
22 here I would also like to follow-up on the status

1 of this increasing traffic of the city. I would  
2 like to propose the Department For-Hire Vehicles  
3 increasing regulations on the vehicles with out  
4 of state tags to remain within their jurisdiction  
5 while waiting for a call.

6 In other words, a Virginia or a  
7 Maryland taxi must receive their dispatch before  
8 crossing into the District to pick up a fare.  
9 Same applies for D.C. taxis. We cannot pick up a  
10 fare outside of D.C.

11 We are requesting this policy be  
12 applied to service such as Uber and Lyft. This  
13 would alleviate the increasing amount of traffic,  
14 cut down on the cars loitering in our streets and  
15 in hot spots such as Union Station, Georgetown, U  
16 Street, 14th Street, et cetera.

17 We are additionally concerned that the  
18 Department of For-Hire Vehicle's police doesn't  
19 address enforcement of these issues as it relates  
20 to Uber and Lyft as we mentioned now. We would  
21 like to see a policy that requires a permanent  
22 trade logo that is easily identifiable for

1 enforcement officers.

2 That would assist in identifying  
3 loiterers and enhance the enforcement. I also  
4 notice that there were inconsistencies in how the  
5 Department For-Hire Vehicles treats limousines by  
6 allowing limousines with a Maryland and Virginia  
7 tags to pick up passengers with a District, in  
8 the District and pay a fee of \$30 a month and  
9 receiving a renewable sticker.

10 If the city is charging out of town  
11 black cars we believe it's only fair that  
12 services like Uber and Lyft should pay the same.  
13 While we believe that this District Department of  
14 For-Hire Vehicle is working to lower fees for  
15 taxi drivers we also believe that fair  
16 competition will also go a long way in helping  
17 taxis to continue to compete.

18 Finally, my comments today reflect the  
19 input of over 75 drivers that have come together  
20 to combine our efforts in securing a future for  
21 taxi drivers. By combining our efforts and  
22 resources we are now focused on impacting

1 policies and recommending changes that would  
2 assist taxi drivers.

3 The playing field is not level. And  
4 we know that Uber and Lyft have the lobbyists in  
5 their favor that will combine their economic  
6 resources to work on behalf of their industry.

7 We are trying to do the same for our  
8 taxi industry. While we are small in number our  
9 commitment is strong. We therefore ask you your  
10 continued partnership in working with us to level  
11 the playing field.

12 If I have more time I just want to  
13 stress on these traffic issues, as we all know, I  
14 don't know if anybody doesn't know I just want to  
15 clear this, a taxi, a Virginia taxi or a Maryland  
16 taxi or whoever out of town taxi cannot come and  
17 loiter in Washington streets.

18 They have to receive their dispatch  
19 before crossing to the District line. The same  
20 goes for taxis, our D.C. taxis. We cannot go  
21 outside D.C. and pick up a fare. So why would  
22 you allow a Virginia tag and Maryland tag and

1 Uber loiter in Washington?

2 By the Department's own admission  
3 there was 185,000 cars added to this driving.  
4 It's only a matter of a day or two if you  
5 regulate. The only fair regulation sit where you  
6 are and wait for a fare their before crossing  
7 into D.C.

8 Just let the taxis in the street in  
9 Maryland. Let's only be fair. If you have a  
10 D.C. tag you can loiter. But Virginia and  
11 Maryland is the majority. They think their  
12 business is here.

13 That's why they come all of them come  
14 and sit in Washington. They take the parking.  
15 They take the streets. Even people are coming as  
16 far as North Carolina and West Virginia.

17 Enforcement agent can help me with  
18 this. You don't know out there. Come on outside  
19 and see what it looks like. It's just a zoo out  
20 there.

21 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: So let me get some  
22 responses for you. Just stay right there.

1 MR. DAGNEW: Okay.

2 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Let's have the  
3 director go first.

4 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: I thank you for  
5 your testimony and taking the time to at least  
6 highlight not only some of the issues that you  
7 see but also recognizing the continued  
8 partnership that the Department seeks and  
9 achieves in working with different stakeholders  
10 to improve livability and workability within the  
11 city.

12 There is or there are a couple of  
13 things that I want to take this opportunity to  
14 announce publicly as it touches on some of the  
15 comments that we've heard over time and you  
16 broached it also in your testimony.

17 By tomorrow we plan on making  
18 announcement on specific grant opportunities for  
19 drivers. That was a commitment that we made in  
20 FY '17 and to develop a grant program there are  
21 steps that we have to go through.

22 So I'm proud of what the team has been

1 able to accomplish and we are positioned to make  
2 an announcement tomorrow. It could be as early  
3 as today.

4 MR. DAGNEW: Thank you.

5 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: But I want the  
6 public to know, specifically taxi drivers, that  
7 we are going to be making incentives available  
8 for drivers. Some of the details that I feel  
9 comfortable sharing at this moment is that it  
10 will be absolute \$10,000 for a driver that wins  
11 the award.

12 It is going to be competitive. We  
13 anticipate having at least 25 awards. So the  
14 details will be in the announcement. But this is  
15 our way of incentivizing good drivers to stay in  
16 the industry and also help ensure that residents  
17 have access to safe, affordable and accessible  
18 transportation options.

19 Secondly, we've been working on, on  
20 line training that would help the industry  
21 particularly taxi drivers in understanding the  
22 digital economy now. We are in a digital economy

1 where the majority of business opportunities is  
2 digital.

3           It's not the analog world. So we made  
4 a grant available to companies to develop  
5 training and that was completed at the end of FY  
6 '17. So we are gearing up to roll out the  
7 training.

8           It's not going to cost a dime to  
9 anybody. Drivers simply have to log in to the on  
10 line management system that we've had in place  
11 for I think about two years now and they will  
12 receive instruction on the changing world around  
13 them and how as a driver now you really have to  
14 be accessible to all digital economic  
15 opportunities and more importantly how you can  
16 position yourself from a customer service  
17 perspective to realize those benefits.

18           So that's something that we're going  
19 to make available to all drivers so they can  
20 learn how to succeed in the digital economy which  
21 has grown in more than double digits compared to  
22 the street level market.

1                   CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Did any of my  
2 colleagues have any questions, no? So I just had  
3 one question for you. You mentioned, I'm sorry  
4 about that, you mentioned that, you mentioned the  
5 out of state tags for black cars and the fee for  
6 black cars.

7                   Are you trying, are you proposing that  
8 all other cars such as Uber, Lyft, et cetera pay  
9 this fee as well in order to, if they have out of  
10 town tags?

11                  MR. DAGNEW: What I'm saying is  
12 consistency. This would show consistency in the  
13 Department. Black cars are constantly coming  
14 from out of town, from out of the city.

15                  They pay \$32, \$45, a dollar per day  
16 and receive a renewable sticker. If that applies  
17 for them why not the others?

18                  CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: And --

19                  MR. DAGNEW: If they had, go ahead.

20                  CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: No, you go.

21                  MR. DAGNEW: If in fact my proposal  
22 for out of the city tags to remain in their

1 jurisdiction just like the taxis is the basic for  
2 removing the gridlock from the city. I don't  
3 expect them to pay or even to be validated to  
4 receive a sticker for that.

5 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Okay. And let me  
6 ask you this because I had mentioned this earlier  
7 in terms of the trade logo at your suggestion  
8 that there's a requirement for a permanent trade  
9 logo.

10 What are you seeing out there in terms  
11 of trade logos and why you have reached this  
12 conclusion?

13 MR. DAGNEW: That is one thing needs  
14 elaboration. I work all day. I'm on the street.  
15 I see them. Each time somebody comes towards  
16 them or a police or any, if they are loitering  
17 they will pick it up and put it and act like they  
18 are simple private people.

19 And whenever they are receiving a call  
20 then they put it on the window. They cannot have  
21 it both ways. If they are commercial act  
22 commercial. Put a logo or tie it up with a tag

1 or something that shows it is for a commercial  
2 purpose.

3 If not just stay home. You cannot  
4 have it both ways. You should not have it both  
5 ways.

6 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Thank you very  
7 much, sir. Appreciate it. Ms. Nixon.

8 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay. And the next  
9 I have is Mr. James Kennedy. And, sir, I do  
10 appreciate your patience. I know you had a  
11 deadline today. We were running a little late.  
12 But we certainly appreciate you.

13 MR. KENNEDY: That's not a problem,  
14 it's not a problem. Good morning, everyone. I  
15 have submitted a more formal statement and I  
16 won't deviate from it but I won't read it as  
17 such.

18 I'm here to advocate this morning for  
19 the full funding of Transport DC cab service and  
20 the entire service that it provides throughout  
21 the month and not the partial service. I'm also  
22 here to articulate the desires of the disabled

1 and the blind community and seniors for this  
2 service to remain intact and to remain funded.

3 We believe that this program is the  
4 most accessible and significant program for us.  
5 Most of us do have MetroAccess that we can rely  
6 on as well. But we all know that it is also a  
7 shared ride.

8 And the Transport DC Program affords  
9 us the ability to do those things that we need to  
10 do on a daily basis. Right now it's only limited  
11 to going to places of employment for the disabled  
12 or to medical appointments at medical facilities.

13 There are other things that seniors  
14 and the disabled like to do and other things they  
15 have to do. I am visually impaired, legally  
16 blind and I am very involved in the activities in  
17 the nation's capital.

18 And not all of the time I can plan to  
19 take MetroAccess. Sometimes things come up that  
20 I found it convenient to call Transport DC and  
21 they can pick me up and get me where I need to go  
22 on time.

1 I'm a growing advocate both for the  
2 blind and for the disabled. And I echo the  
3 concerns of the senior and disabled community  
4 that they want Transport DC.

5 I'd like to give an example of  
6 something that happened. A couple of weeks ago  
7 our blind population was being transported to the  
8 Independent Living Centers where they received  
9 training and they were able to get to their  
10 places and locations.

11 But all of a sudden in the middle of  
12 the day the program was suspended leaving them  
13 stranded wherever they were. Among the blind  
14 community that creates a lot of stress among them  
15 because now they don't know how they're going to  
16 get back to where they're going to get.

17 And we need Transport DC here in the  
18 nation's capital and we want it. And we're  
19 asking, we've had other meetings with our D.C.  
20 Council representatives and representatives from  
21 the mayor's office and we echoed the same  
22 concerns.

1           And they are the most accessible to  
2           us. They are most available to us when we need  
3           to move. We don't all the time go to medical  
4           facilities. We don't all work.

5           Some may need to go to Walmart. Some  
6           may want to visit their grandchildren. Their  
7           well-being is at stake with all the changes and  
8           the possible elimination of Transport DC.

9           I understand, I'm growing to  
10          understand a lot the budgeting process and how  
11          the funds are divided up and also am beginning to  
12          understand the politics that can impact where  
13          that money goes and who and who is not funded.

14          But I simply stand here this morning  
15          to advocate for Transport DC. We would like to  
16          see it fully fund and that the services are  
17          reestablished for the full month and to echo the  
18          needs and the desires of the disabled and the  
19          blind to have Transport DC at our service. Thank  
20          you very much.

21                   CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Mr. Kennedy, thank  
22          you very much for your testimony and thank you

1 for adjusting your schedule to stay around and I  
2 hope you have a few more minutes for us to ask  
3 some questions.

4 MR. KENNEDY: Sure.

5 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Thank you. First  
6 I want to ask the Director for some.

7 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: Mr. Kennedy, it  
8 certainly was my pleasure to meet you this  
9 morning through Henok who I've known for quite  
10 some time and I'm equally encouraged by how you  
11 look at the challenges that we face as not only a  
12 city but also a nation in ensuring that every  
13 person has access to transportation.

14 Transportation is an enabler of social  
15 change. It enables greater economic  
16 opportunities and without transportation nothing  
17 happens. So from that standpoint I stand with  
18 you.

19 I also stand with you in the fight for  
20 assuring that people have access to  
21 transportation and it's also affordable. What I  
22 would propose is we continue this dialogue to

1 figure out how best to maximize the funding that  
2 is currently available and also figure out what  
3 other channels who will present an infusion to  
4 ensure that we can meet the needs of our  
5 residents.

6 Budgeting is complicated. There is a  
7 calendar of activities related to that. And more  
8 importantly we cannot spend money we don't have.

9 The city spends roughly about \$71  
10 million on accessible transportation options.  
11 Transport DC represents less than 5.6 percent of  
12 that. So there has to be some dialogue about how  
13 to put the residents in charge of their  
14 transportation spending.

15 There has to be some dialogue about  
16 figuring out how to make other transportation  
17 systems better. But what we've seen so far is no  
18 amount of unlimited funding is going to be  
19 sufficient for Transport DC because there are  
20 even people who have a challenge in coming up  
21 with \$5 co-pay.

22 So as the senior population continues

1 to grow, as the need for accessible  
2 transportation evolves we will maintain that  
3 dialogue to figure out how best to serve our city  
4 and our residents. So on that note I will  
5 definitely make sure a member of my staff follows  
6 up with you to connect you to that dialogue that  
7 is happening now because we have FY '19 budgeting  
8 process that is taking off very soon.

9 And this is an opportunity to address  
10 some of the issues you mentioned. But for Fiscal  
11 Year '18 we definitely want to hear more ideas  
12 about how to stretch the budget we have and until  
13 there is a Superman or Superman arrives or some  
14 additional funding arrives we owe it to our  
15 residents to make sure that the most vulnerable  
16 have access to this transportation options in the  
17 light and context of our transportation options  
18 available. Thank you.

19 MEMBER WADE: Thank you, Mr. Kennedy.  
20 I would also just like to expound on your issue  
21 about making the services available for other  
22 purposes visitation other than medical.

1           As you can see right now by the fact  
2           that the funding ran out before the year, the  
3           fiscal year ran out there's a great demand for  
4           the services for the medical transportation. If  
5           we try to expand it to cover non-medical  
6           transportation we would not have enough funding  
7           available for the people who desperately need it  
8           for medical appointments.

9           So that's something to consider. I  
10          always like to give people a different viewpoint  
11          of how we kind of make our decisions on funding.  
12          But if there is a greater need for appointments,  
13          transportation to medical appointments and  
14          limited resources it wouldn't be in the interest  
15          of anybody at this point to expand to social  
16          types of transportation, if you understand what  
17          I'm saying.

18          I know to visit your daughter is  
19          really important and it's a needed service. But  
20          I don't think that would fall under Transport DC  
21          which is primarily to assist people with  
22          disabilities and seniors for their medical

1 purposes.

2 MR. KENNEDY: Can I make one other  
3 statement?

4 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Yes.

5 MR. KENNEDY: I understand the  
6 importance of the medical visits and the  
7 employment visits. I get that. But we are  
8 beginning to feel that so often when we're  
9 looking at budget cuts that it's the seniors and  
10 the disabled that are always cut first.

11 And if we consider these programs are  
12 for all of us that are senior and disabled, most  
13 of us have paid our dues already and these  
14 services should be provided for us. So if we're  
15 on the front end of the budget then we won't have  
16 to be on the back end of whatever is leftover and  
17 then shortfall.

18 MEMBER WADE: I don't believe it was  
19 a cut in the budget. I think what it was, was a  
20 greater demand than the budget could cover. It  
21 wasn't as if we cut the budget. I think the  
22 demand was greater than the resources.

1 MR. KENNEDY: All right.

2 MEMBER WADE: Which created the  
3 shortfall at the end of the fiscal year which  
4 sometimes happens. Sometimes agencies run short  
5 of money.

6 Sometimes agencies have a surplus of  
7 money which they, there's a flurry to spend the  
8 money because nobody ever wants to turn money  
9 back in. So I just wanted to make clear that  
10 it's not that we're cutting funds.

11 The demand is greater than the  
12 funding. So what we're going to do is request  
13 more funding to stretch further. But I don't  
14 think at this point it would be a good time to  
15 expand the program to non-medical when we're  
16 shortfaling on the medical side.

17 MR. KENNEDY: And it's the increase of  
18 budget that I'm getting at so that those things  
19 can be considered in the future.

20 MEMBER WADE: Right, thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Any other  
22 comments? Mr. Kennedy, I would just say that I

1 would love to sit down with you one of these days  
2 and sort of map out, as the director said, there  
3 are probably some other organizations and  
4 entities that could partner with this program to  
5 maybe look at where there are some opportunities  
6 for partnership and what have you.

7 But also in doing that maybe use that  
8 to make a better business case for maybe  
9 increased budget in some areas. But I do  
10 recognize what Advisor Wade said, the criticality  
11 of jobs and medical.

12 But maybe looking at maybe a few other  
13 categories outside of that but recognize that the  
14 money might not be able to cover everything  
15 because the program was very popular when we got  
16 here a couple years ago as Commissioners before  
17 we went over to Department of Vehicles For-Hire.

18 MR. KENNEDY: And I think that's an  
19 important statement that creative ways of funding  
20 Transport DC needs to be looked into in our  
21 dialogue as well.

22 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: Mr. Kennedy, can

1 I ask you one thing? So that I have some  
2 understanding about your written performance as  
3 well. Knowing what you know now, and that is  
4 even with the medical segments the growth in  
5 ridership was overwhelming.

6 We've seen a 45 percent growth in the  
7 program just this past year. And this past year  
8 the funding level was about three times more than  
9 when the program started.

10 So funding has grown. Ridership has  
11 grown way faster. What is your thought about  
12 because coming, I'm trying to hear your idea  
13 about sort of like making the program level for  
14 income for our use, would you advocate for a  
15 number of trips for everybody and not necessarily  
16 make it for medical or appointments only?

17 MR. KENNEDY: Recognizing the  
18 importance of the medical trips, on the needs  
19 basis assessment might begin to look at that area  
20 and begin to make some determinations of how we  
21 can budget for those areas.

22 Myself I go to a lot of meetings.

1 Just Saturday if I were to pay for a cab  
2 transportation to the meeting and back home it  
3 would cost me \$45. I'm on disability.

4 And that's totally, you know, out of  
5 my budget area. So I had to find other ways to  
6 get to those meetings around advocating and  
7 working within the city among the disabled and  
8 the blind.

9 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: So if every member  
10 had a set number of trips is that something that  
11 you would support? I'm just trying to take ideas  
12 we hear and streamline them a little bit.

13 MR. KENNEDY: That could be a possible  
14 area of discussion, yes.

15 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: Okay, all right.  
16 Thank you very much. We will continue to engage  
17 with you and the others to figure out how to deal  
18 with the challenges that we have as a city in  
19 general.

20 So thank you very much also for your  
21 flexibility.

22 MR. KENNEDY: And I thank this body

1 for your time.

2 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: You're welcome.

3 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Thank you, Mr.

4 Kennedy. Ms. Nixon.

5 SECRETARY MIXON: Those are all of the  
6 registered speakers. I don't know if you have  
7 time for the unregistered speakers.

8 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: We have about five  
9 minutes.

10 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay. Are there any  
11 unregistered speakers who would like say  
12 something briefly? Any unregistered? I see one  
13 hand. Any other hands?

14 All right, sir, you may approach the  
15 podium. Before you start if you would say and  
16 spell your name for the court reporter please.

17 MR. MULLICK: My name is Nuruzzaman  
18 Mullick. N-U-R-U-Z-Z-A-M-A-N, last name, M-U-L-  
19 L-I-C-K. I am President of Democracy Cab  
20 Company.

21 First, thank you for letting me speak  
22 for this brief moment. I just do have a few

1 concerns that I think I should address. It's not  
2 constant as much as a proposal.

3 As we know that DFHV requires each  
4 driver to acquire a certificate to operate  
5 wheelchair accessible vehicles, what I think  
6 would be better if, that certification make  
7 mandatory for each driver that will maximize the  
8 use of wheelchair accessible vehicles.

9 As my fleet I have 14 wheelchair  
10 accessible vehicles and of them only five are  
11 being operated and nine are still in the shop  
12 sitting down for almost three months. Not many  
13 wheelchair accessible vehicles drivers.

14 And that also, I think diminishes the  
15 calls that we receive for the wheelchair  
16 accessible vehicles. There are not many enough  
17 wheelchair accessible vehicles on the road to  
18 take those calls.

19 This will also benefit the drivers in  
20 a manner taking the opportunity for the grant  
21 that DFHV offers. Lots of drivers know about  
22 this because we don't have much drivers, many

1 drivers operating the wheelchair accessible  
2 vehicles.

3 This will also maximize our driver's  
4 earning potentials in that manner as well as  
5 helping other, our people with disabilities and  
6 senior citizens throughout the city. And also I  
7 believe if driver has to park from a certain  
8 period of time throughout the year as a mandatory  
9 to drive a wheelchair accessible vehicles.

10 Suppose like a proposal like 120 hours  
11 a whole year the driver has to drive, fulfill the  
12 requirements of driving a wheelchair accessible  
13 vehicles that way all of our drivers will know  
14 how to deal with wheelchair accessible vehicles  
15 as will their customers, those riding customers.  
16 I think that's all I have to say.

17 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: So you've got 14  
18 vehicles, five are being operated now in the shop  
19 and you allowed your drivers of the vehicles just  
20 don't want to operate the wheelchair accessible  
21 vehicles. Okay, let's look to Director Chrappah.

22 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: So can you recap

1 the essence of the proposal given that you have  
2 less than half of your wheelchair accessible  
3 vehicles on the road? Is it for all drivers to,  
4 are you advocating or suggesting all drivers  
5 should be trained on wheelchair accessible  
6 vehicle operation or they should be required to  
7 recertify every year? Tell me a little bit.

8 MR. MULLICK: This is two part. One  
9 part is to have each driver get a certification.  
10 So that would be there for them for the rest of  
11 the period of time how long they were driving,  
12 doing that for them.

13 Now renewing certification each year  
14 that's DFHV's discretion if they have to do it.  
15 If the mandatory or regulation changes I believe  
16 that is the proper way to do it because the  
17 regulation changes regarding the people with  
18 disabilities and everything, the Act and  
19 everything.

20 And the second part is for the driver  
21 to, must drive the wheelchair accessible vehicles  
22 that way they will have experience of getting

1 customers and also help the industry because  
2 those cars, not just my cars as I know that all  
3 of companies have their certain amount of cars  
4 wheelchair accessible vehicles sitting in the  
5 shop not being driven by drivers.

6 still it helps the industry as the  
7 manner of helping the drivers and helping the  
8 companies keep on running those vehicles.

9 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: Okay. Is there  
10 something that you think the Department can do or  
11 the For-Hire Advisory Council can do in ensuring  
12 that drivers who get into a wheelchair accessible  
13 vehicle have fair opportunities?

14 Is there something about dispatch that  
15 needs to be done? I've heard different ideas.  
16 But what is your take on how dispatch can be an  
17 opportunity or a barrier in getting people,  
18 drivers to, you know, be on the road with those  
19 vehicles?

20 MR. MULLICK: As far as I know  
21 wheelchair accessible vehicle drivers who are  
22 driving right now has an obligation to complete a

1 certain amount of training in a month period. So  
2 having every driver having the certificate would  
3 automatically have it mandatory to have a certain  
4 amount of trips in wheelchair vehicles.

5 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: Okay.

6 MR. MULLICK: And since we get a lot  
7 of calls on wheelchair vehicles have been not,  
8 what I believe is fairly distributed because we  
9 only have two dispatching companies. And also  
10 as, since you brought this up I believe it would  
11 be better if those trip records are made public.

12 Not the trip record but the calls they  
13 receive, the dispatching companies because now a  
14 company knows how many trips, how many calls that  
15 they are receiving, how many are being dispatched  
16 and how they are being dispatched.

17 I have lots of drivers complaining  
18 they are paying \$75 a week and still not getting  
19 a call from, for the wheelchairs. They're not  
20 getting enough calls maybe once a week or twice a  
21 week they will receive a call.

22 I believe that our community has more

1 demand than what are being projected by those  
2 dispatching companies.

3 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Okay, thank you.  
4 Any other questions?

5 MEMBER WADE: Yes. I was just  
6 wondering if you think that the lack of demand  
7 for your vehicles, wheelchair accessible vehicles  
8 has anything to do with the success of the  
9 Transport DC because of the difference in the  
10 price?

11 MR. MULLICK: Yes, I believe so. I  
12 believe so. There is because of lack of drivers.  
13 I actually, as I said, have no data to see if,  
14 how the Transport DC is dealing with the  
15 wheelchair demand.

16 So as per driver perspective most of  
17 the drivers doesn't want to. I spoke to a lot of  
18 drivers regarding driving wheelchair accessible  
19 vehicles.

20 I have lowered their rent way down to  
21 \$150 per week but still they don't want to drive  
22 the wheelchair vehicles because they believe they

1 are being mistreated because the distance or the  
2 time doesn't match up where they are or they are  
3 not being fairly dispatched.

4 That's what they, whoever drove those  
5 vehicles, wheelchair vehicles don't want to drive  
6 a second time. So I believe if this becomes  
7 mandatory and driver will have more opportunities  
8 and also I'm trying to educate my drivers about  
9 the grant process and everything.

10 Most of the driver doesn't know about  
11 the grant process of this grant opportunities of  
12 this wheelchair accessible vehicles. So they  
13 think that if they drive this car they will make  
14 less money than the people who are driving  
15 regular cars.

16 MEMBER WADE: Is that true?

17 MR. MULLICK: In some cases it might  
18 be true. Like I said I don't know their  
19 earnings. I don't know how the data.

20 But they have a lot of complaint about  
21 paying for the dispatch \$45 or \$75 but they're  
22 not getting their dispatch for the money they're

1 paying for.

2 MEMBER WADE: Thank you.

3 MR. MULLICK: Thank you for the  
4 opportunity.

5 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Thank you. And  
6 let's get your contract information after this  
7 meeting.

8 MR. MULLICK: Sure.

9 CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Ms. Nixon, is  
10 there anybody else?

11 SECRETARY MIXON: One, sir. We're  
12 going to be real fast, real fast. But definitely  
13 state and spell your name then you may start.

14 MR. MENASE: Good morning. My name is  
15 Henok Menase. It's spelled H-E-N-O-K, last name  
16 M-E-N-A-S-E. This is just to actually, I came  
17 representing a rideshare rental company.

18 But one of the issues that the taxi  
19 cabs were speaking about kind of hit home because  
20 I used to run a non-emergency medical  
21 transportation company. I think, I want to ask  
22 do any of your residents use Medicaid for their

1 transportation?

2 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: Yes. Most of our  
3 D.C. residents are on the Medicaid program which  
4 is managed by medical healthcare financed. There  
5 is a Medicaid reimbursement process. We're  
6 generally familiar with those programs.

7 MR. MENASE: Is there any possible way  
8 to create a pathway for cab companies to turn  
9 into or have an arm of non-emergency  
10 transportation which will enable them to get  
11 wheelchair trips that Medicaid does provide for  
12 all of their members.

13 They have trips to go to doctor's  
14 appointments, any kind of rehab, therapy,  
15 dialysis. This would provide a way for cab  
16 companies like yourself that have a steady stream  
17 of revenue to come in from dialysis appointments  
18 because these are three appointments a week.

19 That way you could sure up the kind of  
20 business that you feel that you're not  
21 generating. So is there any way that the DFHV  
22 could create a path with the Department of Health

1 and Human Services to maybe have these  
2 individuals create or get the calls to take them  
3 to different appointments and that would create,  
4 and that would also alleviate some of your issues  
5 that you might have with the budget and how so  
6 many people are using transportation to go to  
7 medical appointments.

8 If they see that it's already provided  
9 for them on one end it would sure up or would  
10 alleviate some of the pressure from the other  
11 side in my opinion.

12 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: Yes. We not only  
13 looked into that we actually implemented a  
14 program for that last year. Last fiscal year we  
15 started the program, the pilot program on non-  
16 emergency medical transportation that we  
17 partnered with the Department of Healthcare  
18 Finance.

19 So we are intimately familiar with not  
20 only that market but also how services could be  
21 provided and how it would expand economic  
22 opportunities for drivers. What it really boils

1 down to it's for companies to step up and take  
2 advantage of those economic opportunities.

3 It also boils down to drivers taking  
4 the basic training on disability sensitivity and  
5 also having their mind shift that instead of me  
6 driving around eight, ten hours looking for  
7 customers now I have to pay attention to what  
8 this tells me. This is where I am and where I  
9 need to go pick up the customer.

10 That is why we are really excited  
11 about the digital economy training for drivers  
12 because if someone needs to go to a medical  
13 appointment and is going to come through the  
14 Medicaid channel they are not going to be out on  
15 the streets waving their hand come pick me up.  
16 That is gone, you know.

17 MR. MENASE: Right.

18 DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: So the investments  
19 that we've made in the past in bringing new type  
20 of business to the industry, the investments that  
21 we'll continually make in helping people readjust  
22 their thinking we think will position those who

1 want to make money to be successful.

2           There are some who don't want to make  
3 money. All right, and that's okay. But the  
4 opportunities will be there for people to compete  
5 for it.

6           MR. MENASE: Great. Thank you so  
7 much.

8           DIRECTOR CHRAPPAH: You're welcome.

9           CHAIRPERSON JOLLY: Thank you, Mr.  
10 Menase. So there were no other questions? So  
11 just in final summary I want thank each of you  
12 all for coming out and taking your time to be  
13 with us today.

14           I think you will see that what we're  
15 moving toward is more of a dialogue here. And we  
16 appreciate the people who come and testify  
17 because they take time out of their schedule.

18           And in exchange we give them a  
19 dialogue. And I just want to give some kudos to  
20 the director because he's always willing to  
21 dialogue with people who have either concerns,  
22 complaints or suggestions or ideas.

1                   And I think that's a good thing when  
2                   you have to come all the way over here for a  
3                   couple hours for our scheduled meetings. So at  
4                   this time it's 11:38 and this meeting is  
5                   adjourned. Thank you.

6                   (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
7                   went off the record at 11:41 a.m.)

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