

## GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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## OFFICE OF THE D.C. TAXICAB COMMISSION

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## FULL COMMISSION MEETING

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WEDNESDAY,  
JANUARY 13, 2016

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The Commission met in the 2nd Floor  
Hearing Room at 2235 Shannon Place, S.E.,  
Washington, DC, at 10:00 a.m., Ernest Chrappah,  
Chairman, presiding.

## COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

ERNEST CHRAPPAH, Chairman  
LINWOOD C. JOLLY, Commissioner  
ANTHONY MUHAMMAD, Commissioner  
BETTY SMALLS, Commissioner  
STANLEY W. TAPSCOTT, Commissioner  
DOTTI L. WADE, Commissioner

## STAFF PRESENT:

JUANITA MIXON, Secretary to the Commission  
MONIQUE BOCK, ESQ., Assistant General Counsel

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

10:15 a.m.

CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Good morning.

Welcome to the General Commission meeting. It's 10:15, and we are located at 2235 Shannon Place S.E., Hearing Room Suite 2032.

Today is Wednesday, January 13, 2015.

We would like to start off by observing a moment of silence.

(Moment of silence.)

CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Madame Secretary, could you determine the quorum.

SECRETARY MIXON: Yes. Commissioner Ferguson. Commissioner Jolly

COMMISSIONER JOLLY: Here.

SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner Muhammad.

COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD: Here.

SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner Smalls.

COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Here.

SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner Tapscott.

1 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Here.

2 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner Wade.

3 COMMISSIONER WADE: Here.

4 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner  
5 Chrappah.

6 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Present.

7 SECRETARY MIXON: Chairman, we do have  
8 a quorum.

9 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you. We're  
10 going to go move to the second part of the agenda  
11 today which is our own Commission Communications  
12 remarks.

13 I would like to start by formally  
14 wishing you all a happy new year and also welcome  
15 you again to the General Commission meeting.

16 I love the new year because it offers  
17 an opportunity to incorporate lessons learned  
18 from prior years and the opportunity to make  
19 resolutions in pursuit of goals and dreams.

20 In 2016 we made great progress in  
21 reducing the burden of regulations, strengthening  
22 the industry, re-establishing public trust in the

1 adjudication process, providing cash incentives  
2 to drivers and companies, and setting the  
3 industry up for success.

4           However, for this year I want us to  
5 build a nexus to strengthen the industry in light  
6 of attempts by dominant market participants and  
7 companies backed by hedge funds and investors.

8           The public vehicle for hire segment  
9 remains at an unfair disadvantage in spite of all  
10 the achievements we collectively made in 2015  
11 which include newer vehicles, cashless payments,  
12 serving customers with disabilities, increasing  
13 the diversity of the commissioners, getting  
14 thought leaders to join our group, and getting  
15 constant and valuable feedback from drivers and  
16 companies.

17           Private vehicles for hire continue to  
18 have an unfair edge quite frankly which needs to  
19 be balanced because of the current state of  
20 legislation, regulations, and public vehicle-for-  
21 hire industry infighting.

22           So as we look ahead to the next

1 several months that we have, I would like to  
2 encourage you all to pay very close attention to  
3 the substance and the ideas behind the  
4 regulations that we propose, legislation that may  
5 and will be introduced and to focus on how as  
6 businessmen you can make an equitable return on  
7 your investments.

8           The time to continue fighting is over.  
9 The forces that the public vehicle-for-hire  
10 industry is battling against is real, and drivers  
11 and companies feel the impact at their bottom  
12 line. You know that. I know that.

13           This is the time to unite. This is  
14 the time to set aside petty differences quite  
15 frankly and focus on the substance behind the  
16 regulations that would ensure that customers have  
17 choice and people can make a decent living.

18           On that note, I would like to welcome  
19 you again and ask you to pay close attention  
20 because while we have no action item today, we  
21 will be listening to your thoughts, but the  
22 feedback you provide on the various proposals

1 that will be forthcoming will forever shape the  
2 future of the industry.

3 Thank you.

4 There are a few Government  
5 Communication and Staff Reports that I would also  
6 like to share. The first is a Small Business  
7 Legal Advice Clinic. The Executive Office of the  
8 Mayor and the D.C. Bar's Pro Bono Center will co-  
9 sponsor a legal clinic offering aspiring and  
10 existing small business owners free brief advice  
11 about legal issues facing their business.

12 Attendees will meet one on one with  
13 attorneys. The clinic will be held today from  
14 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. in Room G9 of the Wilson  
15 Building. The address is 1350 Pennsylvania  
16 Avenue, N.W. For more information visit  
17 [dcbarsbcwilsonbldgjan2016@eventbrite.com](mailto:dcbarsbcwilsonbldgjan2016@eventbrite.com). It's a  
18 very long URL, but the information is available  
19 on our website, so the key nugget here is that  
20 you can take advantage of free legal/business  
21 advice, and I encourage you to not only spread  
22 the word but to take advantage of this limited

1 opportunity.

2           There is also a report that we will be  
3 sharing about the status of opinion appeal  
4 between Gebremarium versus DCTC. Assistant  
5 General Counsel, do you want to give an update on  
6 that?

7           ASSISTANT GENERAL COUNSEL BOCOCK:

8 Thank you, Chairman. Also there is actually two  
9 pending appeals. Yes, so if I can combine -  
10 there is actually two pending appeals that are  
11 currently before the Commission, and these are  
12 appeals from decisions made by the Office of  
13 Taxicabs.

14           One of them is Gebremarium versus  
15 DCTC. The other is DCTC vs. Teferra. These  
16 matters will be decided by the Commission in its  
17 judicial capacity at its meeting held on February  
18 10, 2016, so that will be next month's meeting.

19           CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Okay. Thank you.  
20 Before we open up for public comment, I would  
21 like to ask my fellow Commissioners if there are  
22 a few words you would like to share.

1                   COMMISSIONER WADE: I would just like  
2 to -- good morning. I would like to wish all of  
3 you a very happy new year and tell you how  
4 excited we are at the opportunities we have  
5 before us this year to really make great  
6 improvements with the Taxicab Commission.

7                   Your Commissioners up here are very  
8 committed to making sure that the transitions  
9 that we all are having to make because of the  
10 vehicles-for-hire impact on the industry, so  
11 we're doing all we can to help with this  
12 transition, and we do need your support. We need  
13 your input and feel free to talk with any of us  
14 if you have any issues. Thank you.

15                   CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Madame Secretary,  
16 could you take us to the public comment period  
17 starting with any registered speakers.

18                   SECRETARY MIXON: There are no  
19 registered speakers.

20                   CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: And what about  
21 non-registered speakers?

22                   SECRETARY MIXON: Okay. Chairman is

1 opening up the floor for a limited time for non-  
2 registered speakers. You will have two minutes  
3 to speak before us.

4 Are there any persons here who would  
5 like to speak. I do see your hand. Is there  
6 anybody else? Okay, Number Two, is there anybody  
7 else who would like to speak before the  
8 Commission today?

9 Okay. Number Three in the black hat.  
10 Okay. Anybody else? Okay. What I will ask you  
11 to do is when you come to the front, sign in, so  
12 print your name please and sign in. Then, before  
13 you begin speaking, say your name and spell it.  
14 Okay. I have you as Number Four, sir, to speak,  
15 and say your name and then I will start your two  
16 minutes. Okay, sir.

17 MR. ARIAVAND: Cyrus Ariavand. Mr.  
18 Chairman -

19 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay. I'm sorry,  
20 sir. If you would speak a little more to the mic  
21 and then if you would spell your name now for the  
22 court reporter. Thank you.

1 MR. ARIAVAND: C-Y-R-U-S, first name;  
2 Ariavane, A-R-I-A-V-A-N-D, last name.

3 Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, I thought  
4 about this very, very much. We, as you say,  
5 we're not involved with Uber, but the truth is  
6 when they bring like half - make price in half, a  
7 friend of me send me a text as San Francisco is  
8 going bankruptcy, they're filed for bankruptcy.  
9 They filed for bankruptcy.

10 So the reality is what's going to  
11 happen. We're going to really go out of business  
12 this - the monopoly for generally Uber. Uber -  
13 they're not making money. I talked to them.  
14 Coming from Harpers Ferry, West Virginia,  
15 Frederick and all that, so the only thing - I'm  
16 going to do my share.

17 We've got to start with Congress and  
18 Senate. These people taking totally monopoly in  
19 the whole United States. Most Europeans throw  
20 them out, so we got to do Uber, we've got to  
21 alarm Congress and Senate if we have to one for  
22 one for every Senator and Congressman give them

1 written what's happening to Uber, what Uber is  
2 planning to do. I'm going to make about 600, 700  
3 of them someone very good English I know write  
4 them that's what going on.

5 We have to start with Senate and  
6 Congress. We cannot fight the City Council  
7 ourself. They really want to get rid of that  
8 part. They want to leave us like this, and just  
9 do whatever - just Uber take over the whole city,  
10 and when they take over the whole city, it would  
11 be like, you know, during Rockfield around  
12 Carnegie and the total had monopoly. Is somebody  
13 going to come and break them to pieces, but it  
14 will happen. I have no doubt because Uber is a  
15 sham. In another 20 years is gone, but by then  
16 it's too late for us.

17 So what I'm thinking, I cannot do it  
18 alone - I do my share. If I have to walk in the  
19 Hall of Congress, I will do it. We have to start  
20 with the Senate and the Congress, all those  
21 people telling them what's going on. These  
22 people are doing - taking over the whole taxi

1 industry.

2 That's my opinion. I don't know how  
3 far you think you got to - you have influence  
4 there, how far you can go and talk to those  
5 people.

6 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: All right. Thank  
7 you.

8 MR. ARIAVAND: Thank you, sir.

9 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay. Second  
10 speaker please. Again, after you sign in, if you  
11 could say and spell your name for the court  
12 reporter.

13 MR. SETEGN: My name is Degfae, D-E-G-  
14 F-A-E S-E-T-E-G-N. Good morning, Mr. Chairman,  
15 and good morning, Commissioners.

16 My concern is regarding the Uber  
17 tapping into our future access of the vehicles  
18 which is of all partners a company which is going  
19 to destroy the taxicab industry without investing  
20 a single penny where in our case we invested  
21 close to 300,000 or more without getting any  
22 benefits by going backside registering our

1 drivers, not agreeing with the company, utilizing  
2 our right wheelchair accessible.

3 The fundamental reason why D.C. wanted  
4 to hire wheelchair accessible is to reach to the  
5 disabled community to give the service, and D.C.  
6 Transport Service is giving the best service and  
7 with the less amount of time.

8 What is the rationale for the Uber  
9 companies to tap to our wheelchair accessible  
10 services which is not fair because without  
11 investing anything or let's just share the  
12 benefits, all the revenue.

13 If they have never invested a single  
14 penny to purchase those vehicles but making money  
15 through that, let's make an agreement between the  
16 company and them and get some - at least share  
17 and is it fair for the D.C. Council to put in  
18 language where Uber can negotiate or sign an  
19 agreement whereby our cars owned and have a title  
20 and serve the public which is not fair.

21 Also, when we started to Transport DC  
22 it was for the companies to provide this service

1 simultaneously generate some revenue, but if Uber  
2 is tapping to our vehicles but not getting the  
3 revenue for the companies, we are losing, you  
4 know, the credit card, all those services, and  
5 for that reason, you know, it's not fair and we  
6 have to rethink, and it's really frustrating.

7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you.

9 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay. Number 3  
10 please in the black hat.

11 MR. COLES: Okay.

12 SECRETARY MIXON: Say and spell your  
13 name please.

14 MR. COLES: Okay. My name is Charles  
15 Coles, C-H-A-R-L-E-S, last name is Coles, C-O-L-  
16 E-S.

17 SECRETARY MIXON: Thank you.

18 MR. COLES: Good morning to the  
19 Commission and the Commissioner. I'm basically  
20 here at this meeting, I mean, I had gotten texts  
21 of this meeting many times, never knew what it  
22 entailed, but I really don't have a lot of

1 questions.

2 I noticed for the last year or so  
3 we've been doing this thing called a panel event  
4 of the industry, and it hinted that people that  
5 had had tags before would be able to get them  
6 with some conditions, and as of lately, I have  
7 not seen anything online about that, so - and  
8 when you ask people about it, nobody seems to  
9 know.

10 Basically I just wanted to find out,  
11 you know, whether the Commission had concluded  
12 that study and was there any things that were  
13 going to be done about that. That's basically  
14 what I needed to know - to find out so I'm here  
15 this morning.

16 I mean I've been driving a taxi for a  
17 very long time. I think I first started driving  
18 a taxi when Jimmy Carter was President, and I  
19 kind of figure, well, I've been driving a taxi  
20 that long, now I would like to own one again.  
21 I've owned them before, so that's basically what  
22 I came in front of the Commission for this

1 morning.

2 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Typically we don't  
3 take questions and answer them through this  
4 forum, but today we have no action items, and the  
5 issue about H-Tags is evasive, and it's one of  
6 the things that we committed to resolving. It's  
7 going through the process of the panel and all  
8 that, so I have the time to give you some  
9 information which is publicly available.

10 The Commission adopted rules that says  
11 conditions for issuing vehicle licenses, and that  
12 what people call H-Tags.

13 MR. COLES: Yes, sir.

14 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: And we've taken  
15 the public policy position that we're going to  
16 have an open system based on data, so if you are  
17 asking when you can you get your vehicle license  
18 or H-Tag, I'll say it will happen sometime this  
19 year because there's a process of getting rules  
20 that the Commission has adopted posted in the  
21 Register for people to comment on, and then it is  
22 reviewed by our legal team and then the

1 Commission will vote again for it to become final  
2 regulation, and then it is published again.

3 That's the Directive within  
4 Government, you know. I wish we could just move  
5 straight, but that also has some risks, so it's  
6 going to happen.

7 MR. COLES: Okay.

8 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: It's a matter of  
9 time.

10 MR. COLES: Okay.

11 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: The fact that the  
12 Commission has done its part in adopting the  
13 regulation, that tells people this is how you can  
14 get an H-Tag by having a certain type of vehicle,  
15 fuel efficient vehicle, all those things. We  
16 have effectively created a pathway.

17 MR. COLES: Okay.

18 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: That is a  
19 commitment that is not going to change.

20 MR. COLES: Okay.

21 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: So as we go  
22 through the process of making these rules

1 transparent to everybody, it will come to a  
2 finality in maybe a couple of months, but it's a  
3 done deal. People will get H-Tags, so the  
4 interest you have will be addressed, and I  
5 encourage you to just monitor our website so  
6 whenever it is final, you know and can put in the  
7 application.

8 MR. COLES: Well thank you, sir.

9 That's very good information because it's kind of  
10 hard sometimes to get the information. Thank  
11 you.

12 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: You're welcome.

13 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay, Number 4.

14 Thank you, on the edge, sir. Yes. Thank you.

15 MR. BAHIRU: Thank you, Commissioners.

16 My name is Teshome Bahiru, T-E-S-H-O-M-E -

17 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay, I need you to  
18 speak into the mic.

19 MR. BAHIRU: Okay.

20 SECRETARY MIXON: Yes, okay. So start  
21 over please.

22 MR. BAHIRU: Okay. My name is Teshome

1 Bahiru, T-E-S-H-O-M-E, last name B-A-H-I-R-U.

2 SECRETARY MIXON: Thank you.

3 MR. BAHIRU: Okay. Maybe my question  
4 is different.

5 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Can you speak a  
6 little louder please.

7 MR. BAHIRU: Okay.

8 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Thank you.

9 MR. BAHIRU: Is this okay now?

10 SECRETARY MIXON: Yes.

11 MR. BAHIRU: I have an issue for about  
12 a renewal, a renewal problem. This happened to  
13 me last week. We bring here everything - paper  
14 for renewal. They said leasing of his additional  
15 attachment for letter to live in D.C., and they  
16 kept them back in the leasing office. They're  
17 refusing for writing or we gave you already the  
18 leasing paper.

19 We don't give you additional for to  
20 live here. We can give you like just a receipt -  
21 for months they received to paying for that.  
22 They're refusing here for like we don't give

1 opportunity for renewal for everything because we  
2 have to bring the letter from leasing office  
3 additional.

4 I give them my ID, registration,  
5 everything, and also the receipt for monthly  
6 payment receipt, and local even the same  
7 apartment, everything, apartment. Nothing  
8 changed.

9 They said attachment additional  
10 letter. We argue here. Argue in the leasing  
11 office. I spend here more than two, three hours.  
12 I don't know what to do next.

13 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: If I'm  
14 understanding correctly, you are saying the  
15 client services division of the agency is asking  
16 to bring a letter from your leasing office so you  
17 can complete your renewal.

18 MR. BAHIRU: Right.

19 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Okay. If that is  
20 the determination, I'd like to assure you that  
21 there's a process to go to get an issue resolved,  
22 and we happen to have two of our representatives

1 here. You have Thedford Collins. You have  
2 Charles Lindsay. See them after this session and  
3 your issue will be dealt with.

4 MR. BAHIRU: Thank you.

5 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay, Chairman, I  
6 see two more hands. Do we have time for two  
7 more?

8 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Two minutes each.

9 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay. Sir, with  
10 your hand, and then the last one will be Mr.  
11 Chubbs.

12 MR. WOLDEGEBRIEL: My name is Amanuel  
13 Woldegebriel, A-M-A-N-U-E-L W-O-L-D-E-G-E-B-R-I-  
14 E-L.

15 SECRETARY MIXON: And, I'm sorry, sir,  
16 just before you start if you would also write it  
17 and sign in and then I'll start your time.

18 MR. WOLDEGEBRIEL: Okay. Well, I have  
19 just one question which is for the One app.  
20 Officially it not starting yet. It was meant to  
21 compute with Uber I hope, and we were able to  
22 have that app and starting with the new year, but

1 officially it's not starting yet, so when is it  
2 going to be start officially and how is that  
3 going to be? Is that going to be in cash and  
4 credit card in all or just in cash only? I heard  
5 from some people that they start but not  
6 officially yet. They start with cash only, so  
7 how do you guys working on it? How is that, any  
8 update? That's all the questions that I have.

9 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Okay. The app  
10 provides an opportunity to pay at least speaking  
11 for the customers' standpoint to pay by cash or  
12 credit card or any contemporary digital payment  
13 method over time.

14 As far as has the app started. The  
15 answer is yes. People are using the app in terms  
16 of passengers and drivers. What hasn't happened  
17 and it's actually a smart thing and what the  
18 industry has told me at least the DC  
19 Transportation Group is making a lot of noise  
20 about, yes, we have this app. It solves all the  
21 problems with the industry.

22 Quite frankly, that is not going to

1       happen. The app is going to enable customers to  
2       connect with drivers the way that they can  
3       connect with all the other apps that are out  
4       there, so it's important to make that  
5       distinction.

6               The app alone is not going to save the  
7       industry, but it is necessary for the industry to  
8       be competitive.

9               I assume you've not downloaded it. Is  
10      that right?

11              MR. WOLDEGEBRIEL: I have.

12              CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: You have it?

13              MR. WOLDEGEBRIEL: Yes.

14              CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Okay, so when you  
15      log in you would see that there is nothing like a  
16      beta label associated with it. One of the things  
17      that I have noticed is that people log in and  
18      they don't pay attention or they have their phone  
19      in their pocket. It's not somewhere, so when  
20      customers request a ride, drivers are not even  
21      aware of it, you know.

22              So, again, that's a structure we have

1 in place where the DC Transportation Group, the  
2 industry leaders, are spearheading the effort to  
3 roll out the app.

4 I would encourage you to discuss these  
5 concerns with them. There's a phone number that  
6 will be published for others to get in touch with  
7 them, but you can always go to the email process  
8 where I believe it's feedback or support at  
9 dctaxi.com, and you can always go to dctaxi.com  
10 to get information on who else you need to speak  
11 to, but it's going to very crucial for people to  
12 understand the newer environment about how apps  
13 work. Apps, within the - like the PSB equipment  
14 you have in your car or the dispatch equipment,  
15 it's a different way of behaving, so training  
16 will be provided.

17 The Commission stands strong behind  
18 any innovative efforts, whether it's coming from  
19 the private vehicles for hire or the public  
20 vehicle for hire segment, and I encourage that in  
21 due course there will be a big launch, but it is  
22 important for people to establish trust and

1 traction between passengers and drivers before  
2 making a lot of marketing noise.

3 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay, and my last -  
4 I'm sorry. The last speaker, Mr. Chubbs, please.

5 MR. CHUBBS: Good morning, everyone.  
6 I want to speak - can you hear me?

7 SECRETARY MIXON: Yes, but say and  
8 spell your name please.

9 MR. CHUBBS: My name is Edward Chubbs,  
10 C-H-U-B-B-S. Okay.

11 SECRETARY MIXON: All right.

12 MR. CHUBBS: I want to speak - I'm  
13 speaking for myself and I'm mainly speaking as a  
14 representative of our senior citizens, and I have  
15 said it time and time again last year, and I'm  
16 starting off this year with the same issue.

17 I just think and you all said you  
18 don't intend to put us out of business, but  
19 that's exactly what you're doing. You're putting  
20 all us, and I say Black because the older drivers  
21 are Black like Mr. Tapscott and I have been  
22 driving 50, 60 years, and you all make all of

1 these rules and then you don't give us no  
2 exception.

3 For an example, I have been driving  
4 for 50 years, and I have considered myself a  
5 small businessman, and the rules and regulation  
6 that you all have put on us is driving us out of  
7 business, and I'm sure you can check your record,  
8 you've got five, six elder guys going out of  
9 business not because they want to like myself.

10 Now I've got to come off the street in  
11 August, okay, but the thing about it I think is  
12 criminal, as a small businessman because you know  
13 - I don't know if you know it or not, back years  
14 ago, you couldn't get a taxicab financed and  
15 especially the kind that I drive, okay.

16 So I always bought a private car and  
17 then when I felt the need to take the old one  
18 out, I would have it. Okay, so that's why that I  
19 drive the Lincoln Town Car. It's an '04 the one  
20 I drive.

21 Now the one I bought because they  
22 don't make them anymore is an '08 Lincoln Town

1 Car, and it has 84,000 miles. I bought it brand  
2 new, not no used all for this, and I have paid  
3 for that car. That's my car. Now I can't  
4 utilize it in my business.

5 I'm a senior citizen. I work enough  
6 to subsidize my Social Security. I can't afford  
7 to go out here and buy a car. I don't work like  
8 that. I can't work like that. You go out and  
9 you get a car. I don't care what you got.  
10 You've got five or \$600.00 a month car note, and  
11 you're not - it's okay for these young guys that  
12 work ten, 12 hours a day.

13 Well us senior citizens, we don't  
14 choose. I have - when my brother went out of  
15 business. He'd been driving for 60 years. You  
16 know, he come out and you work a day or he might  
17 work two hours, three hours, but I don't think  
18 it's fair that you all can't make some exception  
19 for us senior citizens, and you're putting us out  
20 of business not because you want to go.

21 What it does, I go home and sit down.  
22 I've been working all my life. I go home and sit

1 in the rocking chair. I just go down, down,  
2 down. This gives me something to look forward  
3 to. I go out. I mingle with the people. I  
4 enjoy talking to people and listening to people,  
5 but I hope this year that you all would make some  
6 exception.

7 You're not giving us anything. We  
8 have served the City and served it well.  
9 Everybody talk about Uber. I'm not worried about  
10 Uber. Who wants - who is going to use Uber. I'm  
11 worried about me staying in business and  
12 everything, rules and regulations, that you all  
13 are making now is putting me out of business, and  
14 when I say me, I'm talking about the senior  
15 citizen.

16 I can give you six just went out last  
17 week because they can't afford to go out again to  
18 even rent a cab. How are you going to pay the  
19 250 or more to rent a cab and you may work 15  
20 hours a week?

21 This way we can work as we want, and  
22 I can understand it if it's a junk or something

1 like that, but you know when you've got something  
2 nice in your business, when you have planned to  
3 upgrade your business, now you all of a sudden  
4 make these rules, and you just put me out of  
5 business.

6 Just like you've got a restaurant and  
7 you buy something because you feel like the  
8 future is going to come for it, you make an  
9 investment. That's what I did with this  
10 \$40,000.00 car that now you all won't let me  
11 utilize it simply because it's an '08 and I think  
12 that is criminal. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you, Mr.  
14 Chubbs. The ideal vehicle retirement is  
15 something that is a sensitive issue, and I  
16 appreciate your persistence in advocating for an  
17 exception for your case.

18 We are governed by a structure, a  
19 transparent framework, and the idea of making one  
20 of exceptions is bad government, however, these  
21 are dire circumstances for the industry, so we  
22 will continue to look into ways where people can

1 find a way of maintaining their economic  
2 livelihood.

3 If you look back for the first time in  
4 the Commission's history several hundreds of  
5 thousands of dollars were made available to  
6 offset the cost of renting. Incentives were also  
7 made available for the purchase of new vehicles.

8 Now we can't now wind back the clock  
9 and change somebody's decision making process  
10 about buying a 40 or a 30 or \$20,000.00 vehicle  
11 five years ago. That's the past. That's gone,  
12 and that's just a fact.

13 However, this year also we've  
14 announced additional grants for the type of  
15 vehicles that the public has demanded. I  
16 strongly feel we are headed in the right  
17 direction.

18 At the same time as I mentioned in my  
19 opening remarks, all the great things that we've  
20 done is not going to be enough. It was  
21 necessary, but it's not sufficient.

22 So we will continue to explore ways,

1 but one thing that will be a common thread is  
2 that we're not going to be living by exceptions  
3 because that will end this or put us in a  
4 quagmire, put us in a situation where we are  
5 creating different rules for different people, so  
6 I don't want to say the window is closed on what  
7 you're looking for, but I'm going to ask for  
8 patience and consideration of the entire industry  
9 in the context of what you're looking for, and if  
10 we take that approach, we are more likely to  
11 emerge a very strong and robust industry for the  
12 vast majority of people instead of a few  
13 individuals.

14 Thank you.

15 I see there are no more unregistered  
16 speakers. Madame Secretary, is that correct?

17 SECRETARY MIXON: Anybody else?

18 Chairman, we have all of our speakers.

19 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: All right. Is  
20 there anything that our fellow Commissioners want  
21 to share before we wrap up?

22 COMMISSIONER WADE: I keep hearing the

1 same refrain, and I think it's important that - I  
2 keep hearing the same refrain from the community  
3 we serve, but I think it's important that you  
4 realize what this Commission does.

5 We're a part of the executive body.  
6 The Council who is our legislative body writes  
7 the laws. Once they write a law and passes it,  
8 it's then forwarded to us, whether the Agency is  
9 that's responsible.

10 We then have the duty, whether we want  
11 to, whether we like it or not, we have the duty  
12 to enforce the laws that have been passed by the  
13 Council.

14 Now when the Council passes these  
15 laws, they don't tell us how to do it. They tell  
16 us what to do, and then we're charged with the  
17 responsibility of writing guidelines and rules  
18 that you have to follow in order to follow the  
19 laws that the Council passed.

20 So we're not writing rules and regs to  
21 really address the industry. The rules and regs  
22 that we write are in direct response to the

1 legislation that has been forwarded to us from  
2 the Council.

3 Now what we do is try to make those  
4 rules as palatable to the public as possible, and  
5 we try to make them in such a way that the  
6 drivers can benefit. We have these open forums  
7 so we can get your feedback, but basically we are  
8 - we have to execute. That's what the executive  
9 department of an agency of the Government does.

10 We have to execute the laws that are  
11 sent to us, so when there's something in that law  
12 that forces us to create a guideline or a  
13 regulation that you don't like, the appropriate  
14 response is to contact your Councilmembers  
15 because it's only the Council who passes the  
16 laws. We can only enforce them, and we have to  
17 do in such a way that you can operate and make it  
18 simple for everybody.

19 So we're not the enemies up here.  
20 We're your middleman so to speak. We're trying  
21 to make what we do and what you do legal, and  
22 that's why a couple of months ago you saw a

1       flurry of regulations, final rulemakings, that  
2       were in direct response to the law that the  
3       Council set up.

4               The Council wrote the law regarding  
5       vehicles for hire, private vehicles for hire, as  
6       well as public vehicles for hire, so once we get  
7       this information, we have to find a way to make  
8       it work, and we count on you guys out there to  
9       help us make this work.

10              So Chairman Chrappah has explained  
11       that. I just kind of when I'm listening from my  
12       years and years of experience serving on boards  
13       and commissions, I want to always be responsive  
14       and I always want you to really understand what  
15       we are trying to do up here.

16              We're trying to -- we're trying to be  
17       a bridge between the Council and the public.  
18       That's what we do, and so I truly encourage you  
19       if there are things about Uber law, the private  
20       vehicle for hire, because it's not just Uber.  
21       There are other companies out there as well who  
22       are competing with Uber and with you, go to your

1 Council. They're the only ones who can actually  
2 change it. We didn't write the law. We're just  
3 implementing it, so I just wanted to make that  
4 very clear so that the discussion is properly  
5 directed.

6 Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD: Yes, Mr.

8 Chubbs, I share your sentiments. I've been  
9 driving myself for 35 years, and because I take  
10 an opposite opinion of some of the rules, I feel  
11 I have been retaliated against because of that,  
12 and I have not changed in my opinion.

13 The President last night stated about  
14 small businesses being over-regulated, and, yes,  
15 we are being over-regulated as drivers with every  
16 day when you're out someone is asking how much  
17 tire pressure do you have. Let me see your  
18 trunk. Is your face on the right side of the  
19 card, and if it's not, and you are stopped, you  
20 are guaranteed to get a ticket if you're stopped  
21 by an inspector, and that is seemingly coming  
22 from other places, and I share your sentiments.

1                   Yes, the Black drivers are being put  
2 out of business, and it's coming from other  
3 places. I share your sentiments.

4                   CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you. Any  
5 other comments before wrap up?

6                   Well, on that note, thank you all for  
7 making the time. It has been great having the  
8 opportunity to get the record from you, and the  
9 meeting is adjourned.

10                   The next meeting will be January 20th,  
11 10:00 a.m., same place.

12                   Have a good day.

13                   (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
14 was concluded at 10:50 a.m.)

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Before: DC Taxicab Commission

Date: 01-13-16

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