GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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OFFICE OF THE D.C. TAXICAB COMMISSION

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SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING

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WEDNESDAY,
AUGUST 6, 2014

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Washington, D.C.

The Commission met in the Old City Council Chambers, 441 4th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. at 10:00 a.m., Ron M. Linton, Chairperson, presiding.

BEFORE:

RON M. LINTON, Chairperson
CYRIL L. CROCKER, Commissioner
ELLIOTT FERGUSON, II, Commissioner
ANTHONY MUHAMMAD, Commissioner
BETTY SMALLS, Commissioner
STANLEY W. TAPSCOTT, Commissioner

JACQUES P. LERNER, ESQ., General Counsel

Commission Staff Present:

JUANDA MIXON, Secretary to the Commission

C O N T E N T S

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

2   (10:08 a.m.)

3   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Good morning,

4   everybody. I will call to order the Special

5   Meeting of the D.C. Taxicab Commission, the Old

6   Council Chambers, on Wednesday, August 6. The time

7   now is 10:07, and as is our practice, we'll

8   observe a moment of silence in memory of those who

9   have given their lives to the service of their

10   country and their community.

11   (Moment of silence observed)

12   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Thank you. The

13   Secretary will determine a quorum.

14   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Burns.

15   (No response)

16   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Cohn.

17   (No response)

18   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Crocker.

19   COMMISSIONER CROCKER: Present.

20   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Ferguson.

21   COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: Present.

22   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Muhammad.

1   COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD: Here.

2   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Smalls.

3   COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Here.

4   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Tapscott.

5   COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Here.

6   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Linton.

7   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Present.

8   The quorum being in attendance, we will

9   continue with our agenda for today, and the first

10   item is Commissioner Communications, and I'd call

11   first on my fellow Commissioners to see if anyone

12   has any remarks they wish to make at this time.

13   (No response)

14   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Publication of final

15   rulemaking for Chapter 18 - Wheelchair Accessible

16   Paratransit Taxicab Service.

17   This is the pilot project that has

18   taken us a year and a half to develop with WMATA,

19   that will result in, as it goes into effect,

20   hopefully October 1st, which is our target date --

21   it will go into effect, it will produce three

22   critical goals, or meet three critical goals.

1   First of all, for those who are

2   eligible to use the service -- the patients that

3   go for dialysis treatment, they will find that

4   increased quality of service, in that No. 1, they

5   will be able to make their arrangements for travel

6   an hour in advance of when they have to be for

7   their appointment instead of 24 hours, and they

8   will never be left to wait for service after they

9   have completed their dialysis service because the

10   "band has left without them" to keep on some other

11   schedule.

12   Second. It will result in a savings for

13   District taxpayers. This one pilot project alone,

14   over a one year fiscal year period, will save the

15   District taxpayers $1.8 million.

16   And third, it will result in one year

17   adding as many as 60 new wheelchair-access

18   vehicles on the streets, not just to take those

19   who are in this program, but anyone who needs a

20   wheelchair access vehicle.

21   And it is a program which we anticipate

22   has expansion capability. What it means for the

1 industry is that it adds, in the first year, some

2 $3.2 million in revenue. It can be expanded,

3 eventually, to the point where it saves District

4 taxpayers as much as $15 million a year, and adds

5 as much as $10 million to the revenue of the

6 industry.

7   So the question is on. A motion to vote

8 to approve this final rulemaking for Chapter 18.

9   COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD: Move.

10   CHAIRMAN LINTON: It's so moved. Is

11 there support?

12   COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Second.

13   COMMISSIONER CROCKER: Second.

14   CHAIRMAN LINTON: It's been moved and

15 supported then. The Secretary will call the role.

16   MS. MIXON: Yes.

17   Commissioner Burns.

18   (No response)

19   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Cohn.

20   (No response)

21   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Crocker.

22   COMMISSIONER CROCKER: Yes.

1   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Ferguson.

2   COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: Yes.

3   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Muhammad.

4   COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD: Yes.

5   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Smalls.

6   COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Yes.

7   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Tapscott.

8   COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Yes.

9   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Linton.

10   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Yes.

11   A majority having voted to affirm, the

12   motion is adopted, the rulemaking is approved, and

13   will be published and put into effect. Thank you

14   very much.

15   The second item on our agenda this

16   morning is a vote to approve publication of a

17   proposed rulemaking to amend Chapter 18 -

18   Wheelchair Accessible Paratransit Taxi Service,

19   and I will let the general counsel explain why

20   it's necessary to take a second vote.

21   MR. LERNER: Thank you. The proposed

22   rulemaking, if approved by the Commission, would

1   make substantial changes in two parts of what has

2   now been approved as the final rules. One is to

3   keep wheelchair accessible vans that have been

4   transferred from WMATA in service for the duration

5   of the pilot program, the first year of the pilot

6   program, and the second is to make clarifications

7   in the section dealing with fares.

8   CHAIRMAN LINTON: In other words, in

9   order not to delay the start of the program, we're

10   doing a concurrent modification that doesn't delay

11   the October 1 date but does bring it in to

12   alignment.

13   Is there a motion to adopt?

14   COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD: Move.

15   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Any support?

16   COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Second.

17   CHAIRMAN LINTON: It has been moved and

18   supported to adopt a vote to approve publication

19   of the proposed rulemaking to amend Chapter 18 -

20   Wheelchair Accessible Paratransit Taxicab Service.

21   The Secretary will call the roll.

22   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Burns.

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 1                  (No response)

 2                  MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Cohn.

 3                  (No response)

 4                  MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Crocker.

 5                  COMMISSIONER CROCKER:  Yes.

 6                  MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Ferguson.

 7                  COMMISSIONER FERGUSON:  Yes.

 8                  MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Muhammad.

 9                  COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD:  Yes.

10                  MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Smalls.

11                  COMMISSIONER SMALLS:  Yes.

12                  MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Tapscott.

13                  COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT:  Yes.

14                  MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Linton.

15                  CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Yes.

16                  The vote is approved, unanimously, that

17      it will remain open for comment for 30 days, and

18      then we'll take the final vote on that at the

19      September meeting.

20                  The third item on the agenda is a vote

21      to approve publication of a second proposed

22      rulemaking for Chapters 8, 12, 14, 16 and 17.
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1   These have to do with the Private Sedan Service.

2   As you know, we published a proposed rule two

3   months ago. We had public hearings. We've had a

4   significant amount of comment on it, and there

5   have been several proposed loan modifications that

6   require that we republish and have another comment

7   period, and I will let the general counsel explain

8   the changes that have been made.

9   MR. LERNER: The two principal changes

10   that require republication of this groups of

11   rulemakings are, first of all, emphasis on the

12   fact that drivers who use -- who have decided to

13   drive in this proposed new class of service would

14   have a choice. Drivers who want to stick to doing

15   private sedans can do so, part time, by signing up

16   with companies, and they would then be subject to

17   what is proposed as part-time work consistent with

18   what the Commission's panel was told in the fall

19   of last year, is the primary typical driver.

20   Alternatively, the choice would now

21   include drivers who hold a DCTC operator's

22   license, would be free to drive in this class of

1   service, and they could do so with their own cars.

2   Those cars would now, if the rules are approved,

3   they would be eligible for S tags, which they're

4   not on the road, but they would be issued by DMV.

5   And so those drivers would not be

6   subject to those limitations. So there would be

7   that choice between those two models of

8   participation in the new private sedan service.

9   The other changes are principally in

10   insurance area, to ensure that insurance is just

11   right. Insurance that's being provided in group

12   coverage, that's purchased by the private sedan

13   businesses, to make sure that there would be

14   adequate coverage in the event of an accident.

15   There are other minor changes, here and

16   there. Those are the two principal changes for

17   which the Commission would be republishing the

18   rulemaking.

19   CHAIRMAN LINTON: All right. Thank you.

20   Is there any Commissioner who would like to make

21   any comment on this matter at this time?

22   COMMISSIONER BURNS: (off-mike)

1   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Buddy, hand him your

2   --

3   COMMISSIONER BURNS: I apologize. I was

4   not at the last meeting on Thursday. I was out of

5   town. But something sounds like -- like not quite

6   sure what the matter is -- I'm in favor of. So I'm

7   moving on this one at this time. I'm not --

8   CHAIRMAN LINTON: You understand,

9   Commissioner, this is not a vote to approve. This

10   is simply a vote to publish, to continue the

11   comment period. If adopted for republication, we

12   will have 30 days for additional comment from

13   those who are interested or affected by it. At

14   that time we'll review it again, to see whether or

15   not we want to put it to a final vote.

16   So this is not a vote on

17   implementation. This is simply proposed changes

18   for people to comment on again, and what it is

19   essentially is, it's saying to the operators of

20   digital dispatch services, who would serve what we

21   call private sedans, what they call ride-sharing,

22   is that people who drive for them have a choice.

1   You want to avoid being involved with

2   the Taxicab Commission, you are a part-time

3   noncommercial driver, and you work part time,

4   because that's what they said they were trying to

5   do, is get part-time work.

6   And the insurance responsibilities are

7   on the backs of the digital dispatch services.

8   They have to provide the insurance. They have to

9   ensure that the background checks are taken, and

10   they have to ensure the inspections on those

11   private vehicles.

12   Now if you don't want to -- if you want

13   to work more than 20 hours, then you come to the

14   Taxicab Commission just like any other driver who

15   has come to the Taxicab Commission, and you will

16   find you get your face card, just like anybody

17   else, and you deal with as a commercial driver.

18   You get your commercial insurance. You apply for

19   an S tag for your vehicle that you're going to

20   use, and you're in the system on a full-time

21   basis.

22   The choice is up to the person who

1 wants to work in that field.

2   COMMISSIONER BURNS: Is this sort of

3 falling in to some of these companies that we're

4 trying to get rid out of the city, though?

5   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Well, we're not

6 trying to get rid of anybody, Commissioner, that

7 I'm aware. We're trying to set up regulations that

8 will bring them in to compliance with what the

9 taxicabs and the limousines have to comply with.

10 The matter of policy as to whether they're here,

11 or they're not here, falls with the City Council,

12 not with us.

13   So the question is on republishing with

14 the modifications.

15   Is there a motion to approve for

16 republication?

17   COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD: Move.

18   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Support?

19   COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Second.

20   CHAIRMAN LINTON: It has been moved and

21 seconded. The Secretary will call the roll.

22   MS. MIXON: Chase Manhattan Burns.

1   (No response)

2   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Cohn.

3   (No response)

4   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Crocker.

5   COMMISSIONER CROCKER: Yes.

6   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Ferguson.

7   COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: Yes.

8   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Muhammad.

9   COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD: Yes.

10   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Smalls.

11   COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Yes.

12   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Tapscott.

13   COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Yes.

14   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Linton.

15   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Yes.

16   A majority having approved, the

17 publication will be republished and open for a 30

18 day comment period upon the publishing date, which

19 would probably what, what? a week from this

20 Friday.

21   The fourth item on the agenda this

22 morning is a vote to approve again publication of

1   a proposed rulemaking or Chapters 5, 6 and 10 -

2   Modern Taxicab Association and Vehicle Service

3   Life Rules.

4   I will ask the general counsel to go

5   through this, and again, remember this is for

6   publication. I believe this is a new move that

7   requires a public hearing. So we will schedule not

8   only the comment period for written comments, but

9   we will schedule a public hearing on this matter

10   before it comes back to the Commission for

11   consideration as to whether they want to move

12   forward with it.

13   So general counsel, if you will explain

14   what is in the proposed rule.

15   MR. LERNER: This proposed rulemaking

16   does three interrelated things, but fairly

17   significant ones. The theme throughout these is,

18   first of all, incentivizing placing in to service

19   fuel-efficient, wheelchair-accessible vehicles,

20   and it would do so in a number of ways. And I'd

21   say that's actually what unites the three parts of

22   the rulemaking.

1   The first part would be to replace

2   what's tentatively called the aging taxicab rules,

3   which is to phase out old vehicles on the road.

4   The first thing that's important to

5   note is that the vehicles that are in service at

6   this time, this rule would not change the existing

7   rule. No gasoline-powered vehicle that is in

8   service at this time would be subject to earlier

9   removal from service that is under the existing

10 rule. That's very important.

11   And the second thing is on that part,

12 the aging taxicab rule simply deals with rules of

13 vehicles on the street, and age that they need to

14 be removed.

15   The proposal takes a much more

16 comprehensive and specific look at the vehicles,

17 and it creates a service plan based on the type of

18 propulsion, and whether the vehicle is wheelchair-

19 accessible or not. And for each parent of those

20 kinds of features, it states a service life.

21   There's also corresponding life based

22 on the use of the vehicle in terms of mileage. And

1   there's the ability for an owner who has a vehicle

2   in service to up-convert professionally with the

3   approved, advanced approval of the office. If, for

4   example, someone wants to take a wheelchair-

5   accessible vehicle and make it, for example,

6   compress natural gas.

7   Another thing that the rulemaking would

8   do is for a new association, a new taxicab

9   association that wishes to apply for approval to

10   be a modern taxicab association, they could do

11   that by applying to the office and showing that

12   they meet a number of criteria.

13   One of the most important criteria is

14   that they have a 100 drivers, they're in good

15   standing with a certificate, operating authority

16   from the office, and then this is an additional

17   set of requirements that must be satisfied. One of

18   those additional requirements is submitting a plan

19   for the approval, the conversion of all of the

20   vehicles in the fleet, within five years, to the

21   best available propulsion and also wheelchair

22   accessibility.

1   And the last part are changes to the

2   rule about, under which someone comes to the

3   office of taxicabs to ask for permission to get a

4   new H tag, or to get an H tag. And as you know,

5   new H tags are not being issued.

6   Under these related rules, if someone

7   puts a new, brand new unused wheelchair-accessible

8   vehicle with the best type of propulsion on the

9   road, or is affiliated with a modern taxicab

10   association, operating under an existing plan,

11   they could get a transferrable right to their H

12   tag, which would allow them to actually sell the

13   H -- not the tag itself, but the commissions and

14   Office of Taxicabs, the ability to actually have

15   the tag, so they can go to the MV and ask for the

16   tag.

17   That would be an interest that they

18   could transfer. It's important to understand --

19   this proposed rulemaking does not give someone the

20   ability to get a tag with the MV without issue.

21   The laws that are in place for the issuance of

22   tags was unchanged. This is simply -- if it's

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 1   approved, it would be an exercise of the

 2   Commission's authority. But those are important,

 3   I think, to incentivize those vehicles.

 4              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  A lawyer always talks

 5   in legal terms. Very simply, it would allow the

 6   Taxicab Commission to recognize, if you have the

 7   tag, it's your tag. If you want to give it to

 8   somebody else, you can give it to somebody else,

 9   and under whatever circumstances. Your son. Your

10   cousin. Your brother-in-law. But that tag stays

11   with the person who got the tax in the first

12   place, and it would not be taken away unless you

13   violated some of the statutes or criminal acts,

14   that you would lose under any circumstances.

15              This will be subject to, as I said,

16   public hearing, comments, and we'll try to

17   schedule the public hearing for either late in

18   August or early in September.

19              This also will address the issue of

20   those who do not have -- cannot get taxes because

21   their vehicle's not titled in the District.

22              But basically what it is, is a system
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 1    that sets out a program, that if ultimately

 2    adopted, could easily result, by the year 2020,

 3    2021, we would have a 100 percent of the vehicles

 4    in the taxi industry, in the city, would be fuel-

 5    efficient and wheelchair-accessible.

 6              So the question now is simply on

 7    publishing this, so it can go into the regulatory

 8    process, and we can have a public hearing, and

 9    open it up for comments.

10              Is there a motion to publish?

11              COMMISSIONER SMALLS:  So move.

12              COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD:  Second.

13              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  The Secretary will

14    call the roll.

15              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Burns.

16              (No response)

17              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Cohn.

18              (No response)

19              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Crocker.

20              COMMISSIONER CROCKER:  Yes.

21              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Ferguson.

22              COMMISSIONER FERGUSON:  Yes.
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 1              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Muhammad.

 2              COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD:  Yes.

 3              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Smalls.

 4              COMMISSIONER SMALLS:  Yes.

 5              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Tapscott.

 6              COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT:  No.

 7              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Linton.

 8              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Yes. A majority

 9   having voted in the affirmative, the proposed

10   rulemaking will be ordered published, and that

11   will be a week from Friday that we anticipate the

12   publication.

13              We have three final approvals to vote

14   on, 5, 6 and --

15              MR. LERNER: No. The Shared Riding is

16   proposed.

17              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  I'm sorry. I'm wrong.

18   The last one is proposed. We have two that are for

19   final rulemaking, that are essentially technical

20   changes. The first one under 5 is are definitions

21   and definitions, all put in a single place. If

22   there's nothing unusual or any significant change
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1   from present practice in there.

2   And the number six is a rulemaking that

3   grows out of an unhappiness among the residents in

4   neighborhoods close to where taxi company

5   facilities exist, that has resulted in taxi

6   vehicles being in residential parking overnight,

7   and they have pushed the Metropolitan Police

8   Department to ticket these cars. And we've argued

9   that this is not the fault of the person who owns

10 that's car, that's waiting for the service. This

11 is the responsibility of the company that's

12 servicing the car, and that unless the companies

13 make facilities available for leaving cars

14 overnight where they won't be ticketed, we're

15 going to fine the companies.

16   So if there's agreement with that, I

17 would accept a motion to combine the vote on 5 and

18 6 in an effort to save some time here.

19   Is a motion to combine. That would be

20 procedural first. Is there a motion to combine 5

21 and 6 for a single vote?

22   COMMISSIONER SMALLS: So moved.

1   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Support.

2   COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Can I speak on

3   it before we vote. I don't understand why we, the

4   Commission -- I'm not sure why we, the Commission,

5   is involved in street cleaning -- another street

6   in D.C. That's -- you need a police --

7   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Wait a minute now.

8   We're not involved in any street cleaning. We have

9   nothing to do with street cleaning.

10   COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Well, I know,

11 but parking, and see, that's what I'm talking

12 about -- street cleaning. Why are we concerned,

13 this Commission --

14   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Let me explain it

15 again to you. What is happening now is, is that

16 people are taking the -- rather than taking their

17 cars to their facility to have work done, they're

18 putting them in -- they're parking them in

19 residential parking areas because there -- and

20 they're being left overnight.

21   The Metropolitan Police Department are

22 ticketing them, and they even began impounding

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 1    them.

 2               That's not the fault of the driver or

 3    owner of that car. He's there to get service from

 4    his company. We're simply in it because we're

 5    saying to the companies, you have -- if you're

 6    going to leave them overnight, you have to make

 7    arrangements that they can be put some place where

 8    they're not going to be ticketed. That's what

 9    we're saying.

10               And if you don't do that, and we get --

11    drivers come to us complaining about being

12    ticketed because they can't get their car

13    serviced, then we're going to fine you.

14               COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT:  I understand

15    the reason for this. I clearly understand that.

16    But I'm not with whether we should be putting the

17    rules out on whether the District of Columbia

18    Police Department or Traffic and Parking should be

19    doing this.

20               CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Well, the

21    Metropolitan Police Department would have no

22    authority, unless they go back to City Council and
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1 ask for it, to deal with the companies who have

2 the responsibility for servicing those cars. So if

3 you don't want to help the drivers, then you vote

4 no here.

5   Are we ready --

6   COMMISSIONER CROCKER: I want to make

7 a comment on this. Also on going forward with the

8 Private Taxicab System, all associations also

9 should be required to have the option for the

10 drivers to pay with a credit card for services

11 that taxicab association does for the drivers. The

12 associations, they will not take payments from a

13 driver who uses a credit card.

14   CHAIRMAN LINTON: That's not a part of

15 these two --

16   COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Well, wait,

17 this is part of it but because we require -- the

18 driver's required to use a credit card in their

19 car, associations are not required to take

20 payments from the driver for payments with a

21 credit card.

22   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Well, that's not a

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 1   part of these two we're dealing with here. That

 2   would be in the previous one we published, and

 3   would come as we consider that one.

 4              Now the question is on the vote to

 5   approve final rulemaking for Chapter 99,

 6   Definitions for Title 21, and final rulemaking for

 7   Chapter 5 - Taxicab Parking.

 8              Is there a motion to --

 9              COMMISSIONER CROCKER:  Move.

10              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  That's a motion to

11   combine?

12              COMMISSIONER CROCKER:  Yes.

13              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  All right.

14              COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD:  Second.

15              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  That's in support to

16   combine. All in favor of combining these two in to

17   a single vote for adoption, say aye.

18              (Chorus of ayes)

19              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Opposed?

20              So the procedural motion is adopted.

21              Is there a motion to approve these two

22   rulemakings?
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 1              COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD:  So moved.

 2              COMMISSIONER CROCKER:  Second.

 3              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  The Secretary will

 4    call the roll.

 5              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Burns.

 6              (No response)

 7              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Cohn.

 8              (No response)

 9              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Crocker.

10              COMMISSIONER CROCKER:  Yes.

11              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Ferguson.

12              COMMISSIONER FERGUSON:  Yes.

13              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Muhammad.

14              COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD:  Yes.

15              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Smalls.

16              COMMISSIONER SMALLS:  Yes.

17              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Tapscott.

18              COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT:  No.

19              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Linton.

20              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Yes.

21              A majority having approved the motion,

22    we'll order the rulemakings be published for
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1   final, and will go into effect a week from Friday.

2   Thank you very much.

3   The last item on the Action Item Agenda

4   is a vote to approve publication of proposed

5   rulemaking for Chapters 8 and 99 on Shared Riding.

6   The general counsel will explain that.

7   MR. LERNER: This proposed rulemaking

8   would fix a conflict within the rules between the

9   definition regarding shared riding and the actual

10   substitute rule. It would then allow the chief of

11   the Office of Taxicabs to designate shared riding

12   at locations where appropriate throughout the

13   city.

14   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Essentially that

15   means that the groups -- riders who are not

16   associated with each other, riding in a cab

17   together, the driver of the cab would restart the

18   meter as each one of the riders departs and make

19   their payment. Just the same as when you leave

20   Union Station or National Park.

21   This just extends our ability to make

22   that type of riding available where it is needful.

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 1              So the question is on approval of it as

 2    a proposed rulemaking. That is, we publish it,

 3    it's open for comment for 30 days.

 4              A motion to publish --

 5              COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD:  Moved.

 6              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  So moved. Is there

 7    support?

 8              COMMISSIONER CROCKER:  Second.

 9              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Moved and supported.

10    The Secretary will call the roll.

11              MS. MIXON:  Chase Manhattan Burns.

12              (No response)

13              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Cohn.

14              (No response)

15              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Crocker.

16              COMMISSIONER CROCKER:  Yes.

17              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Ferguson.

18              COMMISSIONER FERGUSON:  Yes.

19              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Muhammad.

20              COMMISSIONER MUHAMMAD:  Yes.

21              MS. MIXON:  Commissioner Smalls.

22              COMMISSIONER SMALLS:  Yes.
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1   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Tapscott.

2   COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Yes.

3   MS. MIXON: Commissioner Linton.

4   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Yes. A majority

5   having voted in the affirmative, the proposed rule

6   will be published for public comment.

7   We'll move now to Agenda item IV,

8   Government Communications and Staff Reports.

9   Let me, at this time, introduce a new

10 staff member in the Office of Taxicabs who has

11 joined us in this last week, in a very critical

12 and important role, is the manager of our ADA

13 Services, and the individual upon whose shoulders

14 will rest the responsibility of getting the pilot

15 program with WMATA up and running by October 1.

16 Carl Mohammad. Carl.

17   COMMISSIONER CROCKER: Did he want to

18 make a speech?

19   (Laughter)

20   CHAIRMAN LINTON: He's not that

21 Mohammad.

22   (Laughter)

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 1              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Are there any

 2   Government Communications, Madam Secretary, or

 3   staff reports?

 4              MS. MIXON:  No. There aren't.

 5              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  There are not. We'll

 6   then move in to our Public Comment Period, and we

 7   have as the first person on the list, Mr. Bashaw

 8   Biro. Are you with us?

 9              MR. BIRO:  Yes.

10              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Please come to the

11   podium and proceed with your comments.

12              MR. BIRO:  I would like to say thank

13   you for giving me the chance to speak out, the

14   concern that I have.  My name is Bashaw Biro, and

15   I recently received my face ID from DCTC, and I

16   have already rented a taxicab, and I've already

17   started to work. And I have some big concerns, and

18   I want to read it.

19              Subject is request for H Tag. April

20   2012,  District of Columbia Taxicab Commission

21   made a big plan to bring a big change on taxicab

22   service for the nation's capital citizens to make
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1   change, a course of designs that emphasizes

2   achievement of excellent customer service by way

3   of qualified instructors.

4   I expensed dollar 700 to pass through

5   all qualification process, and end up of being

6   self-employed taxicab operator. After I received

7   my face ID, I was told to go to the driver

8   associations to rent car. While going to different

9   associations, I got the following responses.

10   The first one is we don't rent car for

11   nonmembers. The second one is we don't have any

12   cars for rent. And the third one which is very

13   common. We have some cabs under repair. So give me

14   your name and we will call you when we have any.

15   In District of Columbia there are no

16   taxicab companies that are established to have the

17   capital city an organizational structure, give car

18   rental service to external renters like me.

19   The associations, they are companies

20   composed of 20 or more cab drivers who are

21   struggling and -- who are struggling harder to

22   survive the high and tough competition of D.C.

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 1   private transportation, because of many potential

 2   modern competitors in one of the smallest state of

 3   the nation.

 4              So how could we rent taxi for $200 and

 5   more per week, and survive this high-competition

 6   business? What does DCTC to give me the Web-

 7   designed training, when I'm not being let free to

 8   use it for myself.

 9              Is that to support and subsidize the

10   cab associations, to lead by renting their own

11   fuel, fuel consumer cuts, and by working 16 to 20

12   hours a day? Is this the primary purpose of -- is

13   that the primary purpose, to make us give freely

14   but to nonexisting, non-potential associations,

15   that are making us to help the District residents

16   to get the proper service?

17              Why are we forced to work and to give

18   our money for cab owners, when there is not any

19   difference in between us, in all respect. I am

20   really sorry to say that this is modern slavery.

21   This is not American way.

22              This is only place where rules and the
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 1   regulations list all human equally, where politics

 2   and individual interests are far away from freedom

 3   to work, to change, to better life.

 4              So I would like to ask DCTC consider

 5   the decision to give H tag and help us to work,

 6   help our selves and our families. Thanks.

 7              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Thank you, Mr. Biro.

 8   Let me ask you a question.

 9              Do I understand, then, your position is

10   that the Commission should grant an H tag to any

11   person who comes in with a face card, a valid face

12   card, that wants to put a car in the street?

13              Is that what you're saying?

14              MR. BIRO:  Now what I'm saying is --

15              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  No. The question is:

16   Is your position that anyone who has a valid face

17   card, that wants to purchase a vehicle, and put it

18   on the street with an H tag, should be given the

19   H tag? Is that what you're saying?

20              MR. BIRO:  Yes, as long as I got my

21   face ID --

22              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  All right. If we have
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1   2000 more who come in and ask for a card, does

2   that -- you wouldn't be favorable towards that?

3   Do you know how many cars are on the

4   street on an average day now?

5   MR. BIRO: Yes, but the point is when

6   I went to the associations, even they are still

7   open, that means they can -- we can be a member

8   and we can join them, and we can drive the taxi

9   deservedly.

10   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Well, it's not

11   consistent with the complaints we get from a --

12   there are 116 companies and associations out

13   there, and we're constantly hearing that there are

14   not enough drivers, not enough drivers. That's why

15   we were pushed in to setting up a training program

16   to get drivers out there with face cards, and

17   we've given out something like 1100, 1200 new face

18   cards on that.

19   Now you tell me that you're going to

20   these places, and they're telling you there are no

21   cards. Then we have to go back and find out who's

22   not telling us the truth.

1   MR. BIRO: Yes. The other big point is

2   I was on the street for 20 hours on Saturday, and

3   what I made was only 150, and even I couldn't pay

4   the amount of money that I need to pay for the car

5   rent.

6   So there is not any reason for --

7   reason for me to have a face ID. That means there

8   is Uber, there is Lyft, and there is a big

9   competition. And is the main reason why they are

10   now going for strikes, and many of the car

11   companies are complaining because all their jobs

12   are taken by Uber, and there is a big competition.

13   So we are now the -- we are now -- we

14   are -- we are giving them $720 every month and we

15   are going home with nothing, because there's no --

16   even the -- the associations can say something,

17   that there is -- it's a bit tough now, on the

18   street, to make money.

19   CHAIRMAN LINTON: There are currently

20   7100 H tags that are active, that can be used.

21   There are -- on any given day, a range between 50

22   -- 750, 780 tags actually in the street servicing

1   customers.

2   If we open up the doors and let anybody

3   who walks in, that has a face card, take a cab,

4   you're likely to then have eight or nine thousand

5   on the street. And then you're going to have more

6   vehicles chasing customers that aren't there to

7   fill up all those vehicles. You'll be right back

8   here asking for an increase in the rates, cause

9   you still won't make the money, and we'll, under

10   the pressure, give you the increase, and then

11   you'll lose more customers, and you'll be in

12   exactly the same place.

13   That's the deal, that's what we're

14   trying to solve, and we're trying to answer.

15   You can drive an L tag. You can drive

16   -- you can go get in to the L tag business.

17   MR. BIRO: Yes, but I mean, if you

18   don't -- if the face ID doesn't help us at all,

19   so, I mean- the point is --

20   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Yes; it does. It's --

21   MR. BIRO: I know it -- I know it's

22   very practical in the -- it doesn't make a

1 difference. If there are 10,000 drivers who have

2 the face ID, and if there are 10,000 drivers who

3 get the H tag, both are driving the cars, and

4 what's the difference between the two? If -- as

5 long as -- if there are 10,000 cars, and if we are

6 going to rent from them -- and also the other

7 thing is even -- I'm filling more than $50 in the

8 car. Almost -- many of the cars -- I just took it

9 from the truck. As -- as soon as I went out, the

10 checking the light on, I went back and they gave

11 me another car, and it's very high -- high fuel

12 consumption cars, and just we are living for --

13 to pay the rent, and just for the gas stations.

14 That's what -- that's what we're doing now, and

15 that's a big reason why the association drivers

16 are complaining about Uber and Lyft, because of

17 the high competition, and they cannot survive and

18 make money, so -- and we are -- we are giving them

19 the money. We are also be -- just compete --

20 competing with other companies, and that that's

21 reason could never survive, and there is not any

22 reason for us to get the face ID as long as -- we

1 have -- for example, I have a new car, I just got

2 in 2013, and if that was given -- if I have a

3 chance to get H tag, at least I can save the money

4 that I'm paying for -- for the gas station. That's

5 fuel consumption, and I'm not going to pay them

6 any money, and I can make the money for myself.

7   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Well, the Commission

8 will certainly consider your suggestion that we

9 throw open the doors and let anybody who wants to

10 have an H tag have one, and we'll see where it

11 goes.

12   MR. BIRO: Okay. Thank you.

13   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Mr. Joel Wood. Mr.

14 Wood, are you with us?

15   MR. WOOD: Good morning, MR.

16 Commissioner and the rest- of the panel. My name

17 is Joel Wood. I work for the International

18 Brotherhood of Teamsters.

19   A few months ago, we had submitted a

20 FOIA request, and asked for a list of violations

21 that were handed out by hack inspectors for a

22 period of the previous six months. I think

1 everyone here is well aware that taxi drivers are

2 being held accountable for every aspect of their

3 job on a daily basis.

4 During that six month period, there

5 were 3,828 tickets issued by hack inspectors for

6 a wide range of things. 210 for taxi loitering, 93

7 for non-functioning meters, and these are thousand

8 dollar tickets, that most of them were just

9 improper information on the receipt, that drivers

10 really have no control over. 91 tickets for dirty

11 taxis, 63 for improper dress, 52 for hub cap

12 violations.

13 You know? And on down the line. I mean,

14 there's things like not having a sticker on their

15 car, especially folks that get new cars. The

16 stickers aren't available. Hack inspectors ticket

17 them for that. You know? And on down the line.

18 I mean, they're very detailed in to the

19 things that drivers are held in to a high standard

20 on.

21 Taxi drivers are also inspected from

22 head to code. There's a dress code. You have to

1 | have a collar. You have to have shoes.

2 | So, I mean, every aspect of their life

3 | is highly regulated. Taxi drivers are held to the

4 | letter of the law in the DCTC regulations.

5 | Taxi drivers are also subject to

6 | temporary face Ids, because of these regulations,

7 | and customer complaints, which adds another layer

8 | of frustration and red tape that they have to go

9 | through. And a lot of times, their face IDs are

10 | temporary, you know, until they can get through

11 | the OAH system, and get their complaints or their

12 | tickets heard.

13 | All this goes on while companies like

14 | Uber, Sidecar and Lyft and running the streets

15 | illegally. The apps these companies use are

16 | illegal, because they refuse to come to this

17 | Commission, and get them approved. They're

18 | illegal.

19 | The private sedans they use -- they're

20 | illegal too. The companies are so bold, that they

21 | advertise on city property, on city buses, and in

22 | other areas. These illegal companies have apps

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 1    that let you see how many illegal operators are in

 2    any given area at one time, looking to steal work

 3    from our legitimate taxicab drivers.

 4              As we've just heard, some -- a lot of

 5    drivers are having trouble making ends meet.

 6              It's not hard to find them, and it's

 7    not hard to clean our streets of these illegal

 8    drivers who work for these corporate criminals.

 9    That's exactly what they are -- corporate

10    criminals. They engage their drivers to commit

11    illegal acts, daily, via their apps. They break

12    many DCTC regulations. They cost the city millions

13    of dollars.

14              I know we've talked about saving the

15    city a lot of money. Well, this is costing the

16    city a lot of money, and it could actually bring

17    in more revenue, if we would fix it.

18              For the most part, taxi drivers try to

19    operate by the letter of the law. They apply for

20    their licenses, register their cars, spend lots of

21    money just to even get a brand new car legally

22    ready to enter the market.
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1   I think we're all aware of this illegal

2   activity and the increasing amount of it.

3   You know, who decides which laws and

4   regulations should be enforced? I think that's a

5   question every driver in the taxicab industry, you

6   know, asks daily. All laws and regulations need

7   to be enforced equally. It's unfair for this

8   Commission, or it's hack officer, employees, to

9   pick and choose which regulations are enforced.

10   It's unfair for this Commission to give

11   certain companies a pass. It's time for the DCTC

12   to take strong and swift action to bring these

13   corporate thugs to justice. This is not a new

14   problem. The DCTC's been aware of this illegal

15   activity for well over a year.

16   Even though the City Council gave these

17   companies a break for several months, that's been

18   over since January. The DCTC has not done enough

19   to curb this problem.

20   Our members are asking that this

21   Commission address this very important issue now.

22   It is time for enforcement.

1   And I just want to add to that, that I

2   personally have witnessed hack inspectors

3   ticketing some of these illegal drivers, and I

4   applaud that. I think it's what should be done.

5   But there needs to be a more aggressive approach,

6   a more aggressive stance. These companies are

7   advertising. It's easy to spot them, it's easy to

8   track them, and it's easy to run them outta town,

9   until they comply with the laws and regulations.

10   As Mr. Tapscott said earlier, you know,

11   and you commented too, Mr. Linton, it's not about

12   running any certain company out, but I think it is

13   about, you know, enforcing the laws and the

14   regulations in a even manner, so that, you know,

15   everyone who's legally allowed to operate here can

16   ply their trade and make money, and not struggle,

17   as the driver talked about earlier.

18   That concludes my remarks. Thank you.

19   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Thank you, Mr. Wood,

20   and, you know, in general, I agree with you.

21   There are some few comments you made in there,

22   that I might take issue with, but basically there

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 1    are two aspects

 2    of this. One is of course our authority to enforce

 3    is fairly restricted.

 4              One. They can't -- no vehicle that is

 5    not authorized by us can take street hails, and we

 6    are enforcing that to the best of our limited

 7    ability now. We are adding, over the next few

 8    months, we are finally reaching the point, we're

 9    going to be able to ramp up hack inspectors. We're

10    retooling our task force with our police agencies,

11    MDP, Capitol Park, and uniformed -- there's the -

12    Secret Service. So we are increasing in the

13    emphasis and the activity to prevent the illegal

14    street hails. We are also -- we can enforce the

15    reciprocity agreement, cause it's the same thing.

16    It's an illegal vehicle.

17              MR. WOOD: Correct.

18              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  But we have nothing

19    else that we can enforce against those drivers and

20    those cars. Your mission is really down at the

21    City Council. They're the ones that are

22    determining the degree of authority that this
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 1    Commission will have to enforce the same

 2    regulations on the drivers of those Uber, Lyft,

 3    and Sidecar drivers, as we enforce on the H and L

 4    tag drivers.

 5              MR. WOOD:  So when we see a car from

 6    New York, or Virginia --

 7              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  No. That's an illegal

 8    vehicle. You see a car from New York, and we

 9    identify it, that car's impounded. That driver's

10    arrested.

11              MR. WOOD:  Well -- and that's what I'm

12    talking about. The majority of these vehicles are

13    not D.C. vehicles. They're easy to spot --

14              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  We know that, but

15    we're working on that part of the enforcement. You

16    talked about enforcing all the other things. Is

17    your suggestion we stop enforcing the rest of

18    Title 31 against taxi drivers --

19              MR. WOOD:  No.

20              CHAIRMAN LINTON: --because we can

21    enforce them against non-taxi --

22              MR. WOOD:  I think enforcement needs to
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 1   level, across the field.

 2              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  No. But we don't have

 3   the authority to enforce anything -- we can't stop

 4   those cars and ask them for their insurance cards.

 5   We don't have that authority. We can't stop them

 6   and ask them for their manifest, unless we have

 7   reason to believe they're illegal.

 8              If the authority we have is to take

 9   them off the streets, if they're illegal

10   operations -- and we are pursuing that with all

11   the resources we have.

12              MR. WOOD:  If you can -- I can show

13   them to you on that, where they're trolling right

14   outside this building.

15              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Fine. You send us a

16   letter proposing a meeting to work out an

17   arrangement where we can get intelligence info --

18   we're waiting for you to set that meeting.

19              MR. WOOD:  They --

20              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  We're ready to work

21   with you on --

22              MR. WOOD:  These companies provide the
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 1   intelligence. I don't have to provide the

 2   intelligence. It's there. We just have to take the

 3   tools that are there and apply them to

 4   enforcement.

 5              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  I have 14 hack

 6   inspectors. I want to have about twenty-nine.

 7   That's not going to be enough to cover a 1,000

 8   cars coming in here illegally. We need the help of

 9   the drivers in the H cars and the L cars, to feed

10   us information when they see these transactions.

11   And we talked about that.

12              MR. WOOD:  Right; right. And that's

13   something we want to work with you on. But --

14              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Let's do it. Let's

15   get together and work on it.

16              MR. WOOD:  But when these illegal

17   drivers get the message, that they're going to get

18   in trouble when they enter the District, it will

19   curb a lot of the activity and you won't have as

20   many of them trying to come in here and steal

21   work.

22              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  I'm not sure of that.
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 1    But first of all, let's get together and let's

 2    work on it. Second of all, let's convince the City

 3    Council that this is unfair.

 4              MR. WOOD:  We've been working hard at

 5    that.

 6              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Okay.

 7              MR. WOOD:  We've been working very hard

 8    at that. Thank you.

 9              COMMISSIONER SMALLS:  I just want to

10    say the problem is the City Council, and we have

11    to work within the parameters of the rules that

12    they establish for us. So we need to make sure the

13    City Council changes their rules and regulations

14    before you come to us, to get us to be sure to see

15    that everything's carried out.

16              MR. WOOD:  Well, if you don't have a

17    face ID and you don't have an H or an L tag,

18    you're an illegal operator, and that falls under

19    the domain of the DCTC.

20              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  That's correct.

21              COMMISSIONER SMALLS:  That's true.

22              MR. WOOD:  Thank you.
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1                   COMMISSIONER SMALLS:  But I think the

2       regulations that the D.C. cab drivers are faced

3       with, they should be abided by all of the cabs

4       that come in here. Everybody should be under the

5       same rules and regulations.

6                   CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Thank you.

7                   Mr. Royale Simms.

8                   MS. LERNER:  He didn't bring his copies

9       with him.

10                  CHAIRMAN LINTON:  My general counsel

11      tells me -- I m going to have to apply the rules.

12                  But I'll tell you what the rule says.

13      It says that if you want to speak five minutes or

14      more, you have to have a written statement. If you

15      wait till all of those who have registered have

16      made their statements, there's a time period when

17      you can come up for two minutes without one.

18                  MR. SIMMS:  I'll come with two minutes.

19                  CHAIRMAN LINTON:  I'll call you at the

20      end.  Thank you.

21                  Mr. Addis Gebrelassie.

22                  MR. GEBRELASSIE:  Good morning. My name
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1   is Addis. I'm driving for Silver. Recently, the

2   Washington D.C. Taxicab Operators Association has

3   worked with officials at Reagan National Airport

4   to set up a system on reporting illegal taxi and

5   private sedan service.

6   This system is essentially helping to

7   ensure that only authorized operators pick up

8   fares ta the National Airport. Stopping illegal

9   service, helping maintain safety for the

10   passengers, and ensure that -- future for the

11   drivers.

12   The report system has also helped

13   airports identifying illegal operatives who are

14   costing the airports money by not paying airport

15   fees.

16   This also help increasing the amount of

17   money collected by DCTC.

18   We want to see a similar system

19   implemented in D.C. for reporting illegal

20   operation systems. It would take a little effort

21   to set up a simple reporting system, such as an

22   email, telephone numbers, that driver can contact

1 to report illegal services. Reporting would allow

2 the city to see how much illegal activities is

3 going on the street, which is important as the

4 City Council considers legislation on this issue.

5   Just yesterday, the DCTC announced to

6 -- which is the Office of Human Rights, and new

7 complaint forms, and process report,

8 discrimination by the drivers. I have attached the

9 media reports, which you can see it. So we drivers

10 demand that the same kind of process given to us,

11 and we can work on this situation.

12   Our association members are ready and

13 willing to assist the DCTC in their reporting

14 illegal private sedan service. By mentioning this,

15 which is like a core topic that we can discuss

16 about this issue, which is recently that we create

17 to see and to fight these illegal activities.

18   We create the system, so the driver can

19 report easily, or just like by looking, which this

20 illegal driver on the street. We know them.

21 Actually, what we did is we create this system to

22 report to the insurance companies, which is like

1   we try to at least to see our job, on our hand, to

2   fight against these illegal activities, which is

3   like I admire -- you refer to -- which is like

4   your hack inspectors are -- nowadays, they try to

5   enforce this law.

6   But we can do together because our

7   drivers are very much hurted by this. Every day,

8   we are them crying. But we know them on the

9   street, but we don't have any power to do it.

10   If we are working together, and we can

11   achieve a lot of things to at least protect our

12   job. So we have a system we already created. You

13   can use it. I will submit it any time when you ask

14   me to do so. And I thank you very much for this.

15   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Well, thank you very

16   much, but we have a system too, and we have an

17   email address and we have a complaints line, and

18   any of your drivers can call them any time. But

19   they would have to do is tell us a description of

20   the vehicle, the tag number, the location, and the

21   time and the date, and then we can follow through

22   and attempt to find them.

1   Remember that the Airport Authority has

2   everybody entering a very specific roadway. We

3   don't have that. We have hundreds of miles of

4   streets that have to be covered.

5   MR. GEBRELASSIE: Yes.

6   CHAIRMAN LINTON: But we welcome any

7   information that drivers provide us, either

8   through email or through our complaint line. But

9   we ask that there be specificity to what they give

10   us, so that we know what we're looking for.

11   MR. GEBRELASSIE: Yes, but actually,

12   this system does help us, and instead of just like

13   going to your Web site, or just to searching a lot

14   of things, drivers are -- all drivers are on the

15   street, always. They have to pull over, at least

16   to report the certain illegal activities.

17   We make it very much easier, which is

18   like that we create a system --

19   CHAIRMAN LINTON: I don't understand

20   what you're suggesting.

21   MR. GEBRELASSIE: Okay. For instance,

22   that system, we can give it to you to access it

1   any time, any drivers, when they report. When they

2   see illegal activities, that server, which is like

3   the entire complaint, it comes to you.

4   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Yes.

5   MR. GEBRELASSIE: We create that, not

6   by just like going to your Web site. We create

7   that. If you allowed us, you can see it. If it

8   does work, if you accept it. So any drivers can

9   report it easily, within a second.

10   CHAIRMAN LINTON: You say you want the

11   driver to report it to you first, and then you

12   pass it to us?

13   MR. GEBRELASSIE: No; no. We will give

14   it to you, the access. Any driver, when they do

15   complain, if -- the server directly comes to you,

16   and then you can see it.

17   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Yes. The sooner it

18   comes to us, the faster we can react.

19   MR. GEBRELASSIE: Just like --

20   CHAIRMAN LINTON: So all they have to

21   do is call the complaint line and give the report

22   of what they see, where they see it, and identify

```
 1    the vehicle. We have hack inspectors in the street

 2    that will go back out to hack inspectors.

 3                   MR. GEBRELASSIE:  Yes, but actually

 4    within a second --

 5                   CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Why don't you come in

 6    and talk to us about it. We'll explain to you how

 7    we can -- we can do this with you.

 8                   MR. GEBRELASSIE:  Okay. I'm very glad

 9    to hear that. Thank you.

10                   MR. WOOD: Could we get that email and

11    phone number?

12                   CHAIRMAN LINTON:  You don't have the

13    email and the phone number?

14                   MR. WOOD: We'd just like to have it.

15                   CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Sure. It's on the Web

16    site on that -- Juanda.

17                   MS. MIXON:  I'm looking it up.

18                   MR. WOOD: But it is on the Web site?

19                   CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Yes.

20                   MS. MIXON:  I'll provide it.

21                   MR. GEBRELASSIE:  Okay. Thank you.

22                   CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Thank you, Mr.
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1 Gebrelassie.

2   Mr. Irfan Jamali.

3   MR. JAMALI: Thank you very much. My

4 name is Irfan Jamali. I have been D.C. taxi driver

5 in this city for 24 years. I want to remind to

6 Commission how much revenue the city is losing

7 because of the illegal operations. It is estimated

8 that for every one thousand illegal drivers who

9 are operating in District, it's passed -- the city

10 have a minimum $1.2 million a year. These figures

11 we bring from Teamster site, because I belong to

12 the Teamster Union.

13   This service, operating legally, it

14 could bring in over 1.2 million per year in

15 estimated additional revenue.

16   We drivers are demanding justice, and

17 to the city, to -- of certain laws, or others, and

18 we believe all regulations should be equal in

19 force. Previous response to our concern have not

20 been addressed.

21   It's easy to enforce law and resolution

22 on illegal operators such as Uber, Lyft and

1   Sidecar. They have apps which shows where they

2   are, and how many are operating in given areas. It

3   is time for enforcement. I'm saying to Mr. Linton,

4   especially, all these peoples are working, is

5   cause for the drivers, plus D.C. locals peoples

6   are losing a lot of money. Is not paying the

7   department. I don't know if Council allow to work

8   this city, all these peoples without permission.

9   Is still call "illegal." Thank you very much.

10   CHAIRMAN LINTON: Thank you, sir. That

11   completes our speaker registration. We'll turn now

12   to anyone who wants to address the Commission for

13   the two minute limitation.

14   Mr. Simms.

15   MR. SIMMS: Thank you for the time. My

16   comments were going to echo comments that were

17   said first, the first speaker, about H tag policy.

18   I find that the DCTC is -- there's a trend in

19   their policies and their regulations to move

20   drivers towards associations. And I find that

21   there's not a duty for associations in the public

22   policy of Washington D.C., but there is a duty

1   towards independent drivers.

2   The purpose is defined in the Modern

3   Tax Act, 50-302. It says that the DCTC should

4   assure the ownership of taxicabs by taxicab

5   operators.

6   This means that H tags, PVINs, all the

7   equipment necessary for drivers to own their

8   vehicles, should not be blocked by the DCTC.

9   Our request is really simple. I think

10   the DCTC should change its policy. It wouldn't be

11   much because the policy's not regulation. You

12   don't even have to vote on it. It should change

13   its policy and allow H tags on the street. It

14   should open them up.

15   It should create regulations that

16   incentivize independent operators to provide

17   services independently. So there's no need to

18   create a new association for wheelchair

19   accessibility, but come up with incentives for

20   independent drivers to own and operate wheelchair-

21   accessible cabs.

22   And remove and limit the burdens for

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 1    drivers, once they're compliant, to maintain their

 2    compliance. Like when do driers have to spend 50

 3    extra dollars for a simple stamp on a simple sheet

 4    of paper. You know,  those relationships are there

 5    with the DCTC and the DMV. It shouldn't cost the

 6    driver. It shouldn't be a extra burden on the

 7    driver.                      I want the DCTC to fulfill

 8    its purpose, you know,  and really assure that

 9    taxicabs are owned by the taxicab operators.

10              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Thank you very much,

11    and we certainly will take into consideration your

12    comments.

13              Is there anyone else who wants to

14    address the Commission at this time?

15              Two minutes.

16              MR. FRANKEL: Yes, sir. Thank you.,

17    gentlemen, and ladies. I'll mark this fast.

18              CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Identify yourself for

19    the --

20              MR. FRANKEL: I'm Larry Frankel. I'm a

21    taxicab driver with 19 years experience.

22              Mr. Linton, you said would we want 2000
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 1   additional vehicles on the road as H tags. I'm

 2   going to tell you I do.

 3                CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Okay.

 4                MR. FRANKEL: Cause I would rather have

 5   2000 legal cabs on the road than 5000 illegal ones

 6   stealing my business. Thank you.

 7                CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Thank you very much.

 8                Anyone else at this time?

 9                (No response)

10                CHAIRMAN LINTON:  Thank you all very

11   much. We now stand in adjournment.

12                (Whereupon, at 11:09 a.m., the Taxicab

13   Commission Special Meeting was adjourned.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Special Commission Meeting

Before: DC Taxicab Commission

Date: 08-06-14

Place: Washington, DC

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_____
Court Reporter