

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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OFFICE OF THE D.C. TAXICAB COMMISSION

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GENERAL COMMISSION MEETING

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WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 14, 2015

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The Commission met at 2235 Shannon
Place, S.E., Washington, D.C., at 10:00 a.m.,
Ernest Chrappah, Chairperson, presiding.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

ERNEST CHRAPPAH, Chairperson
ANTHONY MUHAMMAD, Commissioner
STANLEY TAPSCOTT, Commissioner
BETTY SMALLS, Commissioner
ELLIOTT FERGUSON II, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT:

JACQUES P. LERNER, ESQ., General Counsel
JUANDA MIXON, Secretary to the Commission
MONIQUE BOCK, Assistant General Counsel

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

2 10:13 a.m.

3 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Good morning, and
4 welcome to the general commission meeting. My
5 name is Ernest Chrappah. I'm the acting chairman
6 of the DCTC, the D.C. Taxicab Commission. Today
7 is Wednesday, October 14, and the time is 10:15.

8 We have 10 important action items for
9 today which reflects DCTC's commitment to
10 improving ridership experience, strengthening the
11 industry, and my resolve to swiftly deal with
12 issues that arise, particularly safety issues.

13 We are located in public hearing room
14 2023 at 2235 Shannon Place SE, Washington, D.C.,
15 and we are also joined on the phone by
16 Commissioner Ferguson.

17 Last week, I had a chance to meet one
18 of our drivers who is really struggling to get
19 his life back together after he miraculously
20 survived a gunshot from the back at very close
21 range with a bullet piercing his lung.

22 And as we meet today, the bullet is

1 still lodged inside him because his doctors think
2 it is too close to the spine to be removed
3 without permanently paralyzing him. He's a
4 father. He's an uncle. He's an honest working
5 citizen.

6 There are many others who never had a
7 chance to share their story with me or to go back
8 to their wives and their families. There are
9 many victims of crimes who have not been lucky as
10 the driver was. Please join me in observing a
11 moment of silence for those who have departed,
12 especially taxi drivers.

13 At this time, I will turn it over to
14 our secretary, Juanda Mixon, for the
15 determination of a quorum.

16 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
17 Ferguson? Commissioner Ferguson?

18 COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: I'm here and
19 present.

20 SECRETARY MIXON: Thank you.
21 Commissioner Muhammad? Commissioner Smalls?

22 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Here.

1 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
2 Tapscott?

3 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Here.

4 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
5 Chrappah?

6 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Present.

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

9 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you. The
10 first agenda item is about safety. It is a vote
11 to approve emergency rulemaking for companies to
12 start deploying safety devices in taxicabs
13 consistent with a proposed rulemaking approved in
14 July. A couple of months back we gave the
15 industry various options to enhance safety in
16 vehicles. The time to act is now.

17 During the weekend, I get incident
18 reports about crime or things that happen to our
19 drivers, and it would be very sad for us not to
20 take action and for something fatal to happen to
21 any of our brothers and sisters.

22 The options include allowing to call

1 911 on the universal dome lights. It also
2 includes allowing a silent alarm that can be
3 triggered by some discreet means, and it allows
4 the driver to establish communication with their
5 company in real time as they are transporting a
6 passenger. These safety features are necessary.
7 It is a public safety issue and we must take
8 action.

9 Do any of the commissioners have
10 questions or comments regarding the first agenda
11 item?

12 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Good morning.
13 I'm going to have to abstain on this and I have
14 spoken to the Chairman on why I'm abstaining on
15 this, because I tried to get this put on when we
16 put the cruising lights on and that would have
17 been a lot of saving to the drivers and our
18 previous commissioner would not listen. So I'm
19 going to have to abstain on this item.

20 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you. Do I
21 have a motion to call the item one for a vote?

22 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: So moved.

1 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Second.

2 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Secretary?

3 SECRETARY MIXON: All right,

4 Commissioner Ferguson?

5 COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: Yes.

6 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

7 Muhammad? Commissioner Smalls?

8 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Yes.

9 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

10 Tapscott?

11 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Yes.

12 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

13 Chrappah?

14 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Yes.

15 SECRETARY MIXON: Three yes, one

16 abstain.

17 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you. The

18 second agenda item is proposed rulemaking to

19 rescind regulations authorizing the issuance of

20 DCTC transferable taxicab licenses which

21 essentially function as medallions. Do I have a

22 motion?

1 COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: So moved.

2 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Do any of the
3 commissioners have any questions? Madam
4 Secretary?

5 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
6 Ferguson?

7 COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: I vote yes.

8 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
9 Muhammad? Commissioner Smalls?

10 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Yes.

11 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
12 Tapscott?

13 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Yes.

14 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
15 Chrappah?

16 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Yes.

17 SECRETARY MIXON: Four yes.

18 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: The third agenda
19 item is second emergency rulemaking to expedite
20 the formation of the D.C. Taxicab Co-op and
21 strengthen bylaws for the good of transparency
22 and industry protection, sorry, industry

1 participation. Do any of the commissioners have
2 any questions? Do I have a motion to call the
3 item?

4 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: So moved.

5 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Madam Secretary?

6 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
7 Ferguson?

8 COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: Yes.

9 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
10 Muhammad? Commissioner Smalls?

11 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Yes.

12 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
13 Tapscott?

14 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Abstain.

15 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
16 Chrappah?

17 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Yes.

18 SECRETARY MIXON: The vote is three
19 yes, one abstain.

20 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: The fifth agenda
21 item covering chapters four and eight is proposed
22 rulemaking to improve PSP performance and

1 competition based on audits and economic analysis
2 and to delete taxicab operator surcharge
3 accounts. Do any of the commissioners have any
4 questions on this? Do I have a motion?

5 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: So moved.

6 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Second.

7 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Madam Secretary?

8 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

9 Ferguson? COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: Yes.

10 Commissioner Muhammad? Commissioner Smalls?

11 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Yes.

12 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

13 Tapscott?

14 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Yes.

15 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

16 Chrappah?

17 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Yes.

18 SECRETARY MIXON: Four yes.

19 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: The sixth agenda
20 item is third emergency rulemaking to conform
21 Title 31 to the requirements of the vehicle for
22 hire innovation amendment act of 2014. Do any of

1 the commissioners have any questions?

2 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Could that be
3 explained a little bit more?

4 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: General Counsel
5 Lerner?

6 MR. LERNER: Yes, the vehicle for hire
7 amendment act of 2014 made sweeping changes in
8 Title 31 of the DCMR. It created - it changed,
9 actually, what had been just the public vehicle
10 for hire industry to the vehicle for hire
11 industry, incorporating both public and private
12 vehicles, adding in what the Commission calls
13 private sedans, which you all may be familiar
14 with.

15 And as a result of that, and of course
16 there were many other changes as well, but there
17 were so many changes that there is comprehensive
18 rulemaking to ensure that not only is the act in
19 compliance with the law, but that the areas that
20 our council had made public policy allowing the
21 Commission to enact certain rules.

22 The Commission did that and that is

1 continuing as proposed rulemaking at this time.
2 But in order to ensure that any nonconforming
3 aspects of Title 31 are not invalidated, it's
4 critical that the emergency continue.

5 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: So moved.

7 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Madam Secretary?

8 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

9 Ferguson?

10 COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: Yes.

11 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

12 Muhammad? Commissioner Smalls?

13 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Yes.

14 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

15 Tapscott?

16 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Yes.

17 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

18 Chrappah?

19 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Yes.

20 SECRETARY MIXON: The vote is four yes.

21 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you. The
22 seventh action item covers chapters eight and 99,

1 and it is emergency and proposed rulemaking for
2 mandatory securement of passengers in wheelchair
3 accessible vehicles. Do any of the commissioners
4 have any questions on this action item?

5 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Will you go over
6 this one more time just to be - so that I will be
7 specific about what it may take?

8 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Sure, General
9 Counsel Lerner?

10 MR. LERNER: Yes, this emergency and
11 proposed rulemaking would ensure that wheelchair
12 passengers are properly secured for safety
13 purposes inside the vehicle using the securement
14 system, by providing assistance as necessary or
15 if requested.

16 It does allow, however, that no
17 operator shall be required to transport a
18 wheelchair passenger who refuses to be properly
19 secured and that's also for safety.

20 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you. Do I
21 have a motion?

22 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: So moved.

1 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Madam Secretary?

2 SECRETARY MIXON: All right,

3 Commissioner Ferguson?

4 COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: Yes.

5 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

6 Muhammad? Commissioner Smalls?

7 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Yes.

8 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

9 Tapscott?

10 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Yes.

11 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

12 Chrappah?

13 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Yes.

14 SECRETARY MIXON: The vote is four

15 yes.

16 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: The eighth action

17 item is proposed rulemaking to create the Office

18 of Hearing Examiners as an independent, and I

19 stress independent, unit of the Office of

20 Taxicabs, to hear and adjudicate appeals of

21 license denials, immediate suspensions, proposed

22 suspensions, and proposed revocations. Do any of

1 the commissioners have any questions? Do I have
2 a motion?

3 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: So moved. I
4 think this will be helpful.

5 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Second?

6 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Second.

7 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Madam Secretary?

8 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
9 Ferguson?

10 COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: Yes.

11 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
12 Muhammad? Commissioner Smalls?

13 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Yes.

14 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
15 Tapscott?

16 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Yes.

17 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
18 Chrappah?

19 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Yes.

20 SECRETARY MIXON: The vote is four
21 yes.

22 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: The ninth action

1 item is a vote to rescind the May 13, 2015
2 approval of final rulemaking for chapters eight,
3 11, which would have renewed certain
4 administrative fees.

5 However, due to the fiscal impact
6 analysis showing DCTC cannot support the
7 reduction in this current budget, and the fact
8 that we cannot violate anti-deficiency laws, this
9 is necessary. Do I have any questions from
10 commissioners?

11 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: I have a
12 question on that. We passed a bill, and this is
13 to reduce some of the fines and things. Now
14 we're going back to put them back in place. Is
15 that correct?

16 MR. LERNER: This is a vote to rescind
17 a May approval of final rulemaking to reduce
18 administrative fees, Commissioner. This is not
19 the one regarding the proposed fines. That is
20 proceeding. That was approved and that's
21 actually a broad reduction of fines. This is
22 different.

1 This is about administrative fees, and
2 the analysis that was required and was done
3 subsequently, showed that the budget - it could
4 not be absorbed in the current budget and it
5 would also create an anti-deficiency, a
6 deficiency which is a violation of district and
7 federal law.

8 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: But the fees
9 on some of the fines and things on cabs stand as
10 they are now?

11 MR. LERNER: No.

12 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: The reduction in
13 fines is proposed, is going through the
14 rulemaking process, and when that is finalized,
15 drivers can see no more than \$500 in maximum
16 fines, so that's still in place and we're still
17 committed to make sure that goes through.

18 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Okay.

19 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Madam Secretary?

20 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: So moved.

21 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
22 Ferguson?

1 COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: Yes.

2 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

3 Muhammad? Commissioner Smalls?

4 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Yes.

5 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

6 Tapscott?

7 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Yes.

8 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

9 Chrappah?

10 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Yes.

11 SECRETARY MIXON: The vote is four
12 yes.

13 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: The tenth action
14 item is a vote to accept the August 28 final
15 report of the Panel on Industry's findings and
16 recommendations on DCTC policy on the issuance of
17 new vehicle licenses for taxicabs, commonly known
18 as H-tags. General Counsel Lerner, do you want
19 to provide some more context -

20 MR. LERNER: Sure.

21 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: - so people
22 understand what it means by the Commission

1 accepting the recommendations?

2 MR. LERNER: Yes, the report followed
3 a several month investigation of various views
4 and positions on H-tags and what should be done
5 in terms of the Commission's H-tag policy. Those
6 are findings and recommendations only.

7 The Panel did exactly what it was
8 asked to do, which was to delve into the subject
9 exhaustively including both through filing
10 information forms and over 1,000 of them were
11 collected and analyzed, and there were two public
12 hearings, I believe, at which public speakers
13 throughout the industry and stakeholders were
14 given the opportunity to make oral presentations.

15 All of that information was
16 considered, was put into the report, and then
17 recommendations were made. That report was
18 actually posted, and I believe it remains posted
19 on the website for public comment, and we
20 encourage you to take a look at that and to
21 comment on the report.

22 However, the Commission accepting the

1 report is merely as if the Panel were sitting
2 here and handing the report to the Commission.
3 That's all. The Commission is now aware of it,
4 will look at it, and because the Panel is just a
5 subset of the Commission, the Commission now
6 looks at it and can consider it in regard to
7 whatever action it may choose to take in the
8 future.

9 It doesn't mean that the Commission
10 must do anything on the subject, but it certainly
11 will consider it as it goes forward on looking at
12 H-tags.

13 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you. We'll
14 now move to the fourth part of the agenda and
15 that is government communications.

16 SPEAKER: You didn't accept it, the
17 motion to accept.

18 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Oh, yes, sorry
19 about that. I'm moving a little bit too fast.
20 Do I have a motion to accept?

21 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: So moved.

22 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: I have some

1 questions on this one.

2 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: What questions do
3 you have, Commissioner Tapscott?

4 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: When is this
5 going to be announced to the public, number one,
6 and if it's not going to be announced to the
7 public, what were these - holding these hearings?
8 I'm a little fuzzy on that.

9 Yeah, I was the Chairman of that
10 Committee and I thought the purpose of that
11 Committee was to hear the public, and we did
12 that, and we made a recommendation. But my
13 problem with this is when is the report going to
14 be announced whether we accept it or not?

15 If it didn't, it looks like to me we
16 just wasted a lot of time. Now, maybe I'm wrong
17 there, but personally, I would like to see the
18 public informed of the way we're going on this
19 because I get too many questions in the street
20 about the H-tag. So as of now, I'm not prepared
21 to vote for this.

22 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you,

1 Commissioner Tapscott. The report is public.
2 That's the first part of the process. Through
3 the Panel, there were a series of meetings, and
4 that concluded with the report sort of like
5 finalized.

6 And I believe it was made public on
7 the 28th of last month, the 28th of August, so
8 that's the very first step for others who didn't
9 get a chance to participate in the hearings to
10 see and react to what has been published. For
11 the purpose of the Commission, we have to accept
12 the report in order to keep moving the ball
13 forward. Not accepting it puts us in a bind.

14 Now, from the regulatory perspective,
15 I've made a commitment to address and resolve all
16 of the H-tag related issues before the end of the
17 year, so I'm going to continue to work with my
18 fellow commissioners and the public to address
19 those issues.

20 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: What you're
21 saying is it will be made before the end of the
22 year. Is that what you're saying?

1 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Well, if we
2 continue to make the progress that I expect and
3 we continue to have engaged commissioners, I see
4 no reason why we should not be able to resolve
5 those issues, but the first step is making the
6 report public. The second step is the Commission
7 accepting it, and the third step will be for us
8 to draft regulations or legislation to resolve
9 the issues.

10 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Yes.

11 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Any further
12 questions?

13 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: If we're
14 working to get this report out to the public by
15 the end of the year, I'll support this.

16 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you. Madam
17 Secretary?

18 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
19 Ferguson?

20 COMMISSIONER FERGUSON: Yes.

21 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner
22 Muhammad? Commissioner Smalls?

1 COMMISSIONER SMALLS: Yes.

2 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

3 Tapscott?

4 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Yes.

5 SECRETARY MIXON: Commissioner

6 Chrappah?

7 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Yes.

8 SECRETARY MIXON: The vote is four
9 yes.

10 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: It's now time for
11 government communications and staff reports.
12 Madam Secretary, do you have a prepared statement
13 on the fact check?

14 SECRETARY MIXON: Yes, I do, Chairman.

15 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Okay, please
16 proceed.

17 SECRETARY MIXON: Yes, this is a fact
18 check from the October - I mean, excuse me, from
19 the September 9th meeting. At the September 9,
20 2015 general commission meeting, a public speaker
21 said that DCTC does not make changes to its
22 proposed rulemakings in response to comments by

1 stakeholders. DCTC does make appropriate changes
2 to its proposed rulemakings in response to
3 comments.

4 Examples of comment based changes
5 include a manufacturer of wheelchair accessible
6 vehicles, also known as WAVs, submitted a comment
7 to DCTC's proposed rulemaking for Chapter 18 for
8 what is now called Transport DC, claiming the
9 vehicles listed in the proposed rulemaking would
10 limit vehicle choices and increase the costs of
11 WAVs by requiring them to use natural gas.

12 In response, DCTC made changes to the
13 final rulemaking published in The Register on
14 July 4, 2014, which added four additional sources
15 of propulsion including gasoline and metric
16 hybrid, diesel or bio-diesel, liquid propane, and
17 ethanol. The rule appears in 31 DCMR 1806.5.

18 AL - I think that's AL. I'm sorry, I
19 can't read my own writing. I think it's ALJ
20 Arabella Teal at the Office of Administrative
21 Hearing, excuse me, at the Office of
22 Administrative Hearings submitted a comment about

1 the standard and procedure for immediate
2 suspensions in proposed rulemaking for Chapter 7.

3 In response, DCTC clarified in the
4 final rulemaking published in The Register on
5 June 27, 2014, the standard for a preliminary or
6 an initial review of an order for an immediate
7 suspension. The rule appears in 31 DCMR Section
8 706.8.

9 A second wave of manufacturers
10 submitted comment on the proposed rulemaking for
11 Chapter 18 asserting that the rulemaking
12 unnecessarily limited approved ways to side entry
13 ramps.

14 In response, DCTC made changes in the
15 final rules published in The Register on July 4,
16 2014, to allow both rear entry and side entry
17 ramps. The rule appears in 31 DCMR Section
18 1806.5.

19 The Disability Advisory Committee
20 submitted comments dated July 31, 2014, also
21 pertaining to the Chapter 18 rulemaking, which
22 recommended that new vehicle licenses be made

1 available to the companies approved to provide
2 service under the rules.

3 The final rulemaking adopted the
4 recommendation for each wheelchair accessible
5 vehicle acquired or purchased under the program.
6 The relevant - excuse me, the rule appeared in 31
7 DCMR Section 1806.19.

8 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Any further fact
9 checks, Madam Secretary?

10 SECRETARY MIXON: That's all that I
11 have at this point, sir.

12 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: Mr. Chairman,
14 did we skip number five?

15 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: I don't believe
16 so. Madam Secretary, for clarity, could you
17 confirm that we have separate votes for chapters
18 - for action items three and four separately?

19 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay, those are the
20 Chapter 16?

21 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Yes.

22 SECRETARY MIXON: Yes, I have just

1 one.

2 MR. LERNER: For which one? We think
3 it's just for the first one. Just call the item
4 again. Just do it again.

5 SECRETARY MIXON: I have it for the
6 second emergency rulemaking.

7 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: So the vote was
8 for Chapter 16 to reflect that it addresses the
9 second emergency rulemaking and final rulemaking.
10 Thank you. Let's move to the public comment
11 period, and can you call out the registered
12 speakers by order?

13 SECRETARY MIXON: Yes, would all of
14 the speakers who are registered, when you go to
15 the microphones, adjust the microphones so we can
16 hear you. Would you also please sign in and
17 during your brief statement - excuse me, before
18 you do that?

19 And when you begin speaking, please
20 say and spell your name for the court reporter.
21 The first speaker I have is Ms. Evelyn Ruiz-Muy
22 and you will have five minutes. Okay, after you

1 state and spell your name, I'll start the timer.

2 MS. RUIZ-MUY: Good morning, my name
3 is Evelyn Ruiz, E-V-E-L-Y-N, Ruiz, R-U-I-Z. I
4 represent the Classic Cab Company and others. I
5 really have three topics, but I will make sure I
6 will not go over my allowable time.

7 I came here today just to follow-up my
8 request regarding the reactivation of my two H-
9 tags with valid PVINs. On May 14, 2015, I filed
10 the H-tag information form complete with all of
11 the details.

12 On July 16, 2015, and July 30, 2015,
13 I testified in front of the special panel on H-
14 tags. I explained very well on both occasions
15 that these two H-tags with valid PVINs should be
16 recommissioned without any more delay. I do not
17 want to look like a broken record. However, I
18 will be now due to my personal desperation in not
19 getting an answer for over a year.

20 Tag 898755 with PVIN D471 in June
21 2013, my driver, Solomon Okoro, was robbed and
22 shot to death. The Office of the Attorney

1 General kept my taxicab for over 14 months as
2 evidence.

3 Tag 899847 with PVIN D483, in June
4 2013, my rental driver got in a big accident.
5 The case was filed and heard in court for over a
6 year, and finally incredible insurance settled
7 after 15 months. I hope I can get a written
8 answer after this meeting. Thank you very much.

9 My second topic is our request to
10 continue the waiver extension for taxicabs with
11 modeled years 2005, 2006, 2007 under 300,000
12 miles. The waiver program is a relief and will
13 ease the pain on a big number of taxicab owners.

14 The whole world of taxicab operators
15 are expressing their pain and sufferings posed by
16 the app digital dispatch, but unregulated
17 companies such as Uber, Sidecar, and Lyft, and I
18 could not believe that you could not see or hear
19 that.

20 We are begging for a small portion of
21 your compassion. We don't want to drive a brand
22 new car. We just want more time to save some

1 amount of money for down payment. These vehicles
2 pass safety inspection every six months. They
3 are safe and comfortable to serve the riding
4 public. We urge you to see and check them for
5 yourself.

6 I know that DCTC made a mistake in
7 giving the extension for model years '97, '98,
8 '99, 2000, 2001, and 2002 vehicles. Some of
9 these vehicles can still be working until 2016,
10 2017. Please do not punish model years 2005,
11 2006, 2007. Give these taxicabs the same chance
12 as you have given to others. I am now submitting
13 about 135 cab owners' petition request to
14 continue the waiver program.

15 I would also like to make a short
16 comment on the safety devices to be deployed on
17 the taxicabs. Do we really need the 911 flashing
18 light? Prior to these very expensive dome lights
19 that we presently have, our old dome lights
20 already got that 911 feature, but I do not think
21 that it saves any life. Before the driver can
22 click that switch, the bad guy already warned him

1 not to even think about it or he will be dead
2 meat.

3 Prior to 2013, I used to take taxicabs
4 to the inspection station and the inspector will
5 turn on the 911 light. I then drove it all the
6 way back to my shop and nobody even noticed it.
7 Before we jump and get tangled with other
8 expenses, I strongly suggest to plan and look at
9 all of the venues what is best, practical, and it
10 serves the purpose.

11 The camera in the car is useless if
12 nobody is monitoring it. Safety is our goal. We
13 do not want to watch a dead driver after he gets
14 robbed. The bulletproof divider works because
15 the bad guy cannot penetrate a knife or a gun
16 through the glass and metal.

17 The only problem is if the third or
18 fourth passenger can sit beside the driver, then
19 this divider will be useless as well. I suggest
20 that if the driver got a divider, he should have
21 an option of not picking up four people,
22 especially during grave hours.

1 The Commission should not put a
2 deadline on this issue, not until we are clear
3 with everything, and that includes the kind of
4 safety device, the supplier of the device, but
5 most especially the costs. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you, Ms.
7 Ruiz. Could you stand up for a moment so I can
8 get some clarity? Could you briefly state what
9 you are advocating with respect to the safety
10 device? What exactly are you advocating for?

11 MS. RUIZ-MUY: Yes, I'm advocating the
12 safety of the drivers. It's a topic very close
13 to my heart. I would like to say that taxicab
14 drivers' lives matter as well.

15 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: I understand that,
16 but what I am asking is what specifically are you
17 advocating? What position are you taking on
18 these safety devices? Do you have an idea in
19 mind that was not submitting during the proposed
20 rulemaking process?

21 I want to get specifics because way
22 too often there is a lot of talk about, "This is

1 what we want. This is what we don't want," and
2 nothing direct and prescriptive and I want to
3 give you the chance now. Could you tell the
4 public, and people who are listening, those who
5 are participating today, what exactly you are
6 proposing?

7 MS. RUIZ-MUY: Well, as I mentioned,
8 we should analyze and look on all avenues before
9 we can decide which one we really need.

10 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: So you don't have
11 a specific proposal or recommendation?

12 MS. RUIZ-MUY: I would like to say the
13 bulletproof glass because I have experience with
14 that. I installed about four of them already in
15 my vehicle.

16 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you for
17 that. And if I may ask, is there a reason this
18 was not suggested earlier?

19 MS. RUIZ-MUY: I was not aware that
20 you were asking for suggestion.

21 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Okay, thank you.
22 And for all that are here, we are open for

1 business when it comes to suggestions whether
2 it's on our website or it's through participation
3 in the rulemaking process. Thank you. The next
4 speaker, Madam Secretary, who do we have?

5 SECRETARY MIXON: Mr. Ed Swailes if
6 I'm pronouncing it correctly, S-W-A-I-L-E-S.
7 Okay, next, Mr. Ahmad Zaheer, Z-A-H-E-E-R. Are
8 you Mr. Zaheer?

9 MR. ZAHEER: Yes.

10 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay, thank you.

11 MR. ZAHEER: I don't have a statement.
12 I just wanted to ask about the H-tag, that's all.

13 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: The microphone
14 please.

15 SECRETARY MIXON: Can you speak in the
16 mic, please?

17 MR. ZAHEER: I am speaking in the
18 microphone. I'm sorry.

19 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: That's okay.
20 That's okay.

21 MR. ZAHEER: I am a 60-year-old. I've
22 been driving in D.C. for the last 31 years. It

1 was very difficult in those days to make and take
2 the forecast or the H-tag for the - to make my
3 living.

4 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Let's figure out
5 how to make this thing work. Would it be easier
6 if you use this microphone?

7 MR. ZAHEER: Thank you.

8 SECRETARY MIXON: Perfect, now hold it
9 up real close.

10 MR. ZAHEER: My name is Zaheer Ahmad.
11 I'm a 60-year-old. I've been driving a cab for
12 the last 31 years, December of 1984. Especially
13 the last three years, it's very difficult to make
14 everything. We need the H-tag for that purpose
15 so we can make a living back again. Rent is too
16 high for this cost.

17 When you go onto the street, you can't
18 find no business. That is the problem. If there
19 is a business, we have no problem. The H-tag is
20 very important for my whole plan so I can make a
21 living and my kids can go to school. They are
22 deserving of school. Thank you so much.

1 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: So Mr. Ahmad, if
2 I may summarize, you were looking for an H-tag.

3 MR. ZAHEER: Yes, sir.

4 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: All right, thank
5 you.

6 MR. ZAHEER: Thank you very much.

7 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Next speaker,
8 Madam Secretary.

9 SECRETARY MIXON: Yes, Ms. Heidi Case.

10 MS. CASE: Good morning. I will have
11 to send written testimony in the future - after
12 this. My name is Heidi Case and I am - consider
13 myself a disability advocate, and I heart
14 Transport DC.

15 I think that would make a wonderful
16 bumper sticker, and I would happily place that on
17 the back of my - my bumper is the back of my
18 wheelchair. I have carried presidential bumper
19 stickers, but I would be happy to put an "I heart
20 Transport DC."

21 I have been a member of Metro's
22 Accessibility Advisory Committee for several

1 years. This last year I became a member of the
2 Taxicab Commission's Accessibility Advisory
3 Committee, and I'm also a member of the Seabury
4 Connector, the old WEHTS, Washington Elderly and
5 Handicapped Transportation Services, their
6 transportation advisory, because transportation
7 is an essential civil right and particularly
8 important to the disability community.

9 When I became unable to use anything
10 but the wheelchair, I moved into D.C. because of
11 the transportation. I can - because
12 transportation allows people to participate in
13 and contribute to their community.

14 Otherwise, we're stuck in the house
15 and I can't stress enough and how important
16 accessible transportation is to the disability
17 community. It allows us to be fellow good
18 citizens to all of you, and I am a huge fan of
19 the Transport DC program.

20 One of the - it is a huge quality of
21 life change for people who normally use Metro
22 access. Now, I may be preaching to the choir,

1 but I am so enthusiastic and excited. I want to
2 make sure everyone completely understands what a
3 blessing and a resource this is to the disability
4 community.

5 With Metro access, you must plan your
6 trips at least 24 hours in advance. There is no
7 spontaneous, "Let's go to a movie. Let's go out
8 to eat, or let's go see a friend," or an
9 emergency. Many people do not realize that
10 ambulances will not transport my wheelchair with
11 me, so if they take me to the hospital, then I am
12 there and somehow someone somehow would have to
13 get my wheelchair there to me. Transport DC
14 fills that gap and I'm very excited.

15 I can remember several years ago, I
16 think in 2010, leading to not emergency, but
17 being admitted to a hospital, calling for an
18 accessible vehicle, a taxi, to take me, and you
19 simply got on a list and you waited, and they
20 said, "Well, we don't know how many hours it's
21 going to be or when, but we'll call you when you
22 come up on the list," such a huge difference now.

1 The program, they're actually doing a
2 better job than the program even suggests. They
3 suggest that you call up to an hour in advance,
4 but when I call, 15 to 30 minutes is really all I
5 ever wait, so it is really spontaneous travel.

6 Recently, a very close, I consider her
7 a sister, fell and broke her hip, and what a
8 relief to be able to go to the hospital when I
9 wanted to and stay as long as I needed to. With
10 MetroAccess, you'd have to plan ahead about a time
11 to pick them up, and if the doctor didn't come in
12 that time then you missed talking to the doctor.
13 Wonderful, wonderful, quality of life improvements.

14 The other thing that I want to speak
15 far and wide, and I do whenever I get that
16 opportunity, is the money it saves. MetroAccess
17 trips DC is billed \$56 per trip. This is \$28.
18 We need to make sure that Mayor Bowser and Cheh
19 understand this is a savings, and to actually put
20 more funds into this program. Thank you.

21
22 SECRETARY MIXON: Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you very
2 much. Transportation is a fundamental human
3 right, so I'm pleased to hear of your testimony
4 or the good things you have to say for the
5 program. We still have a long way to go in
6 making sure people can get to point A to point B
7 in a reasonable time period and to support their
8 needs.

9 However, we also have to be thankful
10 for the drivers who participate in the program,
11 and also the companies that support the program,
12 and also the customers who participate directly.
13 It is one of the things that my administration is
14 focused on making sure that we can not only
15 expand the program, but we can improve the
16 service so that those who are on the fringes and
17 have not had a chance to enjoy the benefit will
18 come in too. Thank you.

19 Madam Secretary, next speaker?

20 SECRETARY MIXON: Ms. Eartha Clark?

21 MS. CLARK: My name - good morning to
22 the panel -

1 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Good morning.

2 MS. CLARK: - the commissioners, and
3 my fellow cab drivers, and guests in here. My
4 name is Eartha Clark and I've been a cab driver
5 for over 40 years, and I have several issues of
6 my comments today.

7 I'm using a term that I don't think
8 anyone ever used before, but I'll explain it to
9 you. My term I'm using in explanations are, "yo-
10 yo roller coaster regulations." There are
11 several issues with yo-yo roller coaster
12 regulations.

13 Nearly every month, the DCTC changes
14 direction and flip-flops on policies, and drivers
15 are left to pick up the costs. For instance, the
16 911 emergency sign proposed mandated to be placed
17 in the taxi by the end of the year. Why do
18 drivers have to pay for the shortsighted mistakes
19 of the DCTC?

20 We told DCTC to have an emergency
21 feature in the beginning, but now because the
22 agency did not listen to the drivers, we will

1 have to pay the extra money to have the sign
2 upgraded. Why should we pay? The DCTC should
3 pay. We are business owners and we need
4 predictability and revenues.

5 The DCTC has reduced our income. We
6 no longer receive extra passenger fees for the
7 two, three, four, or five passengers. We no
8 longer receive trunk or luggage fees. We no
9 longer have the ability to share rides as a
10 regular part of our business.

11 Because of the regulations, we are not
12 getting paid for the work we do. We have lost
13 opportunities to provide customers with the
14 services that they like. Our competition has
15 Lyft, Line, Uber Pool, and taxis have shared
16 riding. We need to make sure that the industry
17 is an industry that pays its drivers. We need to
18 bring back business practices that help the
19 drivers.

20 There is one thing in the signs that
21 we recently got on the rate signs. I think it's
22 waits, the waiting time. I don't know whether

1 that's an error or what is it, but we used to get
2 \$25. I noticed on the signs it says \$35. Well,
3 we didn't get the \$25, and I don't know why in
4 the world that you want to put \$35 and we're not
5 going to get anything from it. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you, Ms.
7 Clark. There are a couple of things that we will
8 address in the fact check for the next session,
9 and one is the idea that the 911 emergency sign
10 is proposed mandated.

11 So I will encourage everyone to read
12 and pay attention to the language, and when you
13 are providing testimony, align it to the facts.
14 But I'll reserve judgment here and the fact check
15 next meeting will address these inconsistencies.
16 Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER TAPSCOTT: You know,
18 there's always been a confusion of waiting time
19 and hourly rate. The \$35 is not related to the
20 hourly rate. That is - I mean, it is not related
21 to the wait time. \$35 is if you want to hire my
22 cab for a number of hours. That has nothing to

1 do with the other, so don't get the two confused.

2 Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you,
4 Commissioner Tapscott. Madam Secretary, who is
5 the next speaker?

6 SECRETARY MIXON: Yes, Mr. Royale
7 Simms.

8 MR. SIMMS: Good morning,
9 Commissioners and Panel. My name is Royal Simms.
10 I represent the Teamsters Local 922 Washington,
11 D.C. Taxi Operator Association. I just have
12 three quick topics. First, I want to talk about
13 the PSPs.

14 At the confirmation round table, it
15 was mentioned that the PSP audit had been
16 completed. We believe that the results of this
17 audit should be made public. Today we see
18 language that states that the PSPs - the PSP
19 market is not competitive because of things like
20 the long-term contracts, but that's just at the
21 surface.

22 PSPs are not competitive because

1 there's a limited choice for the sake of a
2 quarter. Drivers know when they are being double
3 charged. Drivers know when they are paid late.
4 Drivers know when they have - when they lose
5 fares because of unreliable systems.

6 And now with Google Pay, Apple Pay,
7 and every other thing technological that's
8 advancing, drivers know that the PSP is inadequate
9 technology and they will face an equipment charge
10 in the future.

11 There is no need for the government to
12 regulate how customers pay with their credit
13 cards as long as drivers are accepting credit
14 cards. Drivers demand the freedom of choice to
15 select the best service at the best cost and the
16 PSP system does not give them that freedom.

17 On H-tags, we are happy to see the
18 Commission accept the report on H-tags. However,
19 we will not be satisfied with symbolic gestures.
20 The fact that veteran drivers cannot make a
21 living wage because the DCTC has arbitrarily
22 instituted an office policy without any input

1 from the public, the industry stakeholders, or
2 the appointed commissioners is absurd.

3 This is the most pressing issue
4 internally for the industry. We can put aside
5 Uber, and Lyft, and that external competition.
6 Internally, we are left with the question that
7 asks how do we treat drivers after five, ten, 20,
8 30 years of service? The answer cannot be that
9 these drivers are left to languish in non-living
10 wage conditions.

11 All of the drivers who once possessed
12 an H-tag should be the primary and the priority
13 once the DCTC decides to issue H-tags, and this
14 should happened with urgency and be implemented
15 immediately.

16 And finally on Title 31, an ALJ at the
17 Office of Administrative Hearings is quoted as
18 saying, "Title 31 is often internally
19 inconsistent." How can drivers in the industry
20 move forward in the changing environment when the
21 foundational rules are thick and unclear?

22 It is time for the Commission to form

1 a working group to reform Title 31 and clear out
2 all of the inconsistencies, make it streamlined,
3 make - reduce the regulatory burden on drivers.
4 We would gladly participate in such a working
5 group. I mean, we hope that will be an action
6 item for the Commission. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you, Mr.
8 Simms. Madam Secretary, do you have any
9 speakers?

10 SECRETARY MIXON: Has Mr. Ed Swailes
11 come in? That's the only other one that had
12 registered. Are there any non-registered
13 speakers that we can get on the calendar time
14 permitted?

15 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay, yes, and in
16 fact, I saw four hands raised. So sir, in the
17 tan, you're going to be first. Is that okay?

18 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Yes.

19 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay, second, Mr.
20 Frankel. Mr. Massoud, you will get two minutes?

21 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: No more than two
22 minutes.

1 SECRETARY MIXON: Two minutes.

2 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: And gentlemen, I
3 would appreciate your cooperation here. We want
4 to be generous.

5 SECRETARY MIXON: Yes, Dawit Dagneu,
6 okay, Mr. Chubbs, and then in the blue shirt, he
7 spoke to me ahead. So everybody, remember your
8 order. If you would please, on that sheet, write
9 your name? And before you speak, say your name
10 and spell it for the court reporter. So yes,
11 sir, if you would say and spell your name, then I
12 will start the timer when you start to speak.

13 MR. HASSAN: My name Abdelwahaeb
14 Hassan, A-B-D-E-L-W-A-H-A-E-B, Hassan H-A-S-S-A-
15 N. Good morning. Please give us our H-tag back.
16 We did not sign a clear warning. If we give this
17 H-tag back, we will never get it back. We don't
18 want to watch our H-tag that we give now is to be
19 given in a lottery, you know, with companies and
20 some unlimited numbers of drivers. Please, we
21 want our H-tag back. Thank you.

22

1 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you, and I
2 want to take this opportunity to caution future
3 participants also. The idea of trumpeting, "I
4 want an H-tag, H-tag, H-tag," doesn't necessarily
5 move the needle.

6 The Panel on Industry took time to
7 hear from different people, and documented their
8 findings, and the report was made public. And as
9 I mentioned earlier, that was the first step.
10 The second step was for the Commission to accept
11 the findings. And the third step will be for us
12 to propose regulations or legislation to address
13 the H-tag issue.

14 So I'm making a plea that saying, "I
15 want an H-tag, H-tag, H-tag," doesn't do anything
16 anymore, so just save yourself and focus on
17 maintaining good relations with the industry,
18 serving passengers, and the appropriate time,
19 which will be before the end of the year, when
20 something is proposed, you can provide
21 substantive feedback. Thank you.

22 MR. HASSAN: Thank you. I'm just

1 drawing your attention. We did not sign any
2 clear warning that we will never get our H-tag
3 back. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you, next
5 speaker?

6 SECRETARY MIXON: So, yes, if you
7 would put your name there, please?

8 MR. FRANKEL: Do I need to spell my
9 last name?

10 SECRETARY MIXON: Yes, sir, and then
11 spell it, your whole name, Laurence Frankel.

12 MR. FRANKEL: Laurence Frankel, F-R-A-
13 N-K-E-L.

14 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay.

15 MR. FRANKEL: Good enough? Well,
16 thank you very much. Commissioner Ferguson, are
17 you still there? Is Mr. - Commissioner Ferguson
18 still there? Oh, I was going to congratulate him
19 on the fact that he has reached transparency in
20 this agency by becoming completely invisible.

21 In 40 years of being here in the
22 District and coming to meetings, I have never

1 seen an invisible representative completely. I
2 mean, coming from jail, I've seen the people even
3 on the video, so the fact that he voted on my
4 business and what will happen to it is insulting
5 and it should change, and he needs to be told
6 that. Thank you on that part.

7 On the fact check of this meeting, I
8 didn't hear any driver recommendations that
9 changed the agency's regulations. Other
10 businesses and association did, but I've been
11 here for a long time, and these people have here,
12 and they've made recommendations for as many
13 years as I can remember and not one has recently
14 in the last six or seven years really been taken.
15 And if you want some suggestions, I can spend the
16 next two weeks giving you that.

17 On the dome light, the dome light is
18 insulting. It has nothing to do with safety or
19 911. The fact that I can't change the messages
20 on that dome light makes that invalid. It is one
21 of the best things this agency ever invented, and
22 yet it doesn't enforce the right things and it

1 doesn't do the right processes for the driver. I
2 want a switch in my cab that changes every
3 message, and I will give you the money to make
4 911 another feature.

5 And one thing - I'd like one more
6 statement, just - I understand the two minutes.
7 You got two possible mistakes on your new rate
8 charge in the cab. One of them is a snow
9 emergency. Snow emergency is an addition. It's
10 not the entire fare. It's not a flat fee for \$15
11 and that's misleading and it's going to cause us
12 trouble. And the \$35 per hour on the rate chart,
13 new one, Commissioner Tapscott is correct on what
14 he sees, but it's misleading for the public.
15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you, Larry.
17 Next speaker?

18 MR. MEDGHALCHI: Good morning, Massoud
19 Medghalchi.

20 SECRETARY MIXON: I'm sorry, could you
21 spell it for our court reporter, please?

22 MR. MEDGHALCHI: M-A-S-S-O-U-D, last

1 name is spelled M-E-D-G-H-A-L-C-H-I.

2 SECRETARY MIXON: Thank you.

3 MR. MEDGHALCHI: If you would indulge
4 me, I would like to ask a question. I don't know
5 if I'm permitted to do that. But on the item
6 three today for creation of co-ops, can you
7 please refresh my memory on what this is going to
8 do?

9 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: The Commission
10 does not address questions and answers in this
11 forum.

12 MR. MEDGHALCHI: Okay, now I'm going
13 to make a comment based on my take if it's right.
14 I'm not sure. But if the co-ops are going to be
15 like the ones that were formed before, which was
16 to circumvent the residency laws of D.C. which
17 D.C. Cab Commission became complicit in skirting
18 its own rules that were passed, it needs to be
19 stopped.

20 Because now we have a problem between
21 the drivers and the co-ops that were formed that
22 one basically provided residency for the other

1 guy, and now the tags are in dispute, and non-
2 company co-ops are expecting to become companies
3 by getting a windfall by breaking the rules and
4 getting H-tags. That's number one.

5 I've heard from two drivers that their
6 cars were impounded because there was a
7 discrepancy on the VIN number on their insurance
8 cards, so it was a mistake of the insurance
9 companies and they impounded their cars. I
10 believe that's illegal because the PVIN number
11 matched it. So it should have given the
12 enforcement officers enough inkling to know what
13 was really going on instead of impounding the
14 poor guy's car in the middle of the street.

15 We're still getting no enforcement on
16 the black cars. They actually line up in front of
17 bars, office buildings. The cabs cannot even
18 loiter if they wanted to because all of the black
19 cars are loitering all of the time.

20 And Mr. Stark has tapped me on the
21 shoulder angrily to try to stop me from talking
22 about this. I'm going to keep talking about it

1 and beating the dead horse. There is no
2 enforcement for the cab drivers in D.C.

3 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you, Mr.
4 Massoud. And the General Counsel of the
5 Commission, Jacques Lerner, will be happy to meet
6 with you to give you a synopsis of the co-ops
7 rules. Okay, but again, to everybody, this is
8 not sort of like a forum for questions and
9 answers, so if you have questions, we'll be happy
10 to take them, okay?

11 MR. DAWITT: Good morning, Dagnew
12 Dawit, D-A-G-N-E-W D-A-W-I-T. Mr. Chairman, I'm
13 just bringing a little different issue this
14 morning. Many companies and insurance companies
15 may not like it. This is about an insurance
16 company.

17 We have issues about insurance. Of
18 course Commissioner Tapscott and Commissioner
19 Muhammad could help me with this. We all know at
20 this point D.C. government is selling insurance.
21 That's not a secret anymore. We should not be a
22 business of it.

1 Now, the government sold for insurance
2 companies, insurance companies pass that to taxi
3 companies before it gets to me. Why is the D.C.
4 government - I can understand it regulator, as a
5 regulator, yet you can regulate us as to what
6 kind of coverage we should have, but you cannot
7 tell us to go purchase from a particular store.
8 That is illegal.

9 I'm referring to these four companies,
10 insurance companies, that were created under D.C.
11 government. That needs to be changed and I'm
12 going to keep counting on this one.

13 Second, what is the difference? The
14 D.C. government sells it for \$12. The insurance
15 companies sell it to my company for \$22 for just
16 doing nothing, and my company brings it and sells
17 it to me at \$35. Back in the days, we used to
18 get a paint for free at least once or twice for a
19 year. That's no more. So why should I pay my
20 company this much?

21 If I need to go independent, you
22 should open that independent options for

1 individuals. If I have to paint it from my
2 pocket as opposed through the companies which
3 helped us paint in the previous years, is not
4 happening so there's no reason for me to pay for
5 the companies this much.

6 In other words, now I am an
7 independent driver, but I am affiliated with
8 Silver Cab, for example, and I am with Silver
9 Cab. We're going red, right? Cabs are red. How
10 is that a silver and I'm going to be silver, or
11 yellow cab? We're going to be red, right? Even
12 those names doesn't even represent the paints
13 that are going on anymore.

14 The second thing is, and some people
15 might help me here, people who recently upgraded
16 their vehicles are paying two insurances. I
17 understand a dealer asks you for full coverage
18 before you pull up its car from this dealer,
19 okay? If you have full coverage, why do we still
20 purchasing that liability from our insurance
21 companies?

22 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay, your time is

1 up.

2 MR. DAWIT: Two policies. I mean,
3 this is a very important issue. I wish I could -
4 but if you have any questions, I promised last
5 week I'm going to bring this in detail to you,
6 about five weeks ago, I'm sorry, but I would
7 promise I will bring it back. To initiate this
8 issue, I just put it on the record, and I wish I
9 could have that chance to read a copy of the
10 transcript.

11 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you, Dawit.

12 MR. DAWIT: I appreciate it.

13 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: The insurance
14 issue, at least the concerns that have been
15 raised, is something that we're going to look
16 into and take the appropriate actions too. Thank
17 you for taking the initiative.

18 MR. DAWIT: Appreciate it.

19 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: And I look forward
20 to getting additional information from you.

21 MR. DAWIT: Okay, I'm just asking,
22 could we get a transcript? Where should I get

1 that transcript?

2 MR. LERNER: Online.

3 MR. DAWIT: Can we get it? Okay.

4 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you. Madam
5 Secretary, any other registered speakers?

6 SECRETARY MIXON: Yes, there are two
7 more, Mr. Chubbs - do you want to speak, Mr.
8 Chubbs? Okay, you have your two minutes and then
9 the gentleman in the blue, yes, sir.

10 MR. CHUBBS: Good morning,
11 Commissioner, and my fellow drivers. My name is
12 EJ Chubbs, independent cab number 69CHUBBS. Am I
13 allowed to talk on something other than what's on
14 this list?

15 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Yes.

16 MR. CHUBBS: Okay, number one, the
17 number one on there about the safety device. You
18 know, we went around, years ago, we went around
19 and around and we was trying to make something
20 safe with not too much expense to the driver, and
21 with all of the communication and with the
22 driver, we decided on the 911 light. I think it

1 has been a service, but I hear it said that it's
2 no service, but I think it was a service.

3 And now when they come up with this
4 new cruising light, another expense on us
5 drivers. I try to fight to stay in business, but
6 it seems like the rules and regulation that you
7 come up with is just incurring us to spend
8 dollars that we get no return on our dollar.

9 Another thing I wanted to say about,
10 you know, this one color thing. I don't see
11 where that contributes to the business at all. I
12 mean, and the age of the cab. We go through
13 inspection twice a year, and as long as your car
14 is safe and sanitary, I just can't see the reason
15 of enforcing you to have to go out and buy a new
16 car and I want to touch on that too.

17 If you say you want to update our
18 fleet, we go and buy a new car or an updated car.
19 If you make us ride five passengers within our
20 car, you make us put 10 luggage in the trunk if
21 your trunk will hold it, and we get nothing. I
22 mean, the bellmen, they throw the luggage in the

1 car and you see holes in your trunk and things.

2 I mean, and I'll say one other thing.

3 Back years ago, because I've been
4 driving for 50 years, back years ago when we
5 enacted rules and regulation, we did a
6 combination. We made the rules that we felt was
7 going to be beneficial for the general riding
8 public, also benefit us as small businessmen.
9 But somewhere down the line, it looks like that's
10 just going out the window, and I'm open for any
11 questions that you have.

12 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you for your
13 testimony.

14 SECRETARY MIXON: And then our last
15 speaker, sir, in the blue, if you would state and
16 spell your name for the record and write it down,
17 then I will start the timer.

18 MR. BEKELE: My name is Kumilachew
19 Bekele, K-U-M-I-L-A-C-H-E-W, last name Bekele, B-
20 E-K-E-L-E. I think earlier you said you didn't
21 take any kind of questions, but I tried to
22 resolve my problem through the driver's service

1 and tried to get an appointment to see you. I
2 couldn't get a chance.

3 But my issue was like renewing the
4 face. When I renew my face, the Taxicab
5 Commission trying to change their system by doing
6 to the H drivers first day, and some of us will
7 lose. Some of us, we did. But when you charge
8 the amount, you charge - the Taxicab Commission
9 charged the full amount of the two years' renewal
10 system, but now the system is changed.

11 But what I heard from the front office
12 over there is like because my birthday is five
13 months late, I couldn't get the full amount, but
14 I paid the full amount. It doesn't matter. As
15 long as I paid the full amount, I was supposed to
16 get 24 months of renewal.

17 If not, I'm not supposed to pay the
18 full amount of the renewal, and I don't know. I
19 didn't see any memorandum the last time when I
20 came. There was time to even to pull me out by
21 the security. There was a guy that came.
22 Somebody told me he was a deputy, but he said he

1 couldn't show me even if he has a memorandum to
2 see that.

3 I went to even to the counsel office
4 and they told me to go back and talk, but I
5 didn't see anything. So I don't think we deserve
6 it that way. If the Taxicab Commission wants to
7 change the system, it's supposed to be the burden
8 is on the Taxicab Commission, not on the driver.
9 If not, it could be a dollar. I need my dollar
10 refund.

11 I'm not supposed to pay the full
12 amount of 24. In the state of 24 months, I'm
13 just getting 17 months, so I don't know how you
14 look at that one. That's why I came because I
15 was attempting to reach you three times but I
16 couldn't get a chance. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you for your
18 testimony. And again, you would imagine if I had
19 to take an appointment with every single person
20 in the industry, I'd probably get nothing done.

21 I have competent staff members and
22 systems in place to address these issues, so I

1 strongly encourage you to go to client services
2 and ask for an appointment with my special
3 assistant, and your issue, I can assure you, will
4 be resolved.

5 But again, if you want a quick
6 response, the answer is not always, "I have to
7 see the Chairman." I have staff members in place
8 that can address these issues. But again, thank
9 you for bringing this up, and I hope you follow
10 the course of action that I have recommended.

11 That concludes the unregistered or
12 last minute speakers who were provided an
13 opportunity to speak. I'd like to thank you all
14 for attending today's meeting and sharing your
15 thoughts, your comments, your suggestions, and
16 also participating as we try to improve the
17 industry. This meeting is adjourned and the next
18 meeting will be November 18, 2015, 10:00 a.m. at
19 the same place. Thank you.

20 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
21 went off the record at 11:30 a.m.)
22

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In the matter of: Commission Meeting

Before: DC Taxicab Commission

Date: 10-14-15

Place: Washington, DC

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