GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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DEPARTMENT OF FOR-HIRE VEHICLES

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FULL COMMISSION MEETING

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THURSDAY NOVEMBER 10, 2016

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The Commission met in the D.C. Department of For-Hire Vehicles, 2235 Shannon Place, SE, Washington, D.C., at 2:00 p.m., Ernest Chrappah, Chairman, presiding.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

ERNEST CHRAPPAH, Chairman JEFFREY SCHAEFFER, Commissioner DOTTI WADE, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT:

JUANDA MIXON, SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION MONIQUE BOCOCK, ESQ., General Counsel

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

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Adjourn

1	P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S					
2	2:17 p.m.					
3	CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Good afternoon.					
4	Welcome to the hearing. Welcome to the public					
5	hearing on proposed amendments to Chapters 4, 5,					
6	6, 8, 15, 20 and 99 of Title 31 DCMR. Today is					
7	November 10, 2016, Thursday and we are located in					
8	Public Hearing Room 2235 Shannon Place SE,					
9	Washington D.C. and the time is 2:17.					
10	We are fortunate to be joined today by					
11	a couple of our For-Hire Vehicle Advisory council					
12	members and some they are streaming live during					
13	the course of our hearing today. To my right is					
14	Ms. Dotti Love Wade, and to my left is Jeffrey					
15	Schaeffer. Jeffrey Schaeffer is a representative					
16	of a company providing Vehicle For-Hire Service					
17	in the District of Columbia, and Ms. Wade is a					
18	district resident who regularly uses public or					
19	private vehicle for-hire service.					
20	Before we get into the hearing, it's					
21	usual and customary I would like us to observe a					
22	moment of silence for those who've departed.					

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1	(Moment of silence.)					
2	Thank you. The Department of For-Hire					
3	Vehicles has scheduled this public hearing to					
4	hear from our community and our stakeholders					
5	regarding the digital taxicab solutions. The					
6	regulation was put out some weeks back and there					
7	are a number of registered speakers, so I'm going					
8	to ask the Secretary of the Department to call					
9	out the individuals who signed up to speak in the					
10	order they are registered.					
11	SECRETARY MIXON: First we have Mr.					
12	Larry Frankel.					
13	MR. FRANKEL: I apologize for the red					
14	ink. 1, 2, 3, can you hear me?					
15	I apologize for the red ink; my					
16	printer at home ran out of ink, so we had to make					
17	this red ink instead of normal black.					
18	Very good. Should I go ahead and					
19	spell my name?					
20	CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Yes.					
21	MR. FRANKEL: Yes, my name is Larry					
22	Frankel, L-A-R-R-Y, F-R-A-N-K-E-L. I sort of					

made an abbreviated statement, once again, 1 2 because due to the content of these emergency regulations in which I find many passages as 3 I will only illustrate during my 4 unacceptable. 5 scope and testimony as to what those are, so if anybody is not here and would like to read it, 6 7 please refer to the transcripts to find content 8 if you're not present here.

I would like to follow with a few 9 things about the rule-making here. What's very 10 11 interesting is that four years ago to five years 12 ago, mine and Mr. Massoud's testimony was very 13 similar to this, except it was looked upon as 14 opposition at the time to the policy; that was 15 the taxicab meters and the dome light and the credit card PSP to which this legislation is 16 17 about. Now, before the legislation is kind of a 18 preamble which discussed why this has happened. 19 I'm not really against most of the rules being 20 changed back to what they kind of were. They 21 kind of switch back and forth; before we had a \$450 dome light, we had a \$50 dome light. 22 And

now we're going to get rid of the \$450 dome light 1 2 and we're going to go back to a \$50 one. What these policies are doing are 3 bankrupting what's left of the taxicab drivers. 4 These were expensive items, these cost time and 5 There was nothing wrong with the idea of 6 energy. 7 any of these. Many of these were great ideas, a 8 dome light that actually told the people on the 9 street in English words whether you were available or not, is now being scrapped. 10 The meters that you waited in line for, for weeks at 11 12 a time, sometimes you were out of business for a 13 month because the implementation of that did not 14 include enough meters, enough dome lights, enough of anything to fulfill the time elements, so 15 16 people got fined and thousands of dollars were 17 paid and time was lost and we had bad equipment. 18 This is what this says; this says in all these 19 words it was bad. 20 It says it's now several years later

20 It says it's now several years later 21 and the time has come to move past the original 22 regulations which got the industry over its

initial hurdles. Hurdles? It bankrupted me. 1 Ι 2 don't know what it's doing for you? Our director, Mr. Chrappah, I thank you for the last 3 meeting. Of all the meetings, the very last 4 5 meeting last week was the very first one which I felt there was some progress, that I could sit 6 7 down and discuss a real industry situation with 8 realism and being honest about what the fares 9 could be and how they could change and how they can manipulate to make driving more profitable. 10 11 But we can't do that because my argument has 12 always been this; my complaint for many years has 13 been that the industry resolution that I have and 14 others have offered and proposed are regurgitated back to me and us as punitive punishment for 15 16 honestly addressing problems openly. 17 This is a wonderful example of 18 regurgitation, this is a waste of time, to which 19 even it says it in here. It says that the rules

and regulations as proposed will not change

So, it's a

anything majorly, do any progress for our

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industry or for your income.

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lackluster attempt. It says right here; "with 1 2 this in mind of these regulations, the Department has carefully considered the next steps, 3 4 beginning with the question of whether 5 adjustments to the existing regulations would be sufficient to address the needs of the industry 6 7 in the current marketplace." The answer is no. 8 That's what it says; the answer is no. So, 9 what's the purpose? 10 Thank you. Have a good day. 11 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you, Larry. 12 SECRETARY MIXON: All right, the next 13 person is Mr. Massoud Medghalchi. Do you have 14 your statement? Oh, yeah. All ten of 15 MR. MEDGHALCHI: 16 them for the ten people sitting up here. 17 SECRETARY MIXON: Okay. 18 MR. MEDGHALCHI: Some of them are 19 invisible today. 20 Hello, Mr. Chairman. How are you? 21 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: I'm well, Massoud. 22 Good to see you today.

1	MR. MEDGHALCHI: Good to see you, too.					
2	Thank you for the opportunity to					
3	testify today. My name is Massoud Medghalchi; I					
4	represent the dominion of DC taxicab drivers and					
5	I'm actually a board member.					
6	Anyway, I'm going to go into					
7	reiterating some of what Mr. Frankel said. We					
8	fought some of the regulations that we were					
9	saddled with tooth and nail because of the timing					
10	that it was being done in, which was extremely					
11	fast, it was choking us in the industry and a					
12	lack of coherence as to in what order they came					
13	and also basically not equipment it was not					
14	coordinated right, so we did not access to the					
15	equipment on time. Every time we objected to it,					
16	whether it was in front of Ms. wonderful Shay who					
17	was behind all this crap, and your panel when you					
18	were not here, Mr. Linton, it was defended					
19	vociferously by government representatives that					
20	these were absolutely necessary regulations to					
21	bring the industry into compliance and also with					
22	what the public wanted.					

1	What gives you the impetus now to					
2	pivot 180 degrees from all of this? I can tell					
3	you what it is; you know there can be a very					
4	successful lawsuit and it can be a class action.					
5	It could actually bankrupt the city. If the					
6	wonderful drivers here, the idiots that we tried					
7	to tell them all these years how they were being					
8	sandbagged by the government, had stood behind					
9	us. You were lucky in that respect. We never					
10	got that support.					
11	Not only they lost their business,					
12	they lost their dignity. The dignity they lost					
13	was because of not fighting, because of not					
14	listening to us. You on the government side took					
15	the rest of it away from them. These regulations					
16	that were put in place and later on with the					
17	entrance of Uber into the business, shared riding					
18	so-called, all of a sudden Ms. Shay wrote another					
19	set of regulations to accommodate them. However,					
20	there were no measures put in there for					
21	enforcement, and that was admitted by Mr. Start					
22	(phonetic) at a roundtable before the Fifth					

District Police. He actually is on record having
said that, the regulations written as they stand
today was unenforceable.

4 That to me spells discrimination, 5 equal protection, they're all being violated. You know these regulations have a lot of holes in 6 7 them; that's the reason why you want to get rid 8 I have pictures of at least 15 tags of them. 9 from Iowa, New York, New Jersey, Florida, you 10 name it, who are hacking on the streets with Uber I've seen them when they're dropped off 11 sians. 12 or when they pick up passengers. I've even brought it to the attention of the enforcement on 13 14 the street. I will just leave off the name of the enforcement, the officers that I've talked 15 16 to.

They basically throw their hands up and say, "Yeah, we'll do what we can." How come enforcement is not being equally distributed among the for-hire vehicles. The cab drivers don't have enough jobs, so they pile into lines in which they're basically loitering, and they

easily come and give them tickets. In the meanwhile the street is riddled like a brothel for whoever that wants to come from wherever in the United States to prostitute his business to the people on the streets.

I have two ladies in a Wisconsin 6 7 Avenue address, one of them came to her house to 8 find her Uber driver sitting in her living room 9 waiting for her. I'm hoping she's going to bring 10 charges against the city. I'm trying to talk 11 them into it. Another one that's been raped that 12 has never reported. One of these days we will 13 get you. I don't when it's going to be, but we 14 will get you one of these days.

15 I have another guy that was held at 16 gunpoint at the stadium who was supposed to be an 17 Uber driver and made him take out all his money 18 from his bank receipt. I had to give him a ride 19 because he only had \$10. He had begged the guy 20 to leave him with him 10 bucks so he could get 21 home.

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SECRETARY MIXON: That's your time.

1	MR. MEDGHALCHI: All right, it's					
2	useless. Have a good day.					
3	CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you,					
4	Massoud.					
5	Is there anyone in the audience who is					
6	not a registered speaker, who needs some time to					
7	share some thoughts?					
8	We have one. You have two minutes,					
9	and that will round out public speaking, public					
10	witness statement.					
11	MR. PRICE: My name is Nathan Price, I					
12	drove a cab 44-1/2 years.					
13	CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Good to see you,					
14	Nathan.					
15	MR. PRICE: I'm out of business. The					
16	sad thing is that I remember it used to be that					
17	the taxi industry, when it started in 1835 to the					
18	present; it's very sad to see where we are today.					
19	I was listening to you talking about the volumes,					
20	or the chapters as you call them of Title 31; 31					
21	used to be a quarter-inch thick, $8-1/2$ by 11,					
22	drivers used to carry them around in their cabs,					

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it was their Bible. Now it's so thick, it won't 1 2 even fit in the front seat of your car. What is happening has been a 3 4 systematic annihilation of the industry. It was 5 a gateway for a lot of people to go into business, stay in business, raise families and do 6 7 whatever. The industry was overburdened going 8 back to 1985, there were too many taxicabs. **All** 9 of a sudden because we have a zoned system, we got bounded. We went to meters because Adrian 10 11 Fenty said we want to be universal. Now, every 12 city that went universal had something called a limit on the number of cabs. That was like 13 14 thrown out the window, and instead we increased the number of drivers, increased the number of 15 16 cabs, the city council protects the DCTC and let 17 Uber, Lyft and other ride-sharing service come 18 into the business, bankrupting the drivers and 19 through the company. 20 In closing, I'd like to say one thing; 21 the biggest Acting Chairman before you in the

District -- DCTC, he was the first person who I

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1 consider a regulator, and that was very 2 refreshing. When you came along, you were the first person who had a background in economics. 3 That was refreshing, but there's nothing you've 4 5 done dealing with economics, because our business 6 is based on economics. So, basically, I know 7 people like their job, because the job pays 8 money, it pays the bills, but this business is 9 about supply and demand and how you distribute those things. 10 11 Thank you very much. 12 CHAIRMAN CHRAPPAH: Thank you, Mr. Price. 13 On that note, ladies and gentlemen 14 gathered here today, the public witness session 15 of this meeting is concluded and this meeting is 16 adjourned. 17 Thank you. 18 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter 19 went off the record at 2:17 p.m.) 20 21 22

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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Commission Meeting

Before: DC Department of For-Hire Vehicles

Date: 11-10-16

Place: Washington, DC

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my direction; further, that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

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