



TO: DC Taxi Cab Commission:

Panel on the Industry

poi@dc.gov

Re: Grand Cab Company Comments on H-tag Issues

I hereby attest, that on this date, June 1, 2015, I, Ephrem Yikuno, Business Manager and appointed agent of Grand Cab Company, do hereby respond to the request posted on DCTC website inquiring that the Panel on Industry wants to gather information from stakeholders and the public about H-tag issues, including information about why H-tags should or should not be issued, and about events related to H-tags that occurred from 2006 through the present, that cab companies and businesses may share their views on H-tag issues by sending a scanned letter on company letterhead to poi@dc.gov.

Grand Cab Company would like to comments on H-tag issues as follows:

1. An increase in H-tag means an increase in the number of Taxis on the street of DC. It also implies an augmented supply of taxis for the existing demand which leads to lowering of revenues for existing drivers. Before any attempt made for such an increase, we need to answer the following question: Is there a shortage of Taxis on the street or on dispatch services?
2. Whether there is a shortage or surplus in taxi service should be viewed from two angles: on the street and in dispatching services. Do we have an extended period of waiting of customers on the road, hotels and stations or do we see often empty cabs hacking around or standing long in hotels and stations? Do we have a good performance by dispatch service providing companies? How long it takes for cabbies to arrive. Or do they arrive at all?
3. Those questions should be answered based on a carefully undertaken survey and/or study on demand and supply. Especially at this moment, when the market is flooded with new services like Uber and Lyft, and with down trending of cab drivers daily income, an increase in H-tag should be decided carefully based on such studies.

Phone: 202-269-6690/202-269-3832 Fax:202-269-3831

4. It's normal for any city to have a steady increase in demand for taxi services as the population size and income increase. And such a demand should be met by a steady increase of the services. It's my belief that if there is any desire to increase in H-tag, it should come based on such needs and be based on a careful study.

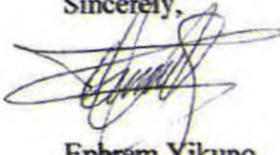
5. If there is any increase in H-tag, priority to be given to high demand areas such as dispatch services or geographic locations which are under-served.

6. The exceptional case of cab drivers, related to and after 2006, and those cab drivers who returned their tags legally for various reasons to get it back later but could not get it back, should be treated differently from the normal supply and demand issue. If DCTC should issue the tags for those two groups (on-resident co-owners and those who surrendered their tags legally but could not get it back). If the former group gets it, it cannot be a transfer from companies.

7. The co-owner companies should keep their tags for rental purposes (as the co-owners get new tags) as they are already obligated and invested due to compliance in wheelchair accessible and dispatch services.

Thus, I would like to ask that this letter may be heard at a panel hearing.

Sincerely,



Ephrem Yikuno

Business Manager

NOTE: This document, when properly executed, is valid without official certification/notarization.

Good afternoon Chairperson Cheh, distinguished members and staff of the Transportation Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony regarding the performance of the District of Columbia Taxi Commission (DCTC). My name is Carol Tyson. I am a District resident and Director of Disability Policy for United Spinal Association. Founded in 1946 by paralyzed veterans, United Spinal is the largest disability-led nonprofit organization representing the interests of more than a million Americans living with spinal cord injuries and disorders. United Spinal has a long history of advocating for equal access to transportation for all.

United Spinal would like to thank the DC Taxi Commission staff and leadership, as well as the companies and drivers of accessible taxis, for their hard work in the past year. We know from discussions that they are taking the mandate to ensure accessible service seriously. United Spinal will always call for a 100% accessible fleet of for-hire vehicles. Still, we recognize the efforts of the Commission to increase service, and support the taxi industry as they move towards complying with the requirements of the Taxicab Service Improvement Amendment Act of 2012 (DC Taxi Act). We acknowledge especially the work of those implementing the CAPS-DC program.

United Spinal has a few outstanding concerns and recommendations for the Committee and Commission. We hope the Commission will continue to implement rulemaking and programs following from requirements in the 2012 law. On December 31st, least 6% of each taxicab fleet was to be wheelchair accessible. Based on estimates this would result in access to 1% of the District's total taxi fleet. We urge the Commission to strongly enforce the requirement. In addition, United Spinal urges the Commission, and this Committee, to do all it can to support compliance with other requirements from the bill, namely that all wheelchair accessible taxi drivers receive proper training. The Commission is also required to "develop a program to provide grants, loans, and other types of financial assistance and incentives to applicants and owners to offset the cost of buying, retrofitting, maintaining, and operating a vehicle for use as a wheelchair accessible cab" (DC Taxi Act, Sec20f(d)).

United Spinal recommends a public awareness and education campaign for drivers on the need and requirements for accessible for-hire service, and which would let the public, including tourists, know that there are additional accessible taxis available. This recommendation was made in the Accessibility Advisory Committee's initial report.

People with disabilities, like everyone else, rely on multiple modes of transportation. The Metro, buses, sidewalks and for-hire vehicles provide a network of transportation options. For people with disabilities for-hire vehicles can provide crucial transportation when sidewalks, curb cuts, and bus stops are completely inaccessible due to snow and ice as we have all experienced over the last month.

Accessible transportation is important for those of us who live with a permanent disability, but also for people who find themselves temporarily disabled. Yesterday, United Spinal received an unsolicited email from a Principal of a respected law firm here in the District. Mr. Thomas had minor surgery on his leg and needed to use a scooter for 5 weeks. He used a wheelchair accessible taxi to get around and had a less than stellar experience. Mr. Thomas shared, "Not only does there need to be more wheelchair accessible service but it needs to be much more liable and companies need to be held accountable when they fail to pick people up on [a] timely basis ... If I were a permanent power wheelchair or scooter user, I would have to rethink the whole notion of continuing to work in my current setting, or at all."

United Spinal calls on this Committee to do all it can to support the taxi commission, companies, and drivers in their efforts to ensure accessible taxi service is provided in the District. We also call on the Committee and the Commission to hold accountable all for-hire vehicle service providers to ensure equal access. In San Francisco, there has been a decline in the number of wheelchair accessible taxis over the past year and a half. Regulators cite the presence of Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) in the market as the reason for the decline. TNCs are not required to provide accessible service in San Francisco or the District, but can draw drivers and passengers from existing taxi companies. Accessibility requirements for TNCs, incentives like a tax credit, or a fund that will support the purchase and operation of accessible vehicles, are needed now more than ever.

This July, the country and the District will celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability - requiring equal access to people with disabilities to schools, employment, restaurants, and other public accommodations. There would be no better time for the District to hold itself accountable to the ideals of this Act. We hope the Commission and Committee will do everything in its power to ensure that people with disabilities, both permanent and temporary, are provided access to the same services that all rely on in the District. Thank you.



DRIVERS UNITED for Equal Rights
1924 9th Street, NW, Washington DC 20001
dcdriversunited@yahoo.com

In 2006 the District of Columbia began enforcing a year 2000 law restricting vehicle registration in the District to residents. However, this law – the Motor Vehicle and Driver Safety Amendment Act – failed to contemplate the fact that while many DC cabdrivers own their cab, they do not live in the District. When this discrepancy was discovered and it became evident several thousand cabdrivers would be pushed out of their profession of choice, the Council ameliorated the problem by creating an exception for cabdrivers living outside of DC.

While this process did much to assure the District's ability to comply with its own vehicle registration laws, it did little to ameliorate the concerns of cabdrivers who began providing service after 2006 as the new approach was applied to all post 2006 cabdrivers. In turn, this meant that even those cabdrivers who lived in DC before 2006 had to partner with a cab company in one form or another if they were to work as cabdrivers within the District. Today it is estimated the community of cabbies impacted by the year 2006 changes are 3000 according to DMV left on their own to preserve their ability to remain in their profession of choice, cabdrivers who were not residents of DC identified a mechanism for registering their cabs. In short, DC-based cab companies began using their status as DC residents to bridge cabdrivers' ability to register their cab with the Department of Motor Vehicles. This approach was successful for at least two reasons.

First, DMV laws and regulations permit co-ownership and thereby co-registration of cars as long as one owner is a DC resident. Second, the approach worked because most cabdrivers owned the car they operated as a cab outright which meant they did not face any barriers to adding a cab company to the title. Despite entering into co-ownership models however, individual cabdrivers continue to be primarily responsible for the cab. That is, for purchasing and/or financing the car they will later use as a cab and for its maintenance, fueling, insurance costs, all DMV related costs such as registration and renewal costs for instance.

In the fall of 2012 the DC Taxicab Commission (DCTC) in partnership with the Department of Motor Vehicles adopted a new approach for effectuating proper registration of a taxicab. This approach is condensed into what is known as the One Stop form.

Due to the policy DCTC had in place the post 2006 drivers problem started. That was when DCTC started signing on one stop form; While one stop form came to DCTC for approval drivers name started to be removed from their registration by DCTC staffs. Until that point there was no problem for drivers to operate smoothly and after that point the right of ownership had been given to cab companies, until DMV make a policy change.

The Taxicab Commission's insistence on standing between cabdrivers and their right to register their cab in their own name means the Taxicab Service Amendment Act will relegate cabdrivers who entered the industry after 2006 to the margins of the industry. System whereby cabdrivers are being purged from the record(s) as the rightful owners of their own cabs, the District's hope of ensuring taxicab service is readily available to all riders is being steadily undermined until DMV make a policy change that restored the primary ownership of their tags. Although DMV made a policy change and our members became primary owners of their tag they are not allowed to change their cab company

due to unknown reason even when drivers don't like their companies. Additionally, since this approach creates a great imbalance between cabdrivers and the cab companies they are being forced to affiliate with. Even some cab companies are using this loop hole and charge cab drivers \$50.00 a week licence fee for the Government property (the Tag) that cab drivers payed for. Some of our members who has been driving with out of state tag and had been working with DMV certificate with DCTC approval had been refused to stay in their profession of choice. This individuals are still paying insurance and equipment fee for the credit card machine for more than three month and had been unemployed. When taken together, these problems clearly show that by institutionalizing regulations and practices that create insurmountable burdens to being a DC-serving cabdriver who entered the industry after 2006 and/or who lives outside of the District, DC Drivers United for Equal Rights demand equal economic opportunity to all cab drivers.

Mekonnen Abel
Dc Drivers United For Equal Right



United Ventures Consortium (UVC) INC

ALLIED, BLACK PEARL, LUXURY, SEASON, SWIFT AND UCC TAXICAB COMPANY

July 27, 2015

Panel on the Industry

Dear Sir/Madam,

Subject :- Letter of appeal on the current move of issuing additional H-tags

Unlike most major U.S. cities, for longtime the District Colombia has not a law capping the number of taxicabs operating in the city. Recently the DCTC made amendments on chapter ten of title-31(in 2012) and commissioned a study on DC taxicab quota (in 2014). Accordingly this study reveals that the number of taxicabs required to provide sufficient service in the city is 6,141, however, the DCTC data shows about 7,000 licenses were issued and of these number 6,191 are actively operating in Washington DC. Despite these facts, currently the DCTC is planning to issue additional new H-Tags.

Nevertheless, it is known that Washington DC has an unusually high number of taxis per capita compared to other cities, which is good for the riding public, but it also means that there are more cabs chasing the limited number of rides, which is bad for the drivers. In addition, the city is overwhelmed by unregulated competitors such as Uber-X and lyft that seriously endanger the livelihood of drivers with a marked reduction of income.

Cognizant of these facts, we kindly applied to the DCTC not to provide additional new H-tags, rather we strongly suggest enforcing existing taxi companies to replace their older cabs and poorly maintained cars with fuel efficient or newer cars to counter drivers claim or excuse to get an H-tags. Because this will not affect the public interest and do not unduly/significantly harm the taxicab industry in the District.

MOHAMMAD ASGHAR
2254 STONE WHEEL DRIVE #C
RESTON VA 20191

HEARING FROM MOHAMMAD ASGHAR
HAIC ID# 80183

DEAR SIR/MAIM,

I am 69 year old and disabled by panel of doctors due surgry of right knee.
I only can work as driver because I can not work by walking. I have 5 children
Age between 3 year to 12 year, 3 are in elementary school one in middle school.
I am only one supporting member to all family.
Sir, as you know that now a days taxi job gone to low in 8 hours hardly we make
50 to 80 dollars which are not sufficient for family expenditures. I pay dollars
One thounds rent per month for rental car.
Sir I request and appeal to issue me Haic licence for free so I can buy car by installment
And make our life easy! hope my request will be conside red with sympathy.

God bless you.thank you advance

Yours faithfully,


Mohammad asghar
H/ID # 80183

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50 to 80 dollars which are not sufficient for family expenditures. I pay dollars
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God bless you.thank you advance

Yours faithfully,



Mohammad asghar
H/ID # 80183

H-TAG PRESENTATION (DRAFT)

Hello, My name is Vincent Gordon, I've been driving taxicab in Washington D.C. since 1988, I've raised my family, brought my home in the district, all while working either full-time or part-time as a cabdriver. Currently I live as a cancer survivor and compensated veteran, who is rated permanently and totally disabled. My disability ended my 24 year career as a finish carpenter and a project supervisor for a company that built restaurants in the metropolitan area. Fortunately for me working as a cabdriver supplements my income.

Personally, I'm hoping that the issuance of an H-tag would ensure that my lifetime commitment as a taxicab driver would be secured. I'd like to think I operated in ^{THE} taxi industry like a responsible small business, and contributed my service as the star ambassador most visitors encounter when they come to the nation's capital.

With the ability to acquire a H-tag, I can realize the possibility of participating in the wheelchair accessible program. I've invested the last seven years trying to develop a working knowledge of the wheelchair accessible industry. As a operator of a wheel-chair van that is a taxicab, I've become familiar with the task of maintaining that type of vehicle. Secondly, as a D.C. business owner I had, in 2009/2010 coupled with a District Cab Company and offered several bid's and contract proposal's to operate as a Metro-Access para-transit contractor. While proposing those endeavors I've established invaluable relationships at Metro-access along with a thorough understanding of American Disability Act (ADA) requirements. I've also developed contacts with companies like Mobility Works, a wheel-chair van conversion company, and also I registered our company to attend the Federal Transportation Department's Para-Transit

Instructor Seminars that are conducted locally, so we ^{would have} ~~could~~ properly training driver we were to hire.

From an industry point of view, I believe the issuance of a limited amount of personal or company H-tags with restriction in place would ensure the availability of a continual workforce and allow the industry to address inadequacies that could enhance taxicab ridership, STOP CONTINUE ONLY IF ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT POSSIBLE INADQUACIES. (i.e. the possibility of Taxicab apps drivers that are coupled with required work hours, also H-tags issuance could fulfill industry's needs for specific vehicles).

Lastly, as a driver that worked as a office manage assistance with Imperial cab company, and now doing special projects with Dial Cab company, I can see where the issuance of some H-tags would allow some companies to recapture the financial burden mandated by some of the requirements that will come with the changes needed by the Taxi industry to remain the dominate in the Washington Transportation Industry.



Public Hearing

Framework for Rulemaking

Thursday, July 30, 2015

Dear DCTC, and Panel members, as you well know, there are many shortcomings with the current format of District's Title 31 regulation governing the taxicab industry. Some of the regulations and amendments that were previously put in place do not take into account the current circumstances affecting the District's Taxicab industry. In specific, how the ongoing developments in computer hardware, software as well as phone apps in conjunction with the moratorium on H-tag has created an imbalance and unfair disadvantage to operators without an individual H-tag. Therefore it's in the city's best interest for the Taxicab Commission to re-instate "The Open Entry System" and let the market decided the equilibrium.

Circumstances and Requirements Under which DCTC can lift the Moratorium on H-tag

Requirements:

- ✓ Licensed taxicab operator must currently posses valid DCTC Hack operator license
- ✓ DCTC to compile and make available specific list of approved taxicab vehicles
- ✓ Provide reasonable time period for operators to purchase and present vehicle for registration with DMV and DCTC
- ✓ Update previous studies on D.C taxi industry to factor in the dynamics of phone App based transportation companies operating within the District
- ❖ Draft regulations to prevent existing cab companies, insurance companies as well as vendors from artificially inflating price for goods and services related with the distribution of H-tags

Structures Under which H-tags May be Expanded

- The H-tag distribution process must not include any new criteria's that were not previously there when issuing the operator permit.
- Allow individual ownership of the H-tag as long as the owner has established the proper business entity by adding the wording "Person Owning the H-Tag" under *(Section 2, questions one and two) of vehicle registration "One Stop Form"*
- Allow individuals to register their vehicle for an H-tag by adding the wording "individual owner's signature on *(step 3, Page 2)* of instructions in the "One Stop Form"
- Illuminate the current practice of allowing companies and associations from overtaking the owner's property and privileges by requiring the owner to give up his/her ownership rights to the H-tag
- Permit individual H-tag holders to incorporate their business, or form an LLC within the District
- Allow individual to form companies and apply for two or more vehicles as long as the operation is based within the district
- Insure all taxi related equipment vendors have sufficient supply and are properly equipped to install all required equipment in a timely manner.
- Set specific time frame DCTC and DMV will take to complete processing operator's H-tag application.

Swick Joseph

July 30, 2015

Good Morning to the Commission and to all the Attendees. My name is Evelyn Geronimo Ruiz-Muy, I am the Manager of Classic Cab Association.

I am here today to voice my humble opinion on the Issuance of more H-Tags. I believe that the Issuance of additional H-Tags should be studied and be researched.

+ H-Tag should be issued with Control and Priority

First Priority- Companies and Owner owned H-tags with existing PVIN, these vehicles were being operated January 1, 2013- until they got accidents and Insurance were never cancelled until the expiration dates.

Second Priority/ on case to case basis/ Owner's and Operator's that got PVIN and returned their tags because they cancelled their Insurance- we really have to listen and try to verify if the reason of returning the tags makes any sense.

Third Priority/ Companies and Owner/Operators that want to Invest on Wheel Chair Accessible vehicles.

Fourt Priority/ Driver's that got their Face in the year 2007 that resides in the District of Columbia. Then Driver's that got their Face in 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, that physically and presently resides in WDC. These Driver's had been waiting too long. I strongly believed that the 5 Days instant Driver's need not be issued an H-Tags.

On the Hearing conducted July 23, 2015. I heard some testimonies from Driver's that they turned in their Tags in the years 2009, 2010, 2011. They told us some of their stories but I think they are just stories. The DCTC informed us in 2011 what is coming ahead, they were given the chance to put their cabs back, I saw quite a big number of Driver's that acted and took advantage of it and they are driving their taxicabs today.

Again I am not in favor to Open the Issuance of H-Tags for Everybody. We have to Control and Prioritize. We need a written Guidelines not just by word of mouth.

Here is the Scenario at the Union Station Cab Line today: Rental Driver's and Owner Operated Taxicabs wait time for a Passenger is between 35 minutes to an hour. Imagine how long will it takes if we do not control the number of Taxicabs.

I agree UBER number is uncontrollable but they do not have a problem because they do not fall in line, they are not being watch by any Police or DCTC Inspector's, they park in front of hotels or anywhere. They can load and unload and stop anywhere they want. Law and Order does not apply to them.

Adding more cabs is not a solution to fight UBER, we need an App and Technology like UBER. We need to discipline ourselves by paying our Taxicab Insurance even we go for a month vacation. We cannot just cancel the Insurance and turn in the tags expecting the DCTC and DMV to give him or her another one after three (3) months. .

Lastly I would like to request again the Re-activation of my two (2) H-Tags which I continued paying the Insurance on them until the License Plates expired in February 2014.

Time and again I had been requesting the re-activation of said H-Tags from July 2014 to the present . I already presented the circumstances last July 23, 2015 hearing.

Let me just point out that I am not asking for new H-tags. I have these tags with PVIN in my possession. I just need them to be re-commissioned.

Thank you for listening, have a wonderful day.

H-98755-PVIN D471- In June 2013, my driver Solomon Okoroh was robbed and shoot to death. The OAG kept my taxicab for over a year as an Evidence.

H-99847-PVIN D483- In June 2013, my driver got an accident. The case was filed and heard in court for over a year.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS BY HAROLD NOVICK

at

D.C. Taxicab Commission Public Hearing

July 30, 2015

My name is Harold Novick and I am an attorney admitted in the District of Columbia. I will be addressing the following two points:

1. The structures of licenses and H-tags; and
2. Taxicab Driver requirements

At the current time the number of H-tags has been frozen for two years. With the rise of UBER, the situation regarding the number of vehicles for hire on the streets of D.C. has significantly changed. The licensed and accredited taxi drivers are under huge competition and are greatly disadvantaged because of the taxicab regulations that are not applicable to UBER. While the taxicab regulations for the most part benefit the public, some are not necessary.

The allocated maximum number of H-tags should not be increased, but fairness to new comers can be accommodated by giving them H-tags to replace those that are turned in. This will assure an even and constant number of regulated taxicabs on the streets of D.C. to properly serve the public without unfairly affecting the drivers who already have H tags. Similarly, the number of H-tags should not be decreased even with the rise of UBER because the public deserves to have a choice between well regulated and documented drivers under the control of the DCTC and the unregulated UBER drivers who may or may not be acceptable for public portage.

Currently, the District is well served by regulated taxicab drivers, most of whom do not live in the District. As a result of regulations on out-of-state resident drivers (see Code of D.C. , Sec. 50-1501.02), these non-resident drivers must affiliate with a DC resident company. To so require such affiliation is akin to slavery because practically speaking such affiliation does not permit those drivers the freedom of movement and the freedom to contest unfair practices and expenses laid upon them by the companies. The consequence of doing so is that such drivers could lose their means of support because they can be discharged by the companies.

In view of the large number of out-of-state taxi drivers, the lack of such requirements on URBER, it is therefore requested that the DCTC do all it can in its regulations to ease the requirement to register with the taxicab companies. In addition, it is suggested that the DCTC initiate a study of the effects of such requirements and submit the completed study to the DC Council.

Date: 07/30/2015

Good Morning dear Respected Panel on Industry members, invited guests and my fellow drivers

First of all I would like to say thanks to DCTC for listening to drivers and customers concern and arrange this great discussion on improving customer service and safety by motivating drivers who has direct and primary impact on the taxi cab business.

- 1.** As a trained and licensed vehicle for hire business drivers, we deserve to be given the priority to operate in the district than other competitors (Uber, lift, and others) drivers, who works for themselves by their own car though they never passed through the authorized department's policies.

- 2.** The existing driver associations have been protesting whenever DCTC tries to modernize and make change on the cab business. As an example they had been opposing the proposed rule to install meters as per customers request so that they can pay by credit card. So it should not be new to DCTC if they bring selfish and imaginary reasons to oppose issuance of H-tag to us.

- 3.** Is that because of Uber and others that the associations are saying the business is saturated? Or just to oppose bluntly as usual DCTC's proposal to modernize the business with qualified and devoted drivers? With thousands of other competitors unregulated vehicles for hire cars operating in the district, what is the meaning of opposing trained and qualified drivers to work and compete? Individuals and associations gave up to compete in the market and they are happy to make easy money because of the opportunity that DCTC arranged for them to rent their car to us so that we can work 16-20 hours to pay their unfair rent and go home with nothing.

- 4.** In my belief DCTC is here to help drivers and listen to customers demand than working in favor of non-existing, unqualified, and traditional cab companies and associations that did nothing in modernizing the business and listening to basic customers demand.

- 5.** If DCTC is responsible for regulating vehicle for hire business in the district, what is the reason for worrying about limiting the number of H-tag that should be issued to the licensed drivers when other competitors are increasing their number in thousand with no limit and control? So let DCTC give us the tag, make us free from slavery, and let the market decide eventually.

Based on the current quantity and quality of taxis operating in the district, the customers still demand more fuel efficient, wheelchair accessible, and safe cab services operated by devoted and trained drivers regardless of thousands of unregulated companies that should not be considered legal by DCTC.

Thanks

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Thanks

D.C.T.C
2235 Sharnol pl SE
Washington DC 20020

11106 Bennington Drive
Upper Marlboro
Md 20774
7-28-15

Dear Sir/Madam.

To Whom it may Concern

Washington D.C had a Culture of allowing licensed Cab drivers to own their Cabs. You took that Culture away from us, so we can be working for Cab Companies who in turn hike up their Cab rentals every week. This is slavery and oppression on the part of drivers who rent cars because they are not allowed to own vehicles of their own.

Some Cab drivers their Cabs, and others cannot, this is unfair and ungodly.

Uber killed us and you buy us. you have no valid reasons to take this Culture away from us.

Any Cab driver that wants to own their cars should be allowed to own as long as all requirements of owning are met.

God bless all of you as you are about to listen and stop this slavery in Washington, DC

Sincerely yours
Yemis A. Adiboyebi


Remarks – Provided by Tesfay Woldu (Owner of Best Cab Company)

Date: July 27, 2015

Summary: The second Panel on Industry (POI) DC Taxicab Commission hearing is to adopt a framework for rulemaking,

1. It will continue the focus on a broad study of the DC taxicab marketplace
2. The Panel will focus on structures under which licenses/H-tags may be expanded or limited as the appropriate needs of the market including Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs), fuel efficient and clean fuel burning vehicles and other services.
3. The priority will be on whether the Commission should lift the moratorium of H-tags, and if so, under what circumstances and requirements.

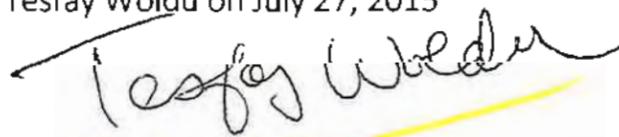
In my opinion the structure of H-Tags Licenses should be lifted and the moratorium of H-tags expanded to all qualified without any specific requirements. The only requirements should be qualifications in adapting new technology and services to meet the demand.

This will give the public choices and competitive on demand services that will have benefit in service and cost for the citizen of Washington DC. Any excess/oversaturated will be corrected by the market in a short period of time.

In addition by adding specific goal dates the Commission should go forward in providing alternative fuel burning vehicles in less than 10 year time frame as a standard in all fleets.

The city and federal should support such initiatives by providing financing and funding.

Signed and Dated by Tesfay Woldu on July 27, 2015



DC Taxicab Commission

2015 JUL 28 AM 11:35

Remarks – Provided by Tesfaye Gebru (Owner of DC Barwood Cab Company)

Date: July 27, 2015

Summary: The DC Taxicab Commission (DCTC) has scheduled a Public Hearing from 11 am to 3 pm on Thursday, July 30, 2015, at 2235 Shannon Place, SE, Washington, DC 20020, in the Hearing Room, Suite 2023. This second Panel on Industry (POI) hearing is to adopt a framework for rulemaking,

1. It will continue the focus on a broad study of the DC taxicab marketplace
2. The Panel will focus on structures under which licenses/H-tags may be expanded or limited as the appropriate needs of the market including Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs), fuel efficient and clean fuel burning vehicles and other services.
3. The priority will be on whether the Commission should lift the moratorium of H-tags, and if so, under what circumstances and requirements.

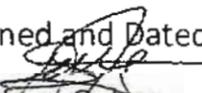
Remarks: In my opinion the structure of H-Tags Licenses should be expanded to the pre-existing companies and senior drivers without any specific requirements. These companies had fulfilled the requirements and were operational prior to the moratorium.

The new applicants of the H Tag Licenses should be allowed to fill the gaps upon the opening or shortage of drivers based on seniority.

WAV's and fuel efficient cars can only be achieved in the fleet by Federal or City grant or creative financing.

The only requirements that should be done by demand and supply on seniority basis.

Signed and Dated By


Tesfaye Gebru

DC Taxicab Commission

2015 JUL 28 AM 11:35

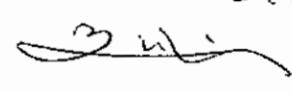
I am Bhuiyan Mohammedhuda
110 South Hudson St.
Alexandria, VA 22304
Cell: 571-215-3738
Home: 703-823-1158
bhuiyahuda@gmail.com

7/16/2015

Requesting H-tags because I have an energy efficient Toyota prius hybrid sitting at home, and I am unable to bring it on the road, as a cab, because of no H-tags.

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Bhuiyan Mohammedhuda, and I am a fellow DC taxi driver. And previously driven in Alexandria diamond cab for about a decade. And like many of ~~you~~ TAXI CAB DRIVERS, I would like to present my opinion about H-Tags. When I started this job, I had to rent a yellow cab. I've been driving it for a while in DC. The reason I've been renting this cab, is because I have no H-tag from DCTC.

With renting this cab I'm using, my situation isn't in a good spot. The cab I am currently driving is a ford crown victoria, so it isn't energy efficient, it's old, consumes too much gas, and has some broken parts here and there. Adding to this, I'm currently in a financial crisis because business is quite slow. With the way it is now, a major part of my income goes to paying for my rented cab and gas, when my money should be going to support my family. With all my money getting dried out from renting and gas, I am starting to have a very narrow income. Therefore, I request that H-tags should be issued to me. Because if they were, I would be able to drive my energy efficient hybrid Toyota prius on the road. This would not only be fortunate for me, but for my whole family. If H-tags were not to be issued, I'm afraid I'd have to take my wife and two kids and head back to Bangladesh, all because my earnings would go to car rent and gas, and not for my family. Anyways, thank you very much for listening to my speech about my current hardships, and allowing me to speak here today. So thank you again, and god bless you.

BHUIYAN N. MOHAMMEDHUDA

7-16-2015

July 30, 2015

DC's Taxi Industry has been subject of whims of several interest groups in the past. None of which have ever had or acted in the interests of the majority of comprising members, namely " owners/operators".

1. An unfair rate structure under which a ride across town in the early 80's was twenty five cents more than a bus ride, so federal workers and the Congress would not be inconvenienced or stressed financially.
2. Legislature pretending to create jobs.
3. DCTC acting inappropriately by peddling illegal licenses created an over saturated and hostile environment. This was an unfair playing field for drivers and company owners.

This created a financially unprofitable industry which has and cannot recover from.

Now we are considering even more licenses without appropriate studies. Special interest groups are covering up valuable statistics, ie Uber, Lyft, and Sidecar. A balance cannot be achieved with so much deception. We already have more vehicles per capita than any other city in the industrialized world. If DC cabs pay the lowest rents in the nation and cannot meet their financial obligations then the market must be over saturated. How can the special interests fulfill their promises of new vehicles when the drivers cannot afford the older vehicles? These special interests will promise anything to mussel their way unfairly into the industry. Legislation, Regulation, or Precedents has never promised a H Tag for every licensed drivers. When do we stop catering to these special interests that only recycle lawyers with ancient rhetoric. I recall Miss Vaquez claiming her clients were not against H tag limits at a hearing before former Chairman Linton. When will limits be appropriate or do we just let the market stay unprofitable.

Thank you for this opportunity to relate my position.

Massoud Medghalchi



Arthur Lennon
1355 Peabody St. NW #1
Washington D.C. 20011

To Whom It May Concern:

The effects of adding more "H Tags" to the present taxi system would be completely devastating to the lives and income, of all taxi drivers. First of all, there are already too many taxis in Washington D.C. The industry is over saturated as it is. Of the possible 7000 or so taxis, that there are, there are probably 2000 too many. I feel as though there should be about 5000 total full time taxis, in our system. I work at night mostly and all I see driving up and down Connecticut and Wisconsin avenues are Taxis for hire. These taxis are vacant looking for passengers and occupied Uber vehicles. Adding more "H Tags" would make it more difficult for me to make a living.

Some of the newer drivers who cannot own their own cabs, have found out that it is very difficult to have to pay \$250-\$350 a week to rent a taxi under the current circumstances. Some of them have stopped driving a taxi all together and went to other jobs. The bill of goods that they were sold has not turned out to be true.

The Competition for passengers, in D.C. Is very severe. So much so, that companies such as Uber, lift and the circulator bus have taken most of our business away. On July 18th I sat on the cab stand at the Omni-Shoreham hotel, for 7:30 pm until 8:15 pm. In that 45 minutes I counted 6 Ubers came up and picked up fares. After 45 minutes I picked up a passenger going to Dupont circle for around \$10.00. I decided not to go back to the hotel, but to 'hit the streets'. I did that for one hour, not picking up another fare. It was then that I decided to go home. This is happening on a Saturday night, the busiest night of the week!

I only average picking up 2-8 trips per day. That was not the case 2 years ago. I was averaging over 10 trips per day. I am not the exception but the rule. There are a couple of solutions that you could consider, I believe.

- 1) For the new drivers. Who want to obtain an 'H Tag' let there be a waiting list for them. As the 'h tag' holders retires, loses their license or passes away the next in line should obtain an 'h tag'.
- 2) Establish a monetary value to each tag owned by a legal 'h tag' owner. By then, the tag can be purchase and there can be an established fee for D.C.

Personally, as you can see, I am handicapped with a prosthetic left leg. I do not know how much longer I can continue doing this job, especially at these diminishing wages. Housing is getting more expensive in the city. I may have to be forced to move back to North Carolina, where I can afford to live. My combined income from Ssi and Social security is less than \$750 a month. I use my income from the taxi to supplement this.

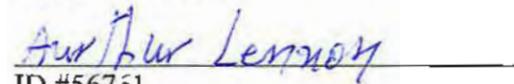
I am now seeking job training, trough D.C. Government on the disabilities services. This is due to the fact I cannot make ends meat driving a taxi now.

Conclusively I would like to say in summary:

About a year ago I picked up Mr. Linton, in my taxi. In the conversation that we had, in route to his apartment, He told that there were too many taxis on the street as it is. He said about half of 7000 would be sufficient to supply the city if they were driving full time instead of parking the cars all over the streets when being used as private vehicles. He also said he was trying to put apps in the cars to help compete with TNC's.

Thank yo ufor the opportunity to share my concerns with you today.

Sincerely
Arthur S. Lennon



ID #56751
Cab# Elite #22
Phone 202-717-7116

July 16/2015

GRIEVANCE TO DCTC.

(Submitted on July 16/2015 - Public Hearing - to The Panel on The Industry)

PRELUDE

I was offered training along with others (Group of 2009) by UDC in 2009; paying \$375.00. The members took the first test, and received the "Yellow Certificate of Completion" by the time. Procedurally, DCTC gives the second test (popularly known as Computer test) within two or three weeks after the first. Unfortunately, this time - the Commission failed to do so and put us on suspense devoid of any prior advice or notice until November 09/2013.

On this later date, the group was given the final DCTC test and received "Operations License", but put on the second suspense until now - being denied of what is called 'H - Tag'. Due to this decision, the members of the Group couldn't buy vehicles and embark on taxi - mini business.

To obtain the License, besides the initial \$375; each has visited at least five DC Government branch Offices and had effected the following payments: \$100.00 on November, 09/2015 final test day; \$45.00 to DC Treasurer; \$41.00 for Medical; \$125.00 to the Office of Finance and Treasury; and \$7.00 to DMV.

THE ENIGMA

It's an enigma to let us traverse "THE LONG WALK TO TAXI - MINI BUSINESS" having a-priori judgment not to issue H-Tags. Why did DCTC let us get training in 2009, collecting \$375 from each of us if it has already decided not to distribute the Tags?

After a suspense of four years (2009 - Nov.2013), we are never clear again why we were ordered to take the Computer test paying \$100.00 when the Commission was sure of withholding Tags. It confuses me personally why I was required to visit some five DC government Agencies effecting the aforementioned payments when it was vivid to the Commission that I will not be issued the Tag having obtained the driving License post this visit.

THE CONCERNS OF THE COMMISSION

As it's clear from the Website of the Commission, the availability of market, Wheelchair Accessible Vans (WAVs), fuel-efficient vehicles and the revision of existing regulations are emphasized.

In line with this, it is written on the Website also that: "The panel will be responsible to develop proposed regulations to allow for a competitive market place".

With respect to market, it is sufficient to mention the success of uber and Lyft in a short period of time.

Basically, we find it very clear to any one that it is the market force that drives and regulates any market under free market economy; not government Agencies like DCTC since the United States is not under command economy.

By the same token, DCTC has no responsibility to worry on our behalf whether we find sufficient market or not. Let's get the Tags, buy our vehicles, and embark on the taxi - small business and be able to direct our lives on our own schedule to sustain our families.

If we find enough market pipelines for the business, we will flow in; else the market force itself will eject us off the pipeline.

Suffice to mention repetitively the success of Uber in a very short period of time providing thousands of jobs even to housewives, office employees and similar individuals while we are under H - Tag denial for more than six years after paying money at different times aforementioned.

Pertaining to different vehicles, DCTC has announced that - 86 Wheel Chair Accessible Vans (WAVs) have already been added to DC taxi fleet (the legislative requirement is 92) even when 21 Companies out of 91 did not meet the required mandate.

When all the 91 Companies make WAVs 6% of their fleet by December 31,2014 as per the stipulated new legislation, we believe it would be more than enough in DC to quench DCTC Acting Chairman Ernest Chrappa's feeling reflected in the statement: "enhancing services for those who need accessible transportation is a priority for the Commission."

The currently operating fuel - efficient vehicles are also undeniably more than the envisioned number due to the solid fact that most DC Taxi drivers are almost buying fuel efficient vehicles because of the clear comparative advantage such cars yield vis-à-vis other traditional ones.

On my way, just to mention some so that the testimony would be all encompassing, I personally recommend the total alteration of Title 31, which is onerous, and in direct contradiction with Free Market principles.

Uber and Lyft, while carrying out taxi business like activity are not subject to Title 31; the situation rendering them competitive advantage over DC Taxi mini business owners.

Otherwise, the cardinal points aforementioned and subject to public hearing are already accorded more than deserved positive responses: taxi market as reflected in the triumph of Uber and Lyft; the remaining - due to the new law (WAVs) and by own free will of driver owners (fuel - efficient cars).

If we consider DCTC to have been loyal to its 2009 proposal, and given us the second test and H - Tags on time, by now - all members of the Class of 2009 would have been in different economic status than what each holds at present. The reason is too obvious; embarking on the taxi small business in 2009; if one works 6 days a week - and collects \$ 100.00/day x 24days a month x for the last 7 years, one would definitely be different in economic terms.

CONCLUSION

- I leave the denial of H - Tags and putting us on suspense for the last seven years to the conscience of those in whose hands our case is resting.
- Having said this, I do not need to elaborate again on the issue of Whether there is market or not in the face of Uber's triumph in a short period of time. I also emphasize that we do not need DCTC to worry on our behalf for the availability of sufficient market. If the space is full (which definitely is not), we will be out of the game by market force and shift to the area where there is job for subsistence.
- We shouldn't also be put on further suspense until DCTC is through with its any study that should take place independently of our case.
- So, we request the immediate release of H-Tags to the Group of 2009 that should have been issued in 2009. Doing this would be in harmony with the basic tenets and principles of free market economy where in one can achieve any intended desire if works hard.
I will personally consider it also as a redress for the lost seven business Years due to the withhold of the Tag.

With due respect;
Ewnetu Akama Gemechu
(ewnetugemechu@yahoo.com)

COMMENTS OF ABEBE AKLOG
2009 UDC GROUP
udctaxicab2009@gmail.com

SUBMITTED TO THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
TAXICAB COMMISSION, PANEL ON INDUSTRY
[JULY 16, 2015]

Prepared in partnership with M. Aurora Vasquez J.D., Strategist
Excluded Worker Project



avasquez@excludedworkerproject.org

OVERVIEW

ABOUT US

My name is Abebe Aklog, I am a member of the leadership team for the 2009 UDC Group. We are an informal group representing people who hold a license to operate a taxicab today specifically because we began the process of getting our Face ID in the year 2009 or earlier. None of our members however, were ever given an H-tag.

Our members took and passed the Qualifying Exam offered through the Cooperative Extension Service at the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) in or before the year 2009. At that time and for many years prior, this exam was the first part of a two-step process to securing a license to drive a cab in the District of Columbia. The Hacker's Exam was the second part. Upon successfully completing the two-step process, the license-holder was automatically eligible for an H-tag and therefore, could become a taxicab owner-operator. The 2009 Qualifying

Exam however, was not timely followed by a Hacker's Exam. Rather, the Hacker's Exam was not offered until November, 2013 but by then H-tags were no longer being offered.

OUR REQUEST

Some of our members currently rent a cab full-time, others do so part-time, while others do not work as cabdrivers because they cannot afford the cost of renting a cab. The members of the 2009 UDC Group have one request:

That the Taxicab Commission recognize that if it had timely processed our applications for a Face ID back in 2009, we would have qualified to receive an H-tag before the agency stopped issuing them in 2010 and as a result, the agency should resolve this problem by issuing H-tags to us at this time.

DCTC CHANGED THE RULES MIDSTREAM

Somewhere between the last Qualifying Exam (issued in the fall of 2009) and November of 2010 when DCTC announced it would not issue any more H-tags, the agency changed the rules. Before letting us take the exam - *under what we believed was still the original licensing process however* – the agency did not give us any notice of this pending change. In fact, from the fall of 2009 through November of 2010, DCTC refused to tell us what it was doing with our applications.

FAIRNESS IN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

The members of the 2009 UDC Group engaged the licensing process during a time when the open-entry system was still in place. That is, during a time when anyone who passed both parts of the licensing exam could get an H-tag if she or he so wanted. Indeed, this is the reason our members chose to become cabdrivers in DC rather than somewhere else.

If however, the system had been suspended, modified, or altogether revoked, our members were not informed of that change. Had we been told, perhaps we would not be here today. What is certain however, is that DCTC's failure to timely process our Face ID applications stripped us of the chance to enjoy the very same economic opportunity the agency extended to our sisters and brothers who entered the industry in the months and years before us.

BACKGROUND

Up until 2009, in order to become an owner-operator¹ of a cab one had to take and pass two exams. The first was the Qualifying Exam which was part of the Pre-License Training Course offered at UDC. If you passed that exam you qualified to take the Taxicab Operator's License Examination (aka the Hacker's Exam) given by the Office of Taxicabs (also known as DCTC). The 2009 UDC group represents people who took and also passed the Qualifying Exam in or before the year 2009 but who never received an H-tag.

Year 2008 Moratorium

In 2008 a moratorium on licensing new cab companies, associations, fleets and limousine drivers was issued.² That moratorium however, did not apply to people interested in becoming owner-operators of their own cab. Rather, it only applied to people seeking a license to operate a cab company, association, or a fleet. Specifically, Section 50-310(b-1) stated: "(1) No new license to operate a taxicab company, taxicab association, or taxicab fleet shall be issued. (2) The moratorium on the issue of new licensees to operate a taxicab company, taxicab association, or taxicab fleet, shall have prospective effect. (3) The moratorium shall last no longer than 2 years from November 25, 2008."

Year 2010 moratorium

Just a few days before this law expired, DCTC issued its own moratorium. That is, on November 23, 2010 DCTC released a policy announcing that it would not be issuing new independent taxicab vehicle numbers and presumably, the H-tags they would need in order to operate.

In effect, on that day the DC taxicab industry became a closed-entry system for owner-operators; a system that limits the total number of owner-operated cabs allowed to provide service. Today, this decision is commonly referred to as 'the moratorium on H-tags.'

¹ The term owner-operator refers to licensed cabdrivers who also own the car they operate as a cab. This includes independent cabdrivers as well as cabdrivers who own their cab but who must also affiliate with a cab company because they live outside of DC.

² Taxicab Company, Association, and Fleet and Limousine License Moratorium Amendment Act of 2008.

However, because a moratorium on H-tags was not part of the 2008 law/moratorium, the announcement was a wholly new concept to the would-be owner-operators who began the licensing process in or before the year 2009. In fact, those cabdrivers began the licensing process in DC specifically because it was an open-entry system.

Open-Entry since the Great Depression

The District's two-part exam process the backbone the taxicab industry's open-entry system; a system that does not place an artificial cap on how many taxicabs can operate nor require a medallion in order to operate. Open-entry had been a central feature of the industry since the Great Depression at which time other places – such as New York City, Philadelphia, and Chicago – turned to a medallion system in order to limit entry.³

Those cities took that approach in response to fears that people's rapidly growing interest in becoming a cabdriver would flood the market. In turn, the peoples' interest was fueled by tremendous job loss of the early 1930s. Having experienced a similar licensing rush, the District could have followed suit but it chose instead to preserve opportunity for small business growth in the form of independent cabdriver operations coupled with an open-entry system. In turn, this well-established system was precisely the one our members began engaging in 2009.

DCTC changed the rules midstream

September 2009: The last Qualifying Exam offered at UDC was given in the fall of 2009. To those who passed, the UDC Cooperative Extension Service sent a congratulatory letter dated September 4, 2009 (See Attachment A). That letter informed the recipient that s/he had passed the Qualifying Exam and also indicated that DCTC was backlogged in processing the UDC-certified students who had passed the Qualifying Exam previously. This was the first time we received official word that we would not move to the second half of the process (Hacker's Exam) right away.

November 2010: As it relates to the Hacker's Exam, after September 4, 2009 DCTC went silent. That is to say, that no one in the office could or would tell us when the next exam would

³ See e.g. *Taxi! Urban Economies and the Social and Transport impacts of the Taxicab* (2012).

be offered. That silence went on for 14 months as it was not until November 23, 2010 that we received word new independent taxicab vehicle numbers and the H-tags they require in order to operate, would no longer be issued. Thus, not before we took the Qualifying Exam and not for more than one year after we passed it, did anyone tell us that the open-entry system we had initially engaged no longer existed.

October 2013: Moreover, it was not until October 31, 2013 that those of us who had passed the Qualifying Exam under the old system received notice that we could take the Hacker's Exam (See Attachment B). That exam was offered on November 9, 2013, was the first available Hacker's Exam since before the fall of 2009 and was limited to those who had taken and passed the Qualifying Exam in or before 2009.

FAIRNESS IN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

The members of the 2009 UDC Group engaged the licensing process during a time when the open-entry system was still in place. If however, the system had been suspended, modified, or altogether revoked, our members were not informed of that change prior to taking the Qualifying Exam. Had we been told, perhaps we would not be here today. What is certain however, is that the members of the 2009 UDC Group engaged the process specifically because we saw the economic opportunity afforded to our sisters and brothers who entered the industry and we wanted a shot at that too.

Parity among cabdrivers

Our members who live in DC wanted to be small business owners with the chance to operate independently as did their colleagues before them; owner-operators wholly responsible for the success or demise of their business. Similarly, our members who live outside of DC wanted a chance to become owner-operators too; owners who, while required to affiliate with a company, would still have many of the freedoms that come with that status – such as setting ones own hours, selecting the make/model of cab they drive, and keeping most of their earnings for themselves.

More importantly, our members wanted then – as they do now – the opportunity to put in a hard day's work in exchange for the chance to make livable earnings; earnings we would use

to care for ourselves and our loved ones in addition to paying for business-related costs (such as insurance, gas, maintenance, DMV fees, and taxes). Livable earnings are not truly possible however, if one has to rent a cab since that requires that a portion of one's hard-earned money be diverted to the cab company. This is the case even though on the surface it may appear that driver-renters have fewer business-related expenses. This however, is a mistaken perception because driver-renters do not set nor can s/he avoid increases in taxicab rental/leasing fees.

IMPACT ON THE INDUSTRY

Our members understand that our request for H-tags means authorizing additional owner-operators and therefore, that more taxicabs will be added to the market. We also understand why some people may be worried that more cabs will make it harder for all cabdrivers to make livable earnings. We however, believe in the market and market forces' ability to stabilize the industry. Moreover, similar to decision-makers during the height of the Great Depression we also believe the District ought to continue to be a safe space for the emergence of sole proprietors and that it ought to continue supporting small businesses.

Attrition

DC's taxicab industry faces natural attrition. In turn this means there is not now nor will there always be, the same number of cabs providing service. For this reason the market can and will make room for new cabdrivers. Additionally, with the inevitable modernization of the industry – including the aging out of cars – attrition is likely to increase as some people do not want to invest more of their profits into the car they operate as a cab. This also means there is now and will continue to be, room for the industry to absorb additional driver-owned cabs.

Size of our group

According to information we obtained from DCTC, the office sent the October 31, 2013 letter informing people they were eligible to take the November 2013 Hacker's Exam to 671

people.⁴ However, not all 671 people took the Hacker's Exam at that time. Rather, according to the information, only 321 took the exam of which 145 passed.

While we do not believe all 671 people who received the initial letter hold an operator's license today, it bears noting that the population we advocate for cannot be larger than this number.⁵ Additionally, while we believe the most equitable approach is for the Commission to authorize immediate release of H-tags to every person who never held a tag before but is licensed to drive a cab today because they took and passed the Qualifying Exam before the 2010 moratorium, we are nevertheless open to an equitable distribution process.

Equitable distribution process

For instance, in the limited event all 671 people who passed the Qualifying Exam in 2009 or before hold a taxicab operator's license today, we are open to an approach that staggers the release of tags via a lottery in which 250 tags are issued in two consecutive years and the final 171 in the third year. We believe this type of approach would fairly balance our members' interest in obtaining an H-tag at this time and any concerns the Commission may have with the rate at which new taxicabs enter the market.

MODERNIZING THE INDUSTRY

Our members believe the DC taxicab industry ought to modernize in a number of ways. For example, we support the idea of offering riders a cashless way to pay their fare and believe the industry ought to make better use of technology (such as an app service) to readily connect riders to cabdrivers. We also support the idea of greening the industry by integrating newer model cars that are more fuel efficient.

However, because green vehicles (such as hybrids, electric cars, and cars fueled by natural gas (CNG)) are significantly more expensive than the types of cars commonly used as taxicabs, there must be significant consideration for the costs associated with buying and maintaining these cars. Significant consideration must also be given for the type of green vehicle cabdrivers will be expected to buy as among these, some types – such as CNG cars – can be significantly

⁴ Information provided to M. Aurora Vasquez, Excluded Worker Project, on August 25, 2014.

⁵ Our membership does not consist of all 671 people.

more expensive than hybrids, for instance. While others, such as electric cars, require an infrastructure for the exclusive use of the high number of cabdrivers who may need it. DC however, does not yet have such an infrastructure in place.

Do not impose unfair preconditions

When coupled with the impact other for-hire services are having on the taxicab industry (such as Uber, Lyft, and Sidecar), it is plainly evident that now is not the time to make the purchase of what amounts to a very expensive car, a precondition to obtaining an H-tag.

That is to say, that our members ought to be allowed to test our ability to successfully compete with these emerging Transportation Network Companies before we invest substantial financial capital in our cabs. In particular, while our members are interested in putting new model hybrid cars into service, they first need an opportunity to earn the income they will use to finance such a car. In turn, had we been allowed to complete the licensing process back in 2009 our members would have been operating as driver-owners for several years by now and would therefore, be better situated to put a greener cab into service at this time.

For this reason, it would be unfair for the Commission to limit our members' ability to become new owner-operators by conditioning our entry into the industry on the purchase of the more expensive model cabs.

Equitable integration

We are however open to a system that allows us to obtain our H-tags now and which over time, offers a reasonable way for all cabdrivers to transition to affordable, environmentally friendly cabs provided the District has in place the infrastructure to readily support their operation (such as sufficient fueling stations for CNG vehicles and sufficient charging stations for electric cars). What is more, as part of that transition, we would also be open to one that offers incentives to all cabdrivers for the purchase and operation of cabs that meet the needs of the disability community as these cars also require a significantly greater financial investment than the average taxicab.

CONCLUSION

Before issuing the 2010 moratorium on new independent taxicab vehicle numbers and the H-tags they need in order to operate, DCTC should have finished processing every person who began the licensing process under the open-entry system.

That is, it should have allowed every person who passed the Qualifying Exam in or before the year 2009 to timely take the Hacker's Exam. Had DCTC abided by the licensing process that had been in place for more than 70 years, the members of the 2009 UDC Group would have obtained an H-tag and become owner-operators long ago.

We were however, not given that opportunity. Instead, while we are the same in every way to our colleagues who got licensed before us -- be that by years or months -- we were treated very differently.

- We were not told there was a problem or even so much as a delay, in accessing the second and final step in the licensing process;
- We were not told until more than one year after we passed the first half of the exam, that the open-entry system no longer existed; and,
- We were not afforded the same economic opportunities extended to our colleagues who entered the industry before us.

We ask therefore, that the Commission approve the release of H-tags to every person who never received a tag but who currently holds a taxicab operator's license because s/he took and passed the Qualifying Exam before the 2010 moratorium on H-tags was issued.

ATTACHMENT A



**COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

4200 Connecticut Avenue, NW • Washington, DC 20008
(202) 274-7115 • Fax (202) 274-7130

University of the District of Columbia

September 4, 2009

Dear Student:

Congratulations on passing your Qualifying Exam for the Taxicab Driver Pre-License Training Course at the University of the District of Columbia (the University). This accomplishment represents a great stride toward achieving your goal of becoming a licensed DC Taxicab Operator. It has also earned you the opportunity to register to take the District of Columbia Hacker's Exam at the D.C. Taxicab Commission (the Commission).

However, please note that the Commission is in the process of eradicating the backlog of UDC certified customers who have been waiting to take the Hacker's Examination. As a result, there will be a delayed date for you to register to take the Hacker's Exam. Therefore, we are asking you who have recently received a Certificate of Completion from the University to please wait until after October 30, 2009 to inquire about future Hacker's examination registration dates.

You may go on-line at dctaxi.dc.gov, or telephone them at 202-645-6018 for additional information.

Enclosed please find your **Certificate of Completion**.

Best Regards,
Carolyn C. Haye, Program Coordinator
Urban Tourism and Taxicab Driver Training Programs
Phone: (202) 274-6685 E-mail: chaye@udc.edu

Enclosure

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ATTACHMENT B



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
TAXICAB COMMISSION

OFFICE OF FINANCE AND TREASURY
Debit: 11/9/2013 11:35 AM
Office: DCTC Batch: DCTC-2201H
CASHIER: 098 Batch Date: 11/9/2013
Trans: 21/21
TAXICAB COMMISSION Ref#: 01363909
Comment/Document: best # 1838
Payment Total: \$100.00
Payment Distribution:
6230 310 (6111) 12/sf-48840 \$100.00
VS Tendered: \$100.00

October 31, 2013

Leja Mitiku
1415 Tuckerman Street, NW apt 112
Washington DC 20011

Dear Leja Mitiku,

You are scheduled to take the Taxicab Operator's License Examination on Saturday, November 9, 2013, at 10:00am at the Metropolitan Police Academy located at 4665 Blue Plains Drive SW, Washington, DC 20032.

Please arrive 1/2 hour early to take the examination. Please bring the following:

- ❖ This appointment notice that includes your name and Registration ID
- ❖ YELLOW CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION CARD OR/ LETTER FROM DCTC FOR MAKE EXAM!!!!!!
- ❖ Please sign this letter where indicated
- ❖ Original Social Security Card
- ❖ Operator's Permit / Driver's License
- ❖ \$100 to be paid by money order or credit/debit card (Master Card & VISA only)

You should know that:

- If you fail to appear to take the examination at your scheduled time, you will be classified as a "NO SHOW" and you will NOT BE RESCHEDULED. You will have one and half hours to complete the examination.
- CHEATING: DON'T DO IT! IF YOU ARE CAUGHT CHEATING "YOU FORFEIT EVERYTHING!"
- NO EXTRA CLOTHING, CELL PHONES, BAGS, OR PAPERS ARE ALLOWED IN THE EXAMINATION AREA;
- Applicants "NOT" scheduled to take the examination "WILL NOT BE ALLOWED ON THE PROPERTY. NO STANDING BY TO FILL VACANT SEATS;"
- If you fail to appear to take the examination, you will not be rescheduled

I have read and understand the contents of this letter. MITIKU A LEJA
Name

Talking points on quality of taxi cabs owned by Washington DC Taxi Cab companies

Note: this argument is not in any way intended to undermine cab company owners who follow the laws and regulations set by DCTC to keep their rental vehicles as appealing as possible.

However, we, cab drivers of rental vehicles from cab companies have observed or experienced the following problems and consequences that follow by driving vehicles that should have been salvaged long time ago.

- ❖ Most of the vehicles have high mileage readings, some over 300,000 miles. Customers often ask if they are safe in this kind of vehicle and breakdown on highways is most likely, obviously breakdown on a highway dearly costs both the passenger/s and the cab driver. Imagine you are on a very busy highway!
- ❖ Most of the vehicles used for taxi cab by companies are used or retired from police services or retired from other cab companies like New York City Yellow Cab and bought at auction elsewhere. It is just morally unfair to use these vehicles in the nation's capital. Not only that, these 8-cylinder vehicles are known as gas guzzlers and spit too much CO2 causing environmental pollution and incurring high running cost (for gas) to the drivers.
- ❖ Some of these vehicles are really unisons with multiple sensor lights on, loose panel, old seats, belts, ad jarred doors, malfunctioning windows poor or no functioning air condition etc. All these multiple problems could be found on several of the vehicles. With all these problems, the drivers are able to avoid or minimize the unintended accidents to our passengers and ourselves. But it is not without cost. Spending hours at repair shop is almost a daily phenomenon without due compensation for the wasted time.
- ❖ The newest cab drivers are at disadvantage for many reasons. There are very limited rental cabs on the market so the rental price have sky rocketed in the last one year. The surging Washington DC young residents have developed bitter tests for old taxi cabs so they have shifted to a technologically advanced side car services with better quality vehicles. Generally the demand for newer vehicles is up and time for a change.
- ❖ Driving old vehicles cost cab drivers their time at repair shops when they are suppose to be on the street to make money like their colleagues who own H-Tags.. This has become additional burden on top of the already meager revenue due to high rental expenses for the malfunctioning vehicles.
- ❖ We, the newest cab drivers are in jeopardy. We are unable to challenge cab companies to provide us a better car for the money we pay them. Because there is an over-supply of drivers than the available H-Tags. Ask a company any question on the quality of the car, the answer is: give me the key; I have a bunch of drivers waiting to rent-dead end. No more questions, the lease is over.
- ❖ We, the newest cab drivers promise the city of Washington DC and DCTC that we will buy fuel efficient appropriate new vehicles including wheelchair accessible ones if we are granted the H-Tags

July 13, 2015

Dear Mr. Chair Man,

Respected participants and fellow Cab Drivers,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the incredible job your commission has done to improve the leadership in the public transit system. Moreover, we are very great full for your office efficiency in giving necessary exam and issuing new taxicab drivers face ID by avoiding all types of difficulties that has been deep rooted for longer period of time.

Dear Mr. Chair Man, contemporary customer service require our closer follow ups that we are giving special emphasis to make sure we are doing our job to the best interest of our customers'. As we are serving this Beloved Capital of this Great Nation, we the Taxi Cab Renters are giving transportation services to the multifarious public members like: District Residents', other Individual Citizens, High Government Officials, Scientists, Doctors and others. While we are rendering these very important services, we are driving rental cars with multiple maintenance codes that are not given proper attention by the Cab Company Technicians which eventually could cause greater customers' dissatisfaction that will have a negative impact on the Public Transit System. Despite the fact that we are exposed to unregulated high price for rental cabs, we are always driving these cars with greater uncertainty thinking what could be happening on the road until our next destination and the customers' drivers safety is at the stake!

I would like to bring to your attention what we have been promised on the two days very well des igned Drivers Training at the end of 2013. We were told that we will be self-employed, qualified professional Taxi Cab drivers. However, we are now, qualified professional Taxi Cab Drivers, but we are not "self employed", because we are not given a chance to have H-TAG, to drive our own brand new, fuel efficient, wheel chair accessible and environmental-friendly cars.

Finally, I would like to thank you on behalf of all the Taxi Cab Renters for organizing this historic Public Hearing and thank you for considering our H-TAG request.

Thank you!!

First of all, I would like to thank the leadership of this panel for giving us the opportunity to express our views regarding the issue of tag.

After going through a well designed two days training, the commission qualified us to be licensed cab drivers in the district. This didn't take place free of charge, but has cost each of us a total of \$700.00, which includes schooling, licensing and other processing fees. This is ok. However, we were not directed to a situation that gives us hope and courage to enjoy the business. Instead, we are exposed to an exploitation that sucks our blood and breaks our bones. We have been instructed to rent cars from companies who are left to do whatever they want, regarding manipulation of rent prices any time. On top that some of the companies never had the capacity and organizational structure to provide durable cabs for rent, and the appropriate services. Currently, the rent is in the range of \$200 to \$350/week, and we pump gas \$30 to \$40/day. The rules and regulations of DCTC states that, the maximum hours a driver can drive per day is 13 hours. However, driving only 13 hours a day doesn't cover all the aforementioned expenses and our living expenses. Thus, we are obliged to work 16 – 20 hours/day to support ourselves and family. Mind you, in what state of mind will a driver be while driving 16 – 20 hours/day? Don't you think this situation could cause terrible accidents that could hurt both the driver and passengers? This is a result of the unregulated car rent action of the cab companies. On the other hand, we drivers deserve to have family time. Giving free labor to unlimited profit making companies should end. We should be given the opportunity to work for ourselves. Therefore, the solution for all these problems is giving tags to cab renting drivers, which as a result, would positively change a lot of things that include the customer service, the environment, and the economy of the district as a whole.

Thank you

Date: 07/14/2015

Good Morning dear Respected Chairman, commissioners, councils and all invited guests.

First of all I would like to say thanks to DCTC for listening to drivers and customers concern and arrange this great discussion on improving customer service and safety by motivating drivers who has direct and primary impact on the taxi cab business. At the end of year 2013 DCTC prepared a well-designed 2 days driver training to bring excellent customer service to the nation's capital residents with qualified, professional, and devoted drivers. During the training it was told that we are going to be self-employed qualified cab drivers who are going to bring big change on customer service level of the District taxi cab business. But once we get our license after paying a total of \$700(\$400 for school and others for processing and license) we were informed to start working by renting cabs from companies and individuals that are struggling harshly to survive in the highly competitive vehicle for hire business. Because of this decision and the following facts we are suffering financially, socially, psychologically, and health wise:

- 1.** The competition of taxi-cab business in DC is getting tough and very challenging due to very open policy that allowed many companies (uber, lift, limousine, and other private companies) to operate in the smallest state of the nation. Except taxi cab all of these companies are allowed to let their drivers compete the challenge and work for themselves using their own cars, even though they never passed through any trainings of cab operation business procedures and policies.
- 2.** The commission qualified us to be licensed cab driver in the District. But we are instructed to rent cab from driver associations(that never have the capacity and organizational structure to provide drivable cabs for rent) by paying \$800-\$1200/month for cab rent, \$20-\$30/week for PSP service, credit card processing fee, and VeriFone rent. Because of the rule imposed on us to work with rent cabs, we are obliged to work 16-20 hours every day to make money for survival of our family after paying all the expenses. Don't we deserve to have family time? Why are we made to give free labor for driver associations? Why are we enslaved by groups of cab owners, who are struggling to survive in the business? Why are we made to sacrifice all our times and energy for nothing? What was the main purpose of all that great training we were given if we can't bring any change to customer service and safety for the respected residents of DC? The customers are getting the poorest service because of the fact that we are discouraged and abused drivers who are not good enough even to our families.
- 3.** Driver associations and companies that own H-tag have been complaining and protesting everyday about their tough survival in the business because of the fact that other competitors have taken all their customers. If drivers who own H-tag can't survive what can be understood about us? Are we expected and trained to work and subsidize their life and families? Why don't we be given at least the opportunity to work for ourselves and compete with others? Why are we enslaved in the capital of freedom nation?

4. Giving H-tag and face ID doesn't make any difference in terms of flooding the street with taxi cabs because of the following reasons:

4.1: All newly licensed drivers are going to drive cars that are not occupied by others previously. Almost all of the cabs we rent and drive are just purchased by associations from auctions and individuals that never been used as vehicle for hire in District of Columbia. If we are given H-tag we are going to clean the street and environment by giving service with fuel efficient and safe to drive cabs, so that the District streets will be free from dangerous to operate unsafe cabs we are renting from the associations now.

4.2: Majority of cab associations don't have well organized customer friendly dispatch and call system; because of this many cabs are seen flooding main streets and hotels than deep in to residential and recreational areas. If dispatch system is modernized and improved and also if DCTC gives us H-tag we will buy better customer comfort and safe to drive cars and give service to customers at their residence like other competitors.

5. DC is the nation's capital, which is the home of Congress and Senators who needs respect and standard taxi service better than the other states. Also big meetings and conferences are held by guests from the whole states and other parts of the world in DC who expects American standard safe and comfortable taxi cab service. If H-tag is issued we can buy comfortable, safe, and neat vehicles to give standard taxi service so that we will contribute for the positive image of the state.

6. Driver association and companies did a very negligible improvements and modernization on cab service by themselves and also never consider customer needs than their income. It has been DCTC that follows up on customer needs and safety to make all the modernizations and greatest improvements that we see today. Improvement and modernization of the industry will be very successful practically when the drivers get the right treatment and motivation from DCTC. Because of the support other competitors get from their company, they are winning the market with big motivated drivers. So I would like to ask DCTC to help drivers as we are the one who got direct impact on the success of the industry modernization and growth. Also it is true that, "The motivated and happy the drivers are, the stronger DCTC is".

Eventually we would like to ask DCTC to reconsider the decisions to give us H-tag so that we can achieve the excellent customer service that the respected residents of the District have been striving.

Thanks

Gashaw Birbo



July 14, 2015

Dear Mr. Chair Man,
Respected participants and Rental Cab Drivers,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the incredible effort that has been made by your commission to improve the quality of leadership in the public transit system. We also would like to express our deepest appreciation to your office's efficiency in issuing hustle free new taxicab drivers face ID.

Dear Mr. Chair Man, currently we the cab drivers are having great stress due to very open policy that allowed many companies: like UBER, lift, limousine, and other private companies and including some individuals are using their own vehicles, in which we the rental cab drivers are unprivileged to operate with our own cars.

The commission qualified us to be licensed cab driver in the District. However, we have no choice to be in business except renting cars from drivers' associations and cab companies by paying \$800-\$1200/month for cab rent, \$20-\$30/week for PSP service, credit card processing fee, and VeriFone rent. Because of the rule imposed on us to work with rented cabs, we are obliged to work 16-20 hours every day to make money for living and family expenses. Why we are made to scarify all our times and energy for nothing? What was the main purpose of all that great training we were given if we can't make any difference in the customer service and safety? Any one can imagine that customers are getting the poorest service because of the fact that we are discouraged and abused drivers who doesn't even have family time.

Driver associations and companies that own H-tag have been complaining and protesting everyday about their tough survival in the business because of the fact that other competitors have taken all their customers. If drivers who own H-tag can't survive what can be understood about us? Are we expected and trained to work and subsidize their life and families? Why don't we be given at least the opportunity to work for ourselves and compete with others? Why are we enslaved in the capital this great Nation known to be the center of freedom?

Giving H-tag and face ID doesn't make any difference in terms of flooding the street with taxi cabs because of the following reasons:

- All newly licensed drivers are going to drive cars that are not occupied by others previously. Almost all of the cabs we rent and drive are just purchased by associations from auctions and individuals that never been used as vehicle for hire in District of Columbia.
- If we are given H-tag we are going to clean the street and protect the environmental pollution by giving service with fuel efficient and safe to drive cabs.
- Majority of cab associations don't have well organized customer friendly dispatch and call system; because of this many cabs are seen flooding main streets and hotels than deep in to residential and recreational areas. In this reared we suggest to our DCTC to invite competitive service providers who can ease these constraints with minimum and reasonable price.
- As the district hosts, big meetings and conferences are held here in the Capital by guests from the whole states and other parts of the world, we and DCTC are expected to provide American standard safe and comfortable taxi cab service. If H-tag is issued to us it would be our responsibility to came up with, safe, and comfortable clean vehicles to give standard taxi service so that together we can make a difference!!
- Last but not list, as we are part of the business we deserve H-TAG and recognition from the commission and together we can make a difference!

Finally, I would like to pass my deepest appreciation on behalf of all the Taxi Cab Renters for organizing this historic Public Hearing and thank you for considering our H-TAG request.

Thank you!

Youssef baldi

5106 Columbia Pike, #5

ARLINGTON, VA, 22204

email: baldiyoussef2002@gmail.com

Phone: (202) 520-9827

HACK License 73013

Refere: H TAG request

Att: DC Panel / Taxi Cab Commission

First of all I would like to thank you for your listening
& your consideration on behalf the request of my H. TAG.

Primarily I am requesting it because I would like to purchase
a nice new vehicle that support the environment, Assisted

Handicapped, more fuel efficient & low emission. This will
be result to built more customers, better overall service &
better customer satisfaction.

I have always supported the district of Columbia, helping
for better environment & service the community.

& Finally I'll do the best I can to continue provide the
Best service for all our residents, handicapped, visitors & everybody
that comes to visit the beautiful nation

Jul. 16. 2015 12:19PM

No. 0577 P. 1

Name: Youssef Baldi 73013

Date: 7/16/2015

Name: Slim Baldi

Face Number: 75071

Driver License: 1831423

To whom it my concern,

My name is Slim Baldi I have been driving as a cab driver for at least 15 years and in dc for the past 6 years and I have never owned applied or received an H tag.

Because of Uber the new company I been losing a lot of business around 30 & 40% at least from my daily income plus paying our company rent a \$315 every week which is about \$1260 a month. I cannot afford any more paying my house mortgage and taking care of a family of 4.

Getting an H Tag and buying a hybrid car will help me control my life and save my mortgage and family from been homeless in future! All that money that I been paying for gas and cab weekly rent I can used for doing a payment to get a hybrid car to save gas and money and most important help the environment and been GREEN.

Thank you for understanding and I hope my dream comes true and get the H Tags.

Best

Slim.

Slim Baldi
1029 Perry St NE # 101
Washington, DC 20017
(202) 471-0014
Email: n_baldi@yahoo.com.

LICENSE AND IDENTIFICATION CARD

DO NOT DUPLICATE
DC TAXICAB COMMISSION
OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT DOCUMENT

73013



No. **EXPIRES 09-05-2017**



RON M. LINTON
CHAIRPERSON

AUTHORIZED TO DRIVE:

District of Columbia Taxicab Commission
(202) 645-6018

Taxicab

**THIS CARD MUST BE DISPLAYED
IN FULL VIEW OF PASSENGER**

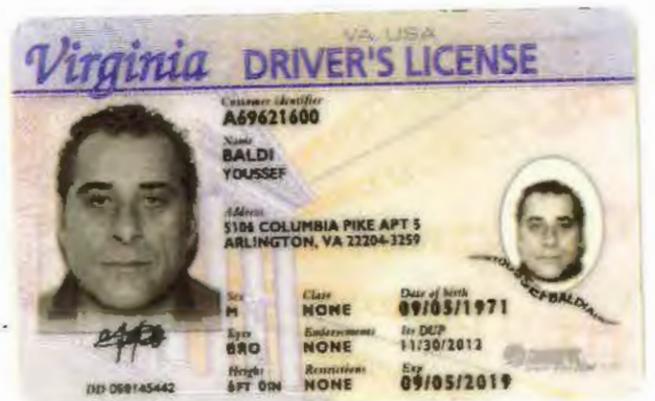
DO NOT DUPLICATE

YOUSSEF BALDI

NAME OF DRIVER

NOTICE TO PASSENGERS - TAKE NOTE OF THE ABOVE NUMBER AND NAME ON THIS CARD.
THIS IS A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE AUTHORIZED DRIVER. IF ANOTHER PERSON IS
DRIVING THE CAB, NOTIFY A POLICEMAN.

DCTC-83-1 (REV. 2/02)



Washington, D.C. Taxi Operators Association
Teamsters Local 922
2120 Bladensburg Road N.E., Washington, DC 20018
Phone: (202) 526-9250 Fax: (202) 526-9253

Panel on Industry Comments

I am Goitom Issac Abselab. I am a trustee on the Leadership Council of the Washington, D.C. Taxi Operators Association, affiliated with Teamsters Local 922. I would like to thank the panel for hearing our concerns regarding h-tag issues.

This panel was formed because the Commission understands that the current system is not serving the industry well. Drivers are facing significant hardships because of the implementation of the H-tag moratorium. I will focus my comments on the two steps the DCTC should implement in order to alleviate these hardships. First, the DCTC should replace h-tags for drivers that surrendered their tags to the DMV in compliance with Title 31 regulations. Secondly, the DCTC should change the h-tag moratorium policy to allow for h-tag neutral transactions, so that drivers of co-titled vehicles will be able to change companies.

Restore Owner/Operator Status

I have been a Washington DC taxi driver for over 20 years and in my experience I recognize that the current policies of the DCTC are hurting the competitiveness of the taxi industry. I was an owner/operator before the h-tag moratorium. I had mechanical difficulties with my vehicle and could not afford to place a new vehicle into service. I surrendered my h-tags before the registration expired in compliance with 31 DCMR 506.2. It was common business practice to surrender the h-tag when there were mechanical or personal issues that required removing the vehicle from service. However, you were always able to get the h-tag replaced when you were ready to put a new vehicle into service. The DCTC changed the rules without providing any

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Teamsters Local 922
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Phone: (202) 526-9250 Fax: (202) 526-9253

notice to the industry. The h-tag moratorium should not have been applied to experienced drivers that previously held the status of owner/operator.

The denial of h-tags to drivers that previously had the status of owner/operators is an injustice. The rules required that drivers turn in their tags, the policy allowed for drivers to get their tags back, and then without any warning the 30 year policy changed. The policy change has regulated former owner/operators to the status of lease drivers. Purchasing a new taxicab cost an owner/operator \$300-500 dollars per month. Leasing a taxicab from a company cost a driver \$200-300 per week. This represents a significant increase in cost for the most experienced drivers. Normally, an industry will reward the most experienced workers to retain their expertise, but here the DCTC has created a disincentive that has lowered morale, increased the cost of operation, and buttressed distrust between drivers and the agency.

The DCTC must restore these drivers back to the status of owner/operators to make them whole. These drivers followed the rules and could not have prepared for the abrupt policy shift because they did not receive any notice of the change.

Ability to Change Companies

There is an additional problem created by the implementation of the moratorium. Because the DCTC has limited the ability of the DMV to issue h-tags, drivers with co-titled vehicles are not able to change their titles and choose the company they work with. Auto Ward Inc. is an example of the hardships drivers face when their freedom to choose their company is restrained.

Auto Ward Inc. was a company sold to District Cab Co. without any notice to the drivers, many of which have their vehicles co-titled and registered to both the driver and the company.

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Prior to the sale of the company drivers had an agreement with the owner to pay \$35 dollars a week for insurance fees. After the sale drivers with co-titled vehicles were subjected to a substantial \$50 increase in their weekly fee. District Cab Co. justified the fee as a license fee for use of the h-tag. However, recently the fee has been changed to an association fee for co-titled drivers.

Avoiding the discussion of whether or not the fee is legitimate, the fee would not exist if co-titled drivers could leave their company by changing their title and having a replacement h-tag issued from the DMV.

The DMV is implementing the DCTC h-tag moratorium by:

- 1) **Maintaining a policy that no new h-tags will be issued**
- 2) **By interpreting the policy of no new h-tags to include replacement h-tags issued due to changes in the titling of a vehicle.**
- 3) **Because many drivers are co-titled with companies, in order to stay in compliance and change companies the driver would need to change the title of their vehicle.**
- 4) **If a company writes a release of ownership and a new company agrees to be added to the title, the DMV cannot under the current policy issue a new h-tag. Even though this transaction is H-tag neutral.**

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- 5) Drivers are effectively stuck with the company that's on their title, because any change would invalidate the h-tag.

We have seen the precarious situations that drivers can be subject to because of company missteps. We have also seen the disadvantages that come when options are removed from drivers. Co-titled drivers are the only drivers in the industry that cannot freely choose the company they associate with. If you are a lease driver you can go rent a car from a company with a lower rate. If you are owner/operator with a single name on the title, you can change affiliations at any moment. If you are a co-titled owner/operator, even if you have the company's consent to leave and change your title, the DCTC/DMV policy prevents you from making that choice.

The DCTC should allow h-tag neutral transactions at the DMV. Allowing the driver to change the title and reissue or replace the h-tag registration to the new title.

Conclusion

The current state of the industry is the result of the DCTC implementing changes without notifying drivers and asking for their input. We are happy to see the DCTC correcting the course and addressing the problems stemming from the moratorium on h-tags. This industry was created based on the values of opportunity and entrepreneurship. Taxi drivers are business people, and DCTC regulations should empower taxi drivers to be in the strongest position to compete with other transportation services. The DCTC should move to lower the cost drivers face, increase the trust in the agency, and boost morale leading to better customer service, by returning drivers to

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the their status as owner/operators and by allowing co-titled drivers to choose the change the
they associate with.

Thank you for your time. I am willing to answer any questions.

Goitom Issac Abselab

Trustee
Washington D.C. Taxi Operators Association
Teamsters Local 922
dctaxidrivers@gmail.com

July 16, 2015

Good morning Mr. Chairman, Commissioner, Ladies and Gentlemen:

My name is Mohammad Momen.

1. As a businessman, I would like to ask for more H-tags, but I am not a selfish person. I always think about my cab drivers first and foremost. They come to me and express their frustration about their income and how they are and have been losing business. Majority of my cab drivers have lost more than 35 to 40 percent of their income in the past four to five years. With more tags, they would lose more than 50 percent of their income. This clearly is not in the favor of cab drivers.
2. Working in DC for the past 25 years, I am sure much of the public would not like more taxis on the streets either. There is much congestions in the city and this would only cause more traffic and trouble to fellow Washingtonians.
3. I also believe that the government would not like more taxis in the city. Instead of focusing on giving out tickets to cab drivers, we need to continue to let the police crack down on crime such as drug trafficking, theft, and violence.
4. I would like for those cab drivers that have been driving for the past 15-20 years, who have been serving this great city and who had their own cabs before March 2006 to continue to have their own tags.
5. However, if it is the case where the city decides to implement more tags, I strongly believe that the government should study and do research (for example take surveys) to determine if this change is what the city needs.

Thank you very much.

I am Bhuiyan Mohammedhuda
110 South Hudson St.
Alexandria, VA 22304
Cell: 571-215-3738
Home: 703-823-1158
bhuiyahuda@gmail.com

7/16/2015

Requesting H-tags because I have an energy efficient Toyota prius hybrid sitting at home, and I am unable to bring it on the road, as a cab, because of no H-tags.

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Bhuiyan Mohammedhuda, and I am a fellow DC taxi driver. And previously driven in Alexandria diamond cab for about a decade. And like many of ^{TAXI CAB DRIVER} you, I would like to present my opinion about H-Tags. When I started this job, I had to rent a yellow cab. I've been driving it for a while in DC. The reason I've been renting this cab, is because I have no H-tag from DCTC.

With renting this cab I'm using, my situation isn't in a good spot. The cab I am currently driving is a ford crown victoria, so it isn't energy efficient, it's old, consumes too much gas, and has some broken parts here and there. Adding to this, I'm currently in a financial crisis because business is quite slow. With the way it is now, a major part of my income goes to paying for my rented cab and gas, when my money should be going to support my family. With all my money getting dried out from renting and gas, I am starting to have a very narrow income. Therefore, I request ^{ing} that H-tags should be issued to me. Because if they were, I would be able to drive my energy efficient hybrid Toyota prius on the road. This would not only be fortunate for me, but for my whole family. If H-tags were not to be issued, I'm afraid I'd have to take my wife and two kids and head back to Bangladesh, all because my earnings would go to car rent and gas, and not for my family. Anyways, thank you very much for listening to my speech about my current hardships, and allowing me to speak here today. So thank you again, and god bless you.

BHUIYAN N. MOHAMMEDHUDA


7-16-2015

07/16/2015 District of Columbia Taxi Cab
Commission

I want to Thank the Panel for giving us the
Chance to speak about the H-Tag.

I would like to get the H-Tag for important
reasons.

1- fuel Efficient and low Emission Vehicle.
that Support the environment

2- Build a better clientele and a customer
Satisfaction (cleaner and better cut)

3- I Support D.C. and I'm willing to do the
best I can to build a better D.C. for us, for
a family, friends, visitors, and our future.

Thank you So much.

Adel Becher
License and identification card 82288

Jul. 16. 2015 12:19PM

No. 0577 P. 1

Date: 7/16/2015

Name: Slim Baldi

Face Number: 75071

Driver License: 1831423

To whom it my concern,

My name is Slim Baldi I have been driving as a cab driver for at least 15 years and in dc for the past 6 years and I have never owned applied or received an H tag.

Because of Uber the new company I been losing a lot of business around 30 & 40% at least from my daily income plus paying our company rent a \$315 every week which is about \$1260 a month. I cannot afford any more paying my house mortgage and taking care of a family of 4.

Getting an H Tag and buying a hybrid car will help me control my life and save my mortgage and family from been homeless in future! All that money that I been paying for gas and cab weekly rent I can used for doing a payment to get a hybrid car to save gas and money and most important help the environment and been GREEN.

Thank you for understanding and I hope my dream comes true and get the H Tags.

Best

Slim.

Slim Baldi
1029 Perry St NE # 101
Washington, DC 20017
(202) 471-0014
Email: n_baldi@yahoo.com.

CLASSIC CAB

1729 BLADENSBURG RD NE WASHINGTON DC 20002

TEL: 202 – 399 – 8234

July 16, 2015

Good Morning to the Commission and to all the attendees. My name is Evelyn Geronimo Ruiz-Muy, I am the Manager of the Classic Cab Association.

I am requesting this Special Panel to Re-activate my two (2) H-Tags.

H-98755-PVIN D471 In June 2013, my driver Solomon Okoroh was robbed and shoot to death. The OAG kept my taxicab for over a year as an Evidence. I continued paying the Insurance from June 2013 until the Tag expired in February 2014. In July 2014, I tried to put a replacement vehicle for it but it was denied.

H-99847-PVIN D483 In June 2013, my driver got involved in a terrible accident. The case was filed and heard in court for over a year. I continued paying for the Insurance from June 2013 until the Tag expired in February 2014. I tried to put a replacement vehicle in July 2014 but also denied.

I had been requesting for both License Plates to be re-activated with Mr. Linton and Mr. Scott then Mr. Rogers and Mr. Scott but I was only given hope and then Nothing.

In my Opinion on the Issuance of H-tags

H-Tags should be Re-activated if they had PVIN, If Insurance had been paid until the Tags expired, if the H-Tags and DCTC –Registration are still in the Owner's possession.

In my Opinion, New H-Tags should be issued to the Companies that are willing to add New WAV to their fleet without Mandating to Register with Yellow or Transco for a Dispatch Service.

NO, I am not in favor to Open the Issuance of H-tags for Everybody. We have to Control and Prioritize. We need a written Guidelines not just by word of mouth.

Thank you for giving me this Opportunity to speak, have a wonderful day.

E R MUY

 PANEL ON INDUSTRY	<p align="center">H-TAG INFORMATION FORM</p> <p>The form gives individuals an easy way to share their opinions and information about H-Tags with the Panel. YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE H-TAGS BY FILING THIS FORM. Please read the attached Background, Instructions, and Frequently Asked Questions before filing. The form must be filed by June 1, 2015.</p>	
A	<p align="center"><i>All filers must complete this part.</i></p>	
	<p>1. LAST NAME RUIZ-MUY</p> <p>2. FIRST NAME EVELYN</p> <p>3. MIDDLE INITIAL </p> <p>4. COMPANY OR ASSOCIATION AFFILIATION, IF ANY CLASSIC CAB</p> <p>5. FACE I.D. NUMBER 00186</p> <p>6. FACE I.D. ISSUE DATE (MM/DD/YYYY) 10/15/2006</p> <p>7. FACE I.D. EXPIRATION DATE (MM/DD/YYYY) 03/25/2016</p> <p>8. CITY OR COUNTY OF RESIDENCE 5913 ADDISON AVENUE</p> <p>9. ZIP CODE 20747</p> <p>10. JURISDICTION <input type="checkbox"/> VA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MD <input type="checkbox"/> DC </p>	
B	<p align="center"><i>All filers must complete this part. Information provided in this part will be kept confidential as provided by D.C. law.</i></p>	
	<p>11. HOME ADDRESS (street address) DISTRICT HEIGHTS</p> <p>12. CELL PHONE (202) 399-6815</p> <p>13. HOME PHONE </p> <p>14. EMAIL ADDRESS EVERUIZ22332YAHOO.COM</p>	
C	<p align="center"><i>All filers must complete this part.</i></p>	
	<p>15. ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SPEAKING AT A PANEL HEARING? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO </p> <p>16. DO YOU SUPPORT DCTC ISSUING H-TAGS? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> NO OPINION </p> <p>17. IF DCTC ISSUES H-TAGS, DO YOU BELIEVE THE H-TAGS SHOULD BE ISSUED ONLY TO OWNERS WHO PURCHASE FUEL EFFICIENT, WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> NO OPINION </p> <p>18. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ISSUED H-TAGS? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO </p>	
D	<p align="center"><i>If you answered NO to #18, skip parts D and E. You may complete part F (narrative) and must complete part G.</i></p>	
	<p><i>This part is only for filers who have been issued H-tags. Skip this part if you have never been issued H-tags.</i></p> <p>19. YEAR H-TAGS WERE ISSUED TO YOU (YYYY) 1983</p> <p>20. DO YOU HAVE H-TAGS NOW? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO </p>	
E	<p align="center"><i>If you answered NO to #20, skip part E. You may complete part F (narrative) and must complete part G.</i></p>	
	<p><i>This part is only for filers who have H-tags now. The following questions concern the vehicle you are now driving.</i></p> <p>21. MANUFACTURER OF YOUR VEHICLE (make) FORD/ DODGE/MERCURY</p> <p>22. MODEL ESC/TAU/MC/FRE/CARA</p> <p>23. MODEL YEAR (YYYY) 2008</p> <p>24. ODOMETER READING 250</p> <p>25. PAINTED IN UNIFORM COLOR? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO </p> <p>26. FUEL TYPE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GAS <input type="checkbox"/> HYBRID <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER </p> <p>27. WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO </p> <p>28. YEAR FIRST REGISTERED AT DMV (YYYY) </p> <p><i>Questions 29 and 30 apply to co-owned vehicles only. Skip questions 29 and 30 if your vehicle is not co-owned.</i></p> <p>29. NAME OF TAXICAB COMPANY THAT CO-OWNS YOUR VEHICLE NOT APPLICABLE</p> <p>30. WILL THE TAXICAB COMPANY AGREE TO STAY ON THE REGISTRATION WHEN THE VEHICLE IS REPLACED? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO </p>	

E R MUY

Narrative: Use this part to provide more information about your answers in parts A-E, to further explain why you do or do not want DCTC to issue H-tags, and to give other suggestions for policies related to H-tags. If you discuss events, please be specific by giving names, dates, and locations. If you are filing this form on paper, please print clearly in blue or black ink. All filers must complete part G.

Evelyn Ruiz-Muy

Good Morning, my name is Evelyn Ruiz-Muy, I am the Manager of the Classic Cab Company. I informed Mr. John Scott that this form is not applicable to me but he said it is, so here I go.

Thank you to the Panel on Industry for giving me the opportunity to speak before you. I am requesting this Special Panel to Re-activate my two(2) License Plates. I am a very small Taxicab Fleet Owner. My Association only own 20 Rental Vehicles, I used to have 22 units but one got a Big accident and one was Impounded by the DC government (OAG) as an evidenced when two Bogus Passengers shot and killed my Rental driver, Solomon Okoroh in June 2013. The government kept my Taxicab and License plates (H-tag) for over a year. I continued paying the required insurance for this Taxicab until the License plates finally expired. I tried to put a replacement vehicle on July 2014, right after the OAG finally released my vehicle which was beyond repair but I was told that I cannot because the License plate was dead for over 5 months but what could I had done? I lost a good Driver, I lost my Taxicab then I lost my Tag too. The second Taxicab was also involved in a very big Accident in June 2013 and like the first one I continued paying for the Insurance until the License Plate expired. The case against me as the Owner of the Association was dismissed on January 2015. Equitable Insurance Company represented and settled the Lawsuit on my behalf. I lost two Vehicles in a Tip-Top condition the same month and year. I was hearth broken and financially drained.

These above-mentioned License Plates are both in my possession. Both of them got valid PVIN's that were assigned in 2013.

I had been requesting for both License Plates to be activated with Mr. Linton and Mr. Scott but I was only given hope and then Nothing.

These said H-Tags are:

- 1) H-98755 Ford Escape 2005 (SUV) with PVIN D471-Insurance paid until Feb. 16, 2014
- 2) H-99847 Ford Freestar 2006 (MINIVAN) with PVIN D483 -Ins. paid until Feb. 24, 2014

I sincerely request for your Approval in the Re-activation of these H-Tags. I am over 60 years old and I had been in this Taxicab business since 1983 up to the present. I cannot find any other job, no one will hire me anymore and I do not think that I can do anything else.

F

The additional License Plates will definitely produce an additional income for me and my family.

My Peers understand my situation and I hope you do too. They have over 200 to 500 cabs in their Fleet and some of them even feel sorry for me that they seek for my services to help them whenever they got so busy.

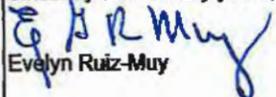
Some Cab Companies had been Opened and Closed for the past 25 years. DCTC Chairmen had Come and Gone and I am still here, I will be loyal to the Taxicab Industry until the end.

English is not my native Tongue, I was originally from the Philippine Islands, I came here in the year 1983 with Nothing but I tried to survive as a Foreigner, a Minority and a Woman in a Men's business "TAXICABS".

Attached herewith are some documentations that I had been following up on the Re-activation of these License plates.

Thank you very for reading and listening.

Sincerely and humbly yours,


Evelyn Ruiz-Muy

ER MUY

Continue your narrative here.

Evelyn Ruiz-Muy

My Opinion On the Issuance Of New H-Tags:

- 1) In my opinion, H-Tags should be re-activated if they had PVIN
- 2) In my opinion, H- Tags should be re-activated if the Insurance had been paid until the Tags expired.
- 3) In my opinion, H-Tags should be re-activated if the Tags is still in the Owner's possession
- 4) In my opinion, H- Tags should be re-activated with PRIORITY for Cab Companies that met the criteria 1-2-and 3 and do not have more than 99 units in their Fleet.

My Opinion on the Issuance of New H- Tags

*** Yes, for the Wheel Chair Accessible New Vehicles only, no matter what Fuel usage ***

* No - do not issue anymore, we have more than enough.

* No - do not issue anymore to new Driver's, they can rent from the Cab Companies

Reasons:- I have been in this business for over 25 years, I have only 22 cabs and only this year that I am able to rent them all. For 25 years I can only rent 12 units and 10 units were sitting in my yard.

With limited number of H-tags, Driver's now are more serious paying their Insurance and paying their License Plates without interruption. Driver's became more responsible. In the past, some Driver's just abandoned their cars on the streets, turned in their tags, went for a vacation for months, when they comeback they can always buy another car and buy another H-tag, there is no consequences and made them irresponsible.(I am talking about Owner/Driver's)

If the number of Taxicabs is more than Driver's, we are creating Monsters & Jumper Driver's. For many years, they drove their rental cars without paying rent and without Insurance cards in their vehicles for weeks and sometimes months, and when the car brokedown that's the time that they moved to another cab company like it's just normal. We rental Owner's were so hungry and that we gave our cars to these Jumper's without checking them at all. It's like "dejavu" all over again.

Most Rental Driver's got a mixed feelings in driving a wheel chair accessible van because of the additional responsibility that is coming with it however if that's the only taxicab available then they will not have any choice and they will get use to it.

So No, I am not in favor of the issuance of New H-tags.

Let's put back the H-tags with an existing PVIN first.

Let the New Vehicles with wheel chair accessible - second

F

Confirmed

All filers must complete this part.

I do solemnly swear or affirm, subject to the penalties of perjury, that the information I have provided on this form and in the attached documents, if any, is true and correct.

G

SIGNATURE: E. R. MUY PRINTED NAME: Evelyn Ruiz Muy DATE: 05/14/2015

WARNING: IT IS A CRIME TO KNOWINGLY MAKE A FALSE STATEMENT ON THIS FORM OR IN ANY ATTACHED DOCUMENTS.

Mayor Browser support open entry system, the current commissioner support open entry system

But what we have is a de-facto closed system.

In the past the DCTC have managed to maintain an open entry by opening the licenses only when the city needed more cabs in the street, and every licensee was able to buy immediately a car and operate a taxi

The DCTC polices with or without intention have created imbalance between h-t tags and drivers

DCTC stopped issuing not just new tags and made a moratorium on issuing tags for independent taxis but also extended without warning the moratorium to all taxis even some replacement for h-tags. And this way they shut down completely issuing h-tags except for few temporary and unorganized opening favoring companies

And on the other side they increased the supply of drivers without limitations. And now we have a huge number of drivers and limited cars

The result naturally was

- More demand for cars and more price hikes for rent by companies , and rent now is \$250.00 (as the price in Virginia which use a closed entry system)
- No available cars for the army of new drivers and yet still printing more new licenses by the day
- Some companies are making more than \$200,000 a month just from renting their cars and their extra tags while drivers suffer to just have a living
- Companies have started to be less caring in maintaining their cars and less caring for the drivers and feel secure because they have a long waiting list of drivers. And they gained huge money and want to maintain this current imbalance
- The new DCTC practice have prevented drivers from returning their tags if they have to be temporarily or even forever out of service because there is no system to allow them to have it back
- More new and old drivers are quitting because of lack of cars and rapid changes
- And drivers feel they are on bottom of the list of interests for DCTC

The solution

It is never too late to recognize the mistake and start in the right direction

I suggest the following

- Open only exams for licenses when there is a need in city for new drivers. And for now stop immediately adding more supply of un-needed licenses
- Limit the number of cars owned by companies based on parking spaces available to them
- Prevent individuals from owning more than one H-tag
- Return tags for those who voluntarily surrendered them as prescribed by the law, and establish a system for those who want to surrender their tags voluntarily with a time limitation for the return
- Start issuing tags to drivers as needed until we return back to the balance between cars and drivers “ even if takes 5 years” because drivers are much more reliable to maintain their cars and own a safe cab
- Use a system of motivation for any new modernizations plans like adding handicap cars and more

Again it is never too late to fix mistakes and to start in the right directions

My own personal story included with this

And my best wishes to paned in its mission

Abdelwahab Hassan

Abdelwa00@gmail.com

My name is Fekade Teshome. I have been driving taxi cab for twenty years. I had surrendered my tag before the commission made decision to stop giving out new tag. Now I am renting to and I would like to ask the committee to give me back my tag for the following reasons.

As the number of new drivers is going up, rental cabs are becoming very scarce. If I lose my rental cab for any reason, I am going to be jobless. This creates a huge job insecurity on me. Taking into consideration the effect of UBER on my job, working eight hours a day is not enough. I have to work long hours to make a living and to pay outrageous rental price. I am compelled to spend less and less time with my family. My health condition is also deteriorating due to lack of adequate rest. After all is it what I deserve after serving for twenty years?

It is obvious that the taxicab industry is improving and growing. The public is in a hybrid or low fuel consuming vehicle state of mind. Let me play my part for the expansion of modern fleet and let me contribute my share to meet the standards of EPA's clean air act. This will happen only if I get back my tag. Finally I would like to ask the committee to consider my statements and make favorable decision.

Talking points on quality of taxi cabs owned by Washington DC Taxi Cab companies

Note: this argument is not in any way intended to undermine cab company owners who follow the laws and regulations set by DCTC to keep their rental vehicles as appealing as possible.

However, we, cab drivers of rental vehicles from cab companies have observed or experienced the following problems and consequences that follow by driving vehicles that should have been salvaged long time ago.

- ❖ Most of the vehicles have high mileage readings, some over 300,000 miles. Customers often ask if they are safe in this kind of vehicle and breakdown on highways is most likely, obviously breakdown on a highway dearly costs both the passenger/s and the cab driver. Imagine you are on a very busy highway!
- ❖ Most of the vehicles used for taxi cab by companies are used or retired from police services or retired from other cab companies like New York City Yellow Cab and bought at auction elsewhere. It is just morally unfair to use these vehicles in the nation's capital. Not only that, these 8-cylinder vehicles are known as gas guzzlers and spit too much CO2 causing environmental pollution and incurring high running cost (for gas) to the drivers.
- ❖ Some of these vehicles are really unisons with multiple sensor lights on, loose panel, old seats, belts, ad jarred doors, malfunctioning windows poor or no functioning air condition etc. All these multiple problems could be found on several of the vehicles. With all these problems, the drivers are able to avoid or minimize the unintended accidents to our passengers and ourselves. But it is not without cost. Spending hours at repair shop is almost a daily phenomenon without due compensation for the wasted time.
- ❖ The newest cab drivers are at disadvantage for many reasons. There are very limited rental cabs on the market so the rental price have sky rocketed in the last one year. The surging Washington DC young residents have developed bitter tests for old taxi cabs so they have shifted to a technologically advanced side car services with better quality vehicles. Generally the demand for newer vehicles is up and time for a change.
- ❖ Driving old vehicles cost cab drivers their time at repair shops when they are suppose to be on the street to make money like their colleagues who own H-Tags.. This has become additional burden on top of the already meager revenue due to high rental expenses for the malfunctioning vehicles.
- ❖ We, the newest cab drivers are in jeopardy. We are unable to challenge cab companies to provide us a better car for the money we pay-them. Because there is an over-supply of drivers than the available H-Tags. Ask a company any question on the quality of the car, the answer is: give me the key; I have a bunch of drivers waiting to rent-dead end. No more questions, the lease is over.
- ❖ We, the newest cab drivers promise the city of Washington DC and DCTC that we will buy fuel efficient appropriate new vehicles including wheelchair accessible ones if we are granted the H-Tags

July 14, 2015

Dear Mr. Chair Man,

Respected participants and Rental Cab Drivers,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the incredible effort that has been made by your commission to improve the quality of leadership in the public transit system. We also would like to express our deepest appreciation to your office's efficiency in issuing hustle free new taxicab drivers face ID.

Dear Mr. Chair Man, currently we the cab drivers are having great stress due to very open policy that allowed many companies: like UBER, lift, limousine, and other private companies and including some individuals are using their own vehicles, in which we the rental cab drivers are unprivileged to operate with our own cars.

The commission qualified us to be licensed cab driver in the District. However, we have no choice to be in business except renting cars from drivers' associations and cab companies by paying \$800-\$1200/month for cab rent, \$20-\$30/week for PSP service, credit card processing fee, and VeriFone rent. Because of the rule imposed on us to work with rented cabs, we are obliged to work 16-20 hours every day to make money for living and family expenses. Why we are made to scarify all our times and energy for nothing? What was the main purpose of all that great training we were given if we can't make any difference in the customer service and safety? Any one can imagine that customers are getting the poorest service because of the fact that we are discouraged and abused drivers who doesn't even have family time.

Driver associations and companies that own H-tag have been complaining and protesting everyday about their tough survival in the business because of the fact that other competitors have taken all their customers. If drivers who own H-tag can't survive what can be understood about us? Are we expected and trained to work and subsidize their life and families? Why don't we be given at least the opportunity to work for ourselves and compete with others? Why are we enslaved in the capital this great Nation known to be the center of freedom?

Giving H-tag and face ID doesn't make any difference in terms of flooding the street with taxi cabs because of the following reasons:

- All newly licensed drivers are going to drive cars that are not occupied by others previously. Almost all of the cabs we rent and drive are just purchased by associations from auctions and individuals that never been used as vehicle for hire in District of Columbia.
- If we are given H-tag we are going to clean the street and protect the environmental pollution by giving service with fuel efficient and safe to drive cabs.
- Majority of cab associations don't have well organized customer friendly dispatch and call system; because of this many cabs are seen flooding main streets and hotels than deep in to residential and recreational areas. In this reared we suggest to our DCTC to invite competitive service providers who can ease these constraints with minimum and reasonable price.
- As the district hosts, big meetings and conferences are held here in the Capital by guests from the whole states and other parts of the world, we and DCTC are expected to provide American standard safe and comfortable taxi cab service. If H-tag is issued to us it would be our responsibility to came up with, safe, and comfortable clean vehicles to give standard taxi service so that together we can make a difference!!
- Last but not list, as we are part of the business we deserve H-TAG and recognition from the commission and together we can make a difference!

Finally, I would like to pass my deepest appreciation on behalf of all the Taxi Cab Renters for organizing this historic Public Hearing and thank you for considering our H-TAG request.

Thank you!

July 13, 2015

Dear Mr. Chair Man,

Respected participants and fellow Cab Drivers,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the incredible job your commission has done to improve the leadership in the public transit system .Moreover, we are very great full for your office efficiency in giving necessary exam and issuing new taxicab drivers face ID by avoiding all types of difficulties that has been deep rooted for longer period of time.

Dear Mr. Chair Man, contemporary customer service require our closer follow ups that we are giving special emphasis to make sure we are doing our job to the best interest of our customers'. As we are serving this Beloved Capital of this Great Nation, we the Taxi Cab Renters are giving transportation services to the multifarious public members like: District Residents', other Individual Citizens, High Government Officials, Scientists, Doctors and others. While we are rendering these very important services, we are driving rental cars with multiple maintenance codes that are not given proper attention by the Cab Company Technicians which eventually could cause greater customers' dissatisfaction that will have a negative impact on the Public Transit System. Despite the fact that we are exposed to unregulated high price for rental cabs, we are always driving these cars with greater uncertainty thinking what could be happening on the road until our next destination and the customers' drivers safety is at the stake!

I would like to bring to your attention what we have been promised on the two days very well designed Drivers Training at the end of 2013. We were told that we will be self-employed, qualified professional Taxi Cab drivers. However, we are now, qualified professional Taxi Cab drivers, but we are not "self employed", because we are not given a chance to have H-TAG, to drive our own brand new, fuel efficient, wheel chair accessible and environmental-friendly cars.

Finally, I would like to thank you on behalf of all the Taxi Cab Renters for organizing this historic Public Hearing and thank you for considering our H-TAG request.

Thank you!!

First of all, I would like to thank the leadership of this panel for giving us the opportunity to express our views regarding the issue of tag.

After going through a well designed two days training, the commission qualified us to be licensed cab drivers in the district. This didn't take place free of charge, but has cost each of us a total of \$700.00, which includes schooling, licensing and other processing fees. This is ok. However, we were not directed to a situation that gives us hope and courage to enjoy the business. Instead, we are exposed to an exploitation that sucks our blood and breaks our bones. We have been instructed to rent cars from companies who are left to do whatever they want, regarding manipulation of rent prices any time. On top that some of the companies never had the capacity and organizational structure to provide durable cabs for rent, and the appropriate services. Currently, the rent is in the range of \$200 to \$350/week, and we pump gas \$30 to \$40/day. The rules and regulations of DCTC states that, the maximum hours a driver can drive per day is 13 hours. However, driving only 13 hours a day doesn't cover all the aforementioned expenses and our living expenses. Thus, we are obliged to work 16 – 20 hours/day to support ourselves and family. Mind you, in what state of mind will a driver be while driving 16 – 20 hours/day? Don't you think this situation could cause terrible accidents that could hurt both the driver and passengers? This is a result of the nnregulated car rent action of the cab companies. On the other hand, we drivers deserve to have family time. Giving free labor to unlimited profit making companies should end. We should be given the opportunity to work for ourselves. Therefore, the solution for all these problems is giving tags to cab renting drivers, which as a result, would positively change a lot of things that include the customer service, the environment, and the economy of the district as a whole.

Thank you

Good Morning dear Respected Chairman, commissioners, councils and all invited guests.

First of all I would like to say thanks to DCTC for listening to drivers and customers concern and arrange this great discussion on improving customer service and safety by motivating drivers who has direct and primary impact on the taxi cab business. At the end of year 2013 DCTC prepared a well-designed 2 days driver training to bring excellent customer service to the nation's capital residents with qualified, professional, and devoted drivers. During the training it was told that we are going to be self-employed qualified cab drivers who are going to bring big change on customer service level of the District taxi cab business. But once we get our license after paying a total of \$700(\$400 for school and others for processing and license) we were informed to start working by renting cabs from companies and individuals that are struggling harshly to survive in the highly competitive vehicle for hire business. Because of this decision and the following facts we are suffering financially, socially, psychologically, and health wise:

- 1.** The competition of taxi-cab business in DC is getting tough and very challenging due to very open policy that allowed many companies (uber, lift, limousine, and other private companies) to operate in the smallest state of the nation. Except taxi cab all of these companies are allowed to let their drivers compete the challenge and work for themselves using their own cars, even though they never passed through any trainings of cab operation business procedures and policies.
- 2.** The commission qualified us to be licensed cab driver in the District. But we are instructed to rent cab from driver associations(that never have the capacity and organizational structure to provide drivable cabs for rent) by paying \$800-\$1200/month for cab rent, \$20-\$30/week for PSP service, credit card processing fee, and VeriFone rent. Because of the rule imposed on us to work with rent cabs, we are obliged to work 16-20 hours every day to make money for survival of our family after paying all the expenses. Don't we deserve to have family time? Why are we made to give free labor for driver associations? Why are we enslaved by groups of cab owners, who are struggling to survive in the business? Why are we made to sacrifice all our times and energy for nothing? What was the main purpose of all that great training we were given if we can't bring any change to customer service and safety for the respected residents of DC? The customers are getting the poorest service because of the fact that we are discouraged and abused drivers who are not good enough even to our families.
- 3.** Driver associations and companies that own H-tag have been complaining and protesting everyday about their tough survival in the business because of the fact that other competitors have taken all their customers. If drivers who own H-tag can't survive what can be understood about us? Are we expected and trained to work and subsidize their life and families? Why don't we be given at least the opportunity to work for ourselves and compete with others? Why are we enslaved in the capital of freedom nation?

4. Giving H-tag and face ID doesn't make any difference in terms of flooding the street with taxi cabs because of the following reasons:

4.1: All newly licensed drivers are going to drive cars that are not occupied by others previously. Almost all of the cabs we rent and drive are just purchased by associations from auctions and individuals that never been used as vehicle for hire in District of Columbia. If we are given H-tag we are going to clean the street and environment by giving service with fuel efficient and safe to drive cabs, so that the District streets will be free from dangerous to operate unsafe cabs we are renting from the associations now.

4.2: Majority of cab associations don't have well organized customer friendly dispatch and call system; because of this many cabs are seen flooding main streets and hotels than deep in to residential and recreational areas. If dispatch system is modernized and improved and also if DCTC gives us H-tag we will buy better customer comfort and safe to drive cars and give service to customers at their residence like other competitors.

5. DC is the nation's capital, which is the home of Congress and Senators who needs respect and standard taxi service better than the other states. Also big meetings and conferences are held by guests from the whole states and other parts of the world in DC who expects American standard safe and comfortable taxi cab service. If H-tag is issued we can buy comfortable, safe, and neat vehicles to give standard taxi service so that we will contribute for the positive image of the state.

6. Driver association and companies did a very negligible improvements and modernization on cab service by themselves and also never consider customer needs than their income. It has been DCTC that follows up on customer needs and safety to make all the modernizations and greatest improvements that we see today. Improvement and modernization of the industry will be very successful practically when the drivers get the right treatment and motivation from DCTC. Because of the support other competitors get from their company, they are winning the market with big motivated drivers. So I would like to ask DCTC to help drivers as we are the one who got direct impact on the success of the industry modernization and growth. Also it is true that, "The motivated and happy the drivers are, the stronger DCTC is".

Eventually we would like to ask DCTC to reconsider the decisions to give us H-tag so that we can achieve the excellent customer service that the respected residents of the District have been striving.

Thanks

Gashaw Birbo

Mr Commissioner. Ernest Chrappah

I serviced the city as a cab driver with my car since 2002,

and On 10/11/2013 I surrendered my tags because my car went out of service and needed major and expensive engine repairs

I was not aware that the moratorium on replacing H-tag was extended automatically from only independent cabs to all cabs. And I wanted to abide by the rules that require me to submit my H-tag when my car out of service and also to avoid paying insurance for a cab not in service

I never intended to give my tag permanently, and On august 2014 I got a good car, but the front desk employee told me verbally that DCTC no longer issue replacement tags

On February 2015 commission meeting I submitted a request to Commissioner Eric Roger to get my H-tag back and I never got a written answer

I congratulate you for your new leadership to the commission and I would like you to help me get my H-tag back

I have two kids 5 and 7 and I can't afford to raise them in the united states when I pay more than \$1000.00 a month to rent a Cab, so I had to send them back to live in Egypt and I suffer from having them away. they are Americans but they are not enjoying what all American kids enjoy . and when I invite them expenses goes beyond my means.

Best of wishes and success to you in your new leadership

Abdelwahab Hassan

703-626-9570

Abdelwa00@gmail.com



7/8/2015

Attached:

Surrendered tags receipt on 10 / 2013

Estimated repairs to old car

Face ID and old registration

Letter submitted to Mr. roger

Picture of my two kids



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Motor Vehicles
P.O. BOX 90120
WASHINGTON DC 20090-0120



SURRENDERED TAGS RECEIPT

ABDELWAHAB M HASSAN
5501 SEMINARY RD APT#1303S
FALLS CHURCH , VA 22041-3907

Surrender Date: 10-11-2013
Vehicle Make: DODG
Tag Number: H92556
Reg. Exp. Date: 04-24-2014
of Tags Surrendered: 2

Co-owner(s):

This receipt serves as acknowledgement that the tags indicated above have been surrendered to DC DMV for the following reason:

OTHER

Note: You are eligible for a refund amount of \$79.98

Please retain this receipt for your records.

- Refunds for unused vehicle registrations are allocated in six-month increments and not to exceed eighteen months (on a two-year registration), rounding down. If you are entitled to a refund, please allow 6 - 8 weeks for processing and mailing of your refund check. Refunds are NOT issued for unused Residential Parking Permit (RPP), Reciprocity or Inspection stickers. Refunds are also not issued for unused vehicle registration less than six months. Final approval is subject to the review of the DMV.
- The registered owner(s) of this vehicle is liable for tickets that may accrue for stolen tags or tags that have not been surrendered to the DMV.
- Failure to maintain continuous vehicle insurance coverage on a vehicle with valid registration may result in an insurance lapse fee for \$150 from 1 – 30 days and \$7 for each additional uninsured day, with a maximum fine of \$2,500. A reinstatement fee will be \$98 if your vehicle registration is suspended.

Abdelwahab Hassan
3713 S George Mason Dr # 916w
Falls church, VA 22041
703-626-9570

2-11-2015

Mr. Eric M. Rogers

District of Columbia Taxicab Commission Chairman

I came to the commission office on august 14 2014. to ask about the procedure to obtain my H-tag that I surrendered on 10-11-2013 and was told by the front desk employee that I cannot get it back

I surrendered my H-tag H92556 on 10-11-2013 because my car was not operable and required very expensive engine repair and I did not want to violate the law and keep the tag without a car in service and I understood that if I don't pay insurance for non-operable car I might pay fines up to \$2500.00

And also I never received my refund amount of \$79.00 which makes this transaction void

I now have a Honda odyssey van 2013 which would make a good in service taxicab and I would like your help to have my H-tag back.

I deeply appreciate your help and cooperation



Abdelwahab Hassan

703-626-9570

2-11-2015

ATTACHED :- SURRENDERED TAGS RECEIPT
:- REPAIR ESTIMATE FOR OLD CAR



PANEL ON INDUSTRY

H-TAG INFORMATION FORM

The form gives individuals an easy way to share their opinions and information about H-Tags with the Panel. YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE H-TAGS BY FILING THIS FORM. Please read the attached Background, Instructions, and Frequently Asked Questions before filing. The form must be filed by June 1, 2015.

All filers must complete this part.

A

1. LAST NAME
MAHMOOD

2. FIRST NAME
TARIQ

3. MIDDLE INITIAL

4. COMPANY OR ASSOCIATION AFFILIATION, IF ANY
EMPIRE CAB COMPANY

5. FACE I.D. NUMBER
73671

6. FACE I.D. ISSUE DATE (MM/DD/YYYY)
02/18/2014

7. FACE I.D. EXPIRATION DATE (MM/DD/YYYY)
05/28/2016

8. CITY OR COUNTY OF RESIDENCE
ALEXANDRIA

9. ZIP CODE
22309

10. JURISDICTION
 VA MD DC

B

All filers must complete this part. Information provided in this part will be kept confidential as provided by D.C. law.

11. HOME ADDRESS (street address)
4304 GRAMERCY CIRCLE

12. CELL PHONE
(703) 731-3219

13. HOME PHONE
(703) 341-6035

14. EMAIL ADDRESS
TARIQ_FF@HOTMAIL.COM

C

All filers must complete this part.

15. ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SPEAKING AT A PANEL HEARING?
 YES NO

16. DO YOU SUPPORT DCTC ISSUING H-TAGS?
 YES NO NO OPINION

17. IF DCTC ISSUES H-TAGS, DO YOU BELIEVE THE H-TAGS SHOULD BE ISSUED ONLY TO OWNERS WHO PURCHASE FUEL EFFICIENT, WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES?
 YES NO NO OPINION

18. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ISSUED H-TAGS?
 YES NO

D

If you answered NO to #18, skip parts D and E. You may complete part F (narrative) and must complete part G.
This part is only for filers who have been issued H-tags. Skip this part if you have never been issued H-tags.

19. YEAR H-TAGS WERE ISSUED TO YOU (YYYY)
2002

20. DO YOU HAVE H-TAGS NOW?
 YES NO

E

This part is only for filers who have H-tags now. The following questions concern the vehicle you are now driving.

21. MANUFACTURER OF YOUR VEHICLE (make)
22. MODEL

23. MODEL YEAR (YYYY)
24. ODOMETER READING
25. PAINTED IN UNIFORM COLOR?
 YES NO

26. FUEL TYPE
 GAS HYBRID OTHER

27. WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE?
 YES NO

28. YEAR FIRST REGISTERED AT DMV (YYYY)

Questions 29 and 30 apply to co-owned vehicles only. Skip questions 29 and 30 if your vehicle is not co-owned.

29. NAME OF TAXICAB COMPANY THAT CO-OWNS YOUR VEHICLE

30. WILL THE TAXICAB COMPANY AGREE TO STAY ON THE REGISTRATION WHEN THE VEHICLE IS REPLACED?
 YES NO

Narrative: Use this part to provide more information about your answers in parts A-E, to further explain why you do or do not want DCTC to issue H-tags, and to give other suggestions for policies related to H-tags. If you discuss events, please be specific by giving names, dates, and locations. If you are filing this form on paper, please print clearly in blue or black ink. All filers must complete part G.

I WAS INVOLVED IN A VERY SEVER ACCIDENT. I HAD 4 SURGERIES AND WAS NOT ABLE TO WORK FOR ONE WHOLE YEAR. ALL RELATED DOCUMENTS ARE ATTACHED TO SUPPORT MY CLAIM.

F

Continue your narrative here.

F

Continued

All filers must complete this part.

G I do solemnly swear or affirm, subject to the penalties of perjury, that the information I have provided on this form and in the attached documents, if any, is true and correct.

SIGNATURE: Tarig M. Mohamed PRINTED NAME: TARIG MAHMOUD DATE: 5-29-2015

WARNING: IT IS A CRIME TO KNOWINGLY MAKE A FALSE STATEMENT ON THIS FORM OR IN ANY ATTACHED DOCUMENTS.

July 16/2015

GRIEVANCE TO DCTC.

(Submitted on July 16/2015 - Public Hearing - to The Panel on The Industry)

PRELUDE

I was offered training along with others (Group of 2009) by UDC in 2009; paying \$375.00. The members took the first test, and received the "Yellow Certificate of Completion" by the time. Procedurally, DCTC gives the second test (popularly known as Computer test) within two or three weeks after the first. Unfortunately, this time - the Commission failed to do so and put us on suspense devoid of any prior advice or notice until November 09/2013.

On this later date, the group was given the final DCTC test and received "Operations License", but put on the second suspense until now - being denied of what is called 'H - Tag'. Due to this decision, the members of the Group couldn't buy vehicles and embark on taxi - mini business.

To obtain the License, besides the initial \$375; each has visited at least five DC Government branch Offices and had effected the following payments: \$100.00 on November, 09/2015 final test day; \$45.00 to DC Treasurer; \$41.00 for Medical; \$125.00 to the Office of Finance and Treasury; and \$7.00 to DMV.

THE ENIGMA

It's an enigma to let us traverse "THE LONG WALK TO TAXI - MINI BUSINESS" having a-priori judgment not to issue H-Tags. Why did DCTC let us get training in 2009, collecting \$375 from each of us if it has already decided not to distribute the Tags?

After a suspense of four years (2009 - Nov.2013), we are never clear again why we were ordered to take the Computer test paying \$100.00 when the Commission was sure of withholding Tags. It confuses me personally why I was required to visit some five DC government Agencies effecting the aforementioned payments when it was vivid to the Commission that I will not be issued the Tag having obtained the driving License post this visit.

THE CONCERNS OF THE COMMISSION

As it's clear from the Website of the Commission, the availability of market, Wheelchair Accessible Vans (WAVs), fuel-efficient vehicles and the revision of existing regulations are emphasized.

In line with this, it is written on the Website also that: "The panel will be responsible to develop proposed regulations to allow for a competitive market place".

With respect to market, it is sufficient to mention the success of uber and Lyft in a short period of time.

Basically, we find it very clear to any one that it is the market force that drives and regulates any market under free market economy; not government Agencies like DCTC since the United States is not under command economy.

By the same token, DCTC has no responsibility to worry on our behalf whether we find sufficient market or not. Let's get the Tags, buy our vehicles, and embark on the taxi - small business and be able to direct our lives on our own schedule to sustain our families.

If we find enough market pipelines for the business, we will flow in; else the market force itself will eject us off the pipeline.

Suffice to mention repetitively the success of Uber in a very short period of time providing thousands of jobs even to housewives, office employees and similar individuals while we are under H - Tag denial for more than six years after paying money at different times aforementioned.

Pertaining to different vehicles, DCTC has announced that - 86 Wheel Chair Accessible Vans (WAVs) have already been added to DC taxi fleet (the legislative requirement is 92) even when 21 Companies out of 91 did not meet the required mandate.

When all the 91 Companies make WAVs 6% of their fleet by December 31,2014 as per the stipulated new legislation, we believe it would be more than enough in DC to quench DCTC Acting Chairman Ernest Chrappa's feeling reflected in the statement: "enhancing services for those who need accessible transportation is a priority for the Commission."

The currently operating fuel - efficient vehicles are also undeniably more than the envisioned number due to the solid fact that most DC Taxi drivers are almost buying fuel efficient vehicles because of the clear comparative advantage such cars yield vis-à-vis other traditional ones.

On my way, just to mention some so that the testimony would be all encompassing, I personally recommend the total alteration of Title 31, which is onerous, and in direct contradiction with Free Market principles.

Uber and Lyft, while carrying out taxi business like activity are not subject to Title 31; the situation rendering them competitive advantage over DC Taxi mini business owners.

Otherwise, the cardinal points aforementioned and subject to public hearing are already accorded more than deserved positive responses: taxi market as reflected in the triumph of Uber and Lyft; the remaining - due to the new law (WAVs) and by own free will of driver owners (fuel - efficient cars).

If we consider DCTC to have been loyal to its 2009 proposal, and given us the second test and H - Tags on time, by now - all members of the Class of 2009 would have been in different economic status than what each holds at present. The reason is too obvious; embarking on the taxi small business in 2009; if one works 6 days a week - and collects \$ 100.00/day x 24days a month x for the last 7 years, one would definitely be different in economic terms.

CONCLUSION

- I leave the denial of H - Tags and putting us on suspense for the last seven years to the conscience of those in whose hands our case is resting.
- Having said this, I do not need to elaborate again on the issue of Whether there is market or not in the face of Uber's triumph in a short period of time. I also emphasize that we do not need DCTC to worry on our behalf for the availability of sufficient market. If the space is full (which definitely is not), we will be out of the game by market force and shift to the area where there is job for subsistence.
- We shouldn't also be put on further suspense until DCTC is through with its any study that should take place independently of our case.
- So, we request the immediate release of H-Tags to the Group of 2009 that should have been issued in 2009. Doing this would be in harmony with the basic tenets and principles of free market economy where in one can achieve any intended desire if works hard.
I will personally consider it also as a redress for the lost seven business Years due to the withhold of the Tag.

With due respect;
Ewnetu Akama Gemechu
(ewnetugemechu@yahoo.com)

Notice of Public Hearing
DC Taxicab Commission
Topic: H-tag
Driver Remarks
Thursday, July 16 2015

The Adverse Environment which Unduly and Significantly Harms
Current DC Taxi Drivers that are Operating without Personal H-tag:

- There are not equal amount of H-Tags available as there are licensed operators
- Weekly taxi rental have reached as high as **\$280.00/week**
- Vehicles that are inefficient that consume up to **\$40.00/day of gas**

Overview of operating Rental Taxi

\$280.00 X 4 (weeks) = **\$1120 /month**

\$40.00 (gas/day) X 6(days/avg) = \$240 (week) X 4 = **\$960/month**

- Total minimum taxi rental operating cost =
\$2080.00 (per Month) x 12 (Months) = **\$24,960.00/year**

Advantages of Issuing Individual H-tag for Current DC Licensed Taxi Operators

- Introduce to the DC taxi business; improved, reliable and efficient fleet of vehicles
- Better customer service by meeting the existing public demand for efficient number of taxis
- Provide adequate number of drivers during peak travel times within the District
- Add more qualified drivers that have met the requirements set by DCTC
- Provide better opportunity for drivers to make sustainable income
- Reduce current licensed driver's dependency on social welfare due to limited income
- Increase the amount of operating revenue for DCTC that would stem from H-tag related fees

Possible Criteria's for Issuing the H-tag for Current Licensed Drivers

- Provide vehicle within reasonable time period that meets the DCTC guidelines
- Attain the required operating insurance
- Maintain current Taxi operating License
- Install the required equipment as outlined in the guidelines
- Pay all the operating costs associated with individual ownership of the H-tag

Conclusion: The DC taxi cab H-tag should be issued to those that are "legally" licensed by DCTC to operate within the District. The current moratorium on H-tag is baseless. Since its implementation, the District has absorbed over twenty thousand (20,000) more privet vehicles for hire under various companies. Therefore, the old and outdated "taxi per capita" formula is inadequate in determining the number of H-tags needed to meet the riders demand. Instead, the demand for taxi ride should be determined by the individual's daily activities within the District as well as the hundreds of events that take place in and around the city. Once again, the H-tag should be issued to those drivers that are: willing, able, and ready to serve the community.