



NEW YORK CITY TAXI & LIMOUSINE COMMISSION

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TLC NEWS | TESTIMONY

TESTIMONY OF NEW YORK CITY TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION Re: Intros. No. 267

Delivered October 24, 2002 Good morning, Chairman Liu and members of the City Council Transportation Committee. My name is Matthew Daus, and I am the Commissioner and Chair of the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC). I appreciate the opportunity to testify on behalf of the TLC with regard to Intro. No. 267.

The TLC was created pursuant to the City Charter and given the responsibility of developing an overall transportation strategy for demand responsive transportation providers, established by Local Law and TLC regulations. The TLC licenses and regulates medallion taxicabs, community liveries, black cars, commuter vans, paratransit vehicles and luxury limousines.

Each of these industries has its own place in the comprehensive transportation network of the city, providing transportation services in response to a particular need of New York City residents and visitors, to supplement and complement public transportation. For example, taxicabs provide hail service in high-density areas, while other for-hire vehicles (FHV's) are available solely for radio dispatch calls and provide door-to-door service.

For the most part, when looked at from the broader perspective, this has been a largely successful balancing act that sees the public served quite well. The many neighborhoods of New York City are unique, with different transportation needs. In some areas, a hail-type system provides the best service. In others, radio-dispatch services provide the greater public benefit. It is true that medallion taxicabs primarily serve the Central Business District of Manhattan, though there are operational medallion taxicab stands in parts of the Bronx, Queens and Brooklyn.

While the TLC has basis in law to require and enforce that passengers be transported anywhere in the City of New York and certain destinations beyond, there is no such basis to require that medallion taxicabs cruise areas other than those they wish to. As they are part of a free market, taxicabs frequent those areas where there is sufficient business. It is also an undeniable fact that there are some communities throughout the City of New York that prefer hail-like service to public transportation and pre-arranged for-hire vehicle services available in their localities.

While we recognize the Council's intention to begin to address this issue, Intro. No. 267, if passed in its current form, would require significant layers of bureaucracy to implement and monitor a system of such scope. Indeed, it is our mission at the TLC to reduce existing bureaucracy, not to add additional layers. It is also true that Intro. No. 267 does not address the issue of enforcement, which is clearly problematic.

There are aspects of Intro. No. 267 that we believe would be a positive step toward improving customer service and industry accountability, such as the requirement of trip sheets and the posting of FHV drivers' licenses, and the TLC would be pleased to consider these provisions as amendments to the TLC's existing regulations.

That said, however, the TLC believes, and logic dictates, that we take the time and the opportunity to further study and discuss the viability of such an approach with the Council and the Department of Transportation. We also look forward to hearing the testimony of the public and members of the TLC's regulated industries, so that we may carefully consider their considered positions as important stakeholders in this process.

Again, thank you for inviting me to testify. I would now be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

