

March 29, 2018

Chair
House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development
Rm. 35
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05635-5301
Tel: (802) 828-2228

RE: H-143 & H-725

Dear Committee Members,

I would like to express to the Committee that there are numerous short comings within the two bills under consideration by this committee. I will do my best to point out a few of them for your review, consideration and inclusion.

Also, I do wish to inform the Committee that I cannot say that I support both bills for reasons already stated previously; namely that the very “foundation” of both bills are based on deceptive language.

Taxicab companies Uber & Lyft (and any other so-called TNC’s) would like this committee to believe that they are not taxicabs, nor vehicles-for-hire. They are taxicabs and they must conform to Vermont state law in all regards. If this Committee separates TNC’s for special consideration from taxicabs in general, you will be promoting a separate-and-unequal balance between the two. The 14th Amendment to the Constitution will come into play due to that imbalance.

The best way out of this dilemma would be your recommendation and support of a comprehensive Vermont State Taxicab bill covering the entire range of vehicles-for-hire.

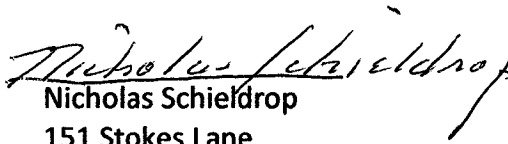
In any event, I will do my best to enumerate a few short comings below:

1. All taxicabs are in the Transportation Network business, thus they run Transportation network companies. Thus, change the wording to Taxicab Transportation Companies throughout the document,

2. Section 750, (a) (1) "Digital Network." All taxicabs use numerous digital applications, such as computers, websites, digital phones of one sort or another. We call "Prearrangement of Rides" reservations or bookings. Thus, all taxicabs are also TNC's. The Committee needs to change the entire document.
3. Change "Transportation Network Company Vehicle" to "Taxicab" throughout."
4. Insert the word "passenger" instead of "Rider."
5. Change the word(s), "platform" to "dispatch" or "dispatcher."
A "dispatcher dispatches a taxicab, and a "platform dispatches a ready vehicle. Use the words, "Dispatch System" when applicable
The platform in this instant, becomes a dispatcher.
6. Reduce the insurance amount for independent taxicab operators to 400,000. Taxicabs operating in the remote areas of Vermont will be hard-pressed to pay higher rates.

In closing, I do want this Committee to realize that both House bills create a back-door licensing scheme for Uber and Lyft taxicab companies to operate in all municipalities without first obtaining the required licenses to operate within those jurisdictions. For instance, a St. Albans license is required to pick-up within St Albans and a Burlington license is required to drop-off in Burlington. A medical patient going from Northwestern Hospital to the University Center Hospital in Burlington requires a taxicab with both municipal licenses.

Solution - Insert into these House bills that municipal taxicab licenses will be no longer required at the time of enactment of either House bills.


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