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To Rep. Nancy Nathanson,

My name is Meera Joshi and from April 2014 until March of 2019 I was the Chair of the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission. During my almost five year tenure I witnessed first-hand the explosive growth in ridership of popular apps such as Uber and Lyft, and the welcome and needed added mobility they brought to many who live outside of the city's core business district. I write today urging you not to support HB 3023 as it takes away important tools necessary to match this important service these companies provide with an entire community's needs. As written, at the least, the bill preempts localities from taking necessary steps to protect the safety of all street users and passengers, the ability to have an informed understanding of traffic on its streets, driver economics, and the ability to mandate that these services don't discriminate against passengers who use wheelchairs. For example:

Safety: As drivers compete for fares, more and more stay on the road longer and longer. Driving for extended periods of time is the same as driving drunk. Localities need a way to effectively limit how long a driver can stay on the road to protect pedestrians, other street users, passengers and the driver. This takes two things at a minimum. Access to information on how long a driver has been on the road regardless of what app they are working for and the ability to penalize both the company that keeps sending them trips and the driver who keeps accepting them. These important, efficient and lifesaving tools are taken away with HB 3023 as localities can't get the necessary data and don't independently have the ability to take a driver off the road. Who loses, the public, who is at greater risk of being the victim of a crash.

Data: Empty miles cost everyone. A passengerless driver is not earning money yet needs to be in his or her car at the ready to accept a trip and in a popular/dense area. The passengerless car is taking up needed road space. Both are ingredients for companies to achieve low wait times and therefore are incentivized. There needs to be balance. Increased congestion has a huge economic toll on a local businesses, their patrons and workers. Information about how cars are being utilized, especially in businesses districts, is the only way communities can provide smart flexible congestion fighting measures. Data also provides the foundation for determining whether drivers are able to make a living or whether the expenses they incur in order to work for an app are eating up their wages. Yet, HB 3023 prohibits local government from addressing

these concerns through data driven policy and in fact puts the responsibility of increased congestion and poor driver wages directly on state lawmakers.

Access: I spent last Friday morning with a group of disabled college students discussing their daily challenges. In New York City we mandated that to operate app services must provide accessible service for each request and within a prescribed time (i.e., within 15 minutes). Today these students have much fuller lives. They can get to class, get to meetings, socialize. Providing accessible service costs more than providing standard so companies don't provide it unless it is a precondition to operation. HB 3023 denies passengers who use wheelchairs with a way to get around and fully participate in life because it preempts localities from mandating this service. This is discrimination and if the bill passes it will be state sanctioned discrimination.

In closing, I have heard lots of pushback from companies about local control. They often claim that if it is allowed, they will have to comply with a complicated patchwork of regulation. Yet, these same companies are able, through very complex algorithms, to customize each users trip, match multiple riders with the same trip, work in every state despite differences in state laws, and work internationally despite differences in international rules and laws. So, this criticism simply lacks foundation. They clearly do not lack ability. Moreover, public servants have a duty to address inequality and risks to the public, and if the cost is that apps must change their algorithms (something they likely do on a daily basis), it is a small price for them to pay for an immense and important change for the better.

Thank you for your time and consideration and please contact me at mjoshi919@gmail.com if you have any questions about my experience or need additional information.

All the best,

/Meera Joshi/