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TIMES

An Insider's Look at Both NYC TLC Regulated Industries

STAY ALERT, PRACTICE SELF-CARE, AND ASK FOR HELP IF YOU NEED IT



MANTÉNGASE ALERTA, PRACTIQUE EL CUIDADO PERSONAL Y PIDA AYUDA SI LA NECESITA

TLC Offers Safety Tips as Crime Spikes

Cabbies Protest Demanding Debt Relief

Black Car/Livery Task Force Approved

Drivers Worry as More Streets Closed to Cars



EDITOR'S NOTES

STAY ALERT ON THE STREET, TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, AND PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO ASK FOR HELP

We're living through a dark and confusing time, and it's sad and disturbing that our industry's drivers seem like they're caught in the middle of the chaos. They are considered essential workers, asked to transport people during a pandemic, but there aren't enough rides for most of them to earn a decent wage, despite working long hours. Civil unrest is erupting in cities across the nation, with violence and crime spiking as people seek justice for our nation's long history of racism – and the stress and uncertainty caused by the pandemic adds fuel to that fire.

Due to the lack of a national strategy to tame the coronavirus, and mixed messages from the White House, far too many people STILL aren't taking COVID-19 seriously. Even after all these months, after all of the deaths and suffering, there are still people refusing to perform the smallest of courtesies to help protect their fellow citizens: wear a mask and maintain a safe distance.

Meanwhile, our industry's drivers are increasingly becoming victims, as desperation, fear, and rage continue to spread, like the disease itself. When crime hits the streets, it's the people on the street who invariably become the victims.

After a rash of robberies and assaults this summer, New York City's Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC) launched a new program "to ensure that anyone who assaults a driver is brought to justice and that drivers who are victims of verbal and physical attack or robberies receive the assistance and advocacy they deserve."

There are plenty of drivers out there who feel that the TLC does nothing but take, but this is the perfect opportunity to get something back for the money that you've paid in all these years. The TLC is not only offering assistance and support to drivers who have been victims of a crime, but help is available on financial, legal, and health matters (both physical and mental).

First Things First: Immediate Danger

Any driver who feels in peril or is the victim of a crime should call 911 immediately. It is also essential to file a police report, to help prevent future crimes. Then, email the TLC at tlcexternalaffairs@tlc.nyc.gov, for help connecting with important services that aid crime victims. This includes support connecting to the New York State Office of Victim Services, which can help with medical bills and counseling expenses, lost wages, and other types of assistance. The TLC also helps victims file police reports, lodge Hate Crime complaints with the NYPD, file discrimination complaints with the NYC Commission on Human Rights and assists the NYPD in gathering evidence in criminal investigations.

Driver Resources

The TLC's Driver Resource Center provides drivers with financial counseling, legal services, and help if you are feeling unwell or are struggling with stress and need mental health assistance. They also can help you fill out applications for benefits, which can be very useful because the system can be very confusing. Schedule an appointment and get help today at <https://portal.driverresourcecenter.tlc.nyc.gov/>.

It's natural to feel overwhelmed, sad, anxious, and afraid, or to experience other symptoms of distress, such as trouble sleeping. To reduce stress and get help – particularly if you are starting to feel overwhelmed – please reach out to NYC Well, a free, confidential, 24/7 helpline, staffed by trained counselors. They can provide brief counseling and referrals to care in over 200 languages. Just call 888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355), text "WELL" to 65173, or start a chat at [NYC.gov/nycwell](https://nycwell.gov/).

Whatever the reasons for the recent spike in crime – whether it's civil unrest or pandemic-related anxiety over poverty, unemployment, housing instability, or hunger – all drivers must remember that the most important trip they take during their shift is the one that brings them home safely to their loved ones. There is no reason to go through this alone. Please... PLEASE... don't hesitate to ask for the help you need.

MANTÉNGASE ALERTA EN LA CALLE, CUÍDESE Y NO DUDE EN PEDIR AYUDA

Estamos viviendo un momento enigmático y confuso, y es triste y preocupante que quienes dirigen nuestra industria parezcan estar atrapados en medio del caos. Se los considera trabajadores esenciales, a quienes se les pide que transporten a las personas durante una pandemia, pero los viajes no son suficientes para que la mayoría de ellos ganen un salario digno, a pesar de trabajar muchas horas. Los disturbios civiles están estallando en ciudades de todo el país, la violencia y el crimen aumentan a medida que la gente busca justicia ante la larga historia de racismo de nuestra nación, y el estrés y la incertidumbre causados por la pandemia echan más leña al fuego.

Debido a la falta de una estrategia nacional para controlar el coronavirus y a los mensajes contradictorios de la Casa Blanca, demasiadas personas AÚN no se toman en serio el COVID-19. Incluso después de todos estos meses, después de todas las muertes y el sufrimiento, todavía hay personas que se niegan a tener la más mínima cortesía de ayudar a proteger a sus conciudadanos: usar una máscara y mantener una distancia segura.

Mientras tanto, los conductores de nuestra industria se están convirtiendo cada vez más en víctimas, ya que la desesperación, el miedo y la ira continúan propagándose, como la enfermedad misma. Cuando el crimen llega a las calles, es la gente que circula allí la que constantemente se convierte en víctima.

Después de una serie de robos y asaltos este verano, la Comisión de Taxis y Limusinas (TLC) de Nueva York lanzó un nuevo programa "para garantizar que cualquier persona que agrede a un conductor sea llevada ante la justicia y que los conductores que sean víctimas de asaltos o robos verbales y físicos reciban la asistencia y la defensa que merecen".

Hay muchos conductores que opinan que la TLC no hace más que recaudar, pero esta es la oportunidad ideal para obtener algo a cambio del dinero que han pagado todos estos años. La TLC no solo ofrece asistencia y apoyo a los conductores que han sido víctimas de un delito, sino que también les brinda ayuda con asuntos financieros, legales y de salud (tanto físicos como mentales).

Primero lo primero: Peligro inmediato

Cualquier conductor que sienta que está en peligro o sea víctima de un delito debe llamar al 911 de inmediato. También es fundamental presentar una denuncia policial, para ayudar a prevenir futuros delitos. Luego envíe un correo electrónico a la TLC, a la dirección tlcexternalaffairs@tlc.nyc.gov, a fin de obtener ayuda para conectarse con servicios importantes que asisten a las víctimas de delitos. Parte de la asistencia que se ofrece lo conecta con la Oficina de Servicios para Víctimas del Estado de Nueva York, que puede ayudarlo con las facturas médicas y los gastos de asesoramiento, la pérdida de ingresos y otros tipos de asistencia. La TLC también ayuda a las víctimas a presentar denuncias policiales, presentar denuncias de delitos de odio ante el Departamento de Policía de la Ciudad de Nueva York (NYPD), presentar denuncias de discriminación ante la Comisión de Derechos Humanos de la Ciudad de Nueva York y ayuda a la policía de Nueva York a reunir pruebas en investigaciones penales.

Recursos para conductores

El Centro de Recursos para conductores de la TLC brinda a los conductores asesoramiento financiero, servicios legales y ayuda si se sienten mal o están luchando contra el estrés y necesitan asistencia de salud mental. También pueden ayudarlo a completar solicitudes de beneficios, lo que puede ser muy útil porque el sistema puede ser muy confuso. Para programar una cita y obtener ayuda hoy mismo, ingrese a <https://portal.driverresourcecenter.tlc.nyc.gov/>.

Es natural sentirse abrumado, triste, ansioso y asustado, o tener otros síntomas de angustia, como dificultad para dormir. Para disminuir el estrés y obtener ayuda, especialmente si comienza a sentirse abrumado, comuníquese con NYC Well, una línea de ayuda gratuita, confidencial, disponible las 24 horas, los 7 días de la semana, con asesores capacitados. Pueden ofrecerle una breve sesión de asesoramiento y derivarlo para que reciba asistencia en más de 200 idiomas. Simplemente llame al 888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355), envíe un mensaje de texto con la palabra "WELL" al 65173, o inicie una conversación de chat en [NYC.gov/nycwell](https://nycwell.gov/).

Sean cuales sean las razones del reciente aumento de la delincuencia, ya sean disturbios civiles o la ansiedad relacionada con la pandemia por la pobreza, el desempleo, la inestabilidad habitacional o el hambre, todos los conductores deben recordar que el viaje más importante que hacen durante su turno es el que los lleva de regreso a casa a salvo, con sus seres queridos. No hay razón para pasar por esto solo. Le ROGAMOS no dude en pedir la ayuda que necesita.



FROM WHERE I SIT

IT IS TIME TO UNIONIZE

BY "TAXI DAVE" POLLACK

From where I sit, over 50 million Americans have applied for unemployment benefits in the past few months, over 180,000 Americans have died from Covid19, a hurricane with 150 mph winds hit parts of Louisiana & Texas, and a California judge ruled that Uber and Lyft must classify their drivers as employees.

Uber & Lyft drivers are deprived of health insurance, just like yellow cab drivers at a time when Covid19 is spreading like mayonnaise on your favorite sandwich. If you are one of those drivers who stopped working to protect your family from Covid19, you had zero income from working, are now one of the 50 million unemployed, and must thank god that there is Obamacare in order to receive medical care with, or without preconditions.

Most bus drivers, subway engineers and conductors, FedEx drivers, UPS drivers and even truckers have not lost their jobs or their health insurance, not to mention a pension. Pensions are part of a marvelous system that rewards decades of hard work with monthly in-

come until the day you die. Unfortunately for yellow cab drivers and Uber/Lyft drivers, a pension is only a dream. This dream, which is part of what made America the envy of the world for many decades, has eluded those who specifically transport people for a living.

Uber lost about \$5 billion, yes, with a B, each year since its inception. Even as they went public, their drivers received zero benefits, yet many UBER EMPLOYEES had stock built into their salary offers.

Yellow cab companies, most with high overhead, have taken a financial hit as bad as their drivers – with up to 95% of yellow cabs sitting idle at times. Some smaller taxi businesses have gone out of business or merged to save those businesses.

New York City yellow cab drivers who did drive during the initial stages of Covid19, found out the destructive truth: there were virtually zero passengers while they endangered their lives. No income, no health insurance and no pension is a formula for financial disas-

ter now and for evermore. BUT, if all drivers were unionized at this time, at least one could envision a situation similar to those drivers delivering packages, driving trains and trucks: a guaranteed income and benefits.

Look, unionization has its negatives as well as positives. FROM WHERE I SIT, unionization is the best thing to protect drivers and the taxi industry. A lot would have to be negotiated for drivers and "garages" to survive.

A union job with a steady income and health benefits at a time where the entire country is suffering in one way or another, would certainly be the carrot to enlist drivers back into a currently flawed and unbeneficial workforce system. If it means higher fares, so be it. We are a luxury segment of mass transit and our drivers deserve to be paid a living wage just like other union drivers. Without a workforce, all other problems are just a nuisance. Without an abundant workforce, any industry will die. I want the New York City Taxi Industry to live, so... UNIONIZE NOW!

David "Taxi Dave" Pollack is an industry veteran, spokesperson and advocate for drivers in New York City. He can be reached via email at taxihail@aol.com. He encourages people with comments or questions to reach out to him, and each month we publish those letters, comments and photos.



TAXI NEWS

NYC CABBIES PROTEST NEAR CITY HALL DEMANDING DEBT RELIEF

New York City Taxi drivers protested outside City Hall in Manhattan on August 20, demanding Mayor Bill de Blasio offer help as the steep drop-off in ridership caused by COVID-19 continues to cripple the industry. The demonstration, organized by the New York Taxi Workers Alliance, called for debt forgiveness for cab drivers. The union said 80% of yellow cab owner-drivers faced food insecurity.

The demonstration brought a caravan of cabs to City Hall and the offices of three financial lenders in New York and New Jersey.

Taxi trips in June were down more than 70% compared to before the pandemic. Drivers were already suffering from the taxi medallion crisis that left many drivers in deep debt. The mayor has said the city simply does not have the money to bail out taxi drivers but believes the federal government should step in to help.

Source: Fox 5 New York



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TAXI NEWS

REPORT: PANDEMIC HURTS STRUGGLING TAXI INDUSTRY

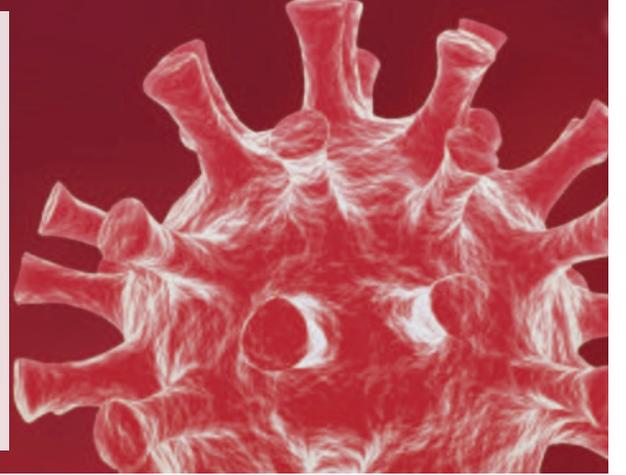
A report released in July by New York City's Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC) showed the industries it regulates have been heavily impacted by the coronavirus pandemic – despite being deemed “essential”. Only one in four NYC Taxi and For-Hire-Vehicle (FHV) drivers were on the road in late June, the report noted.

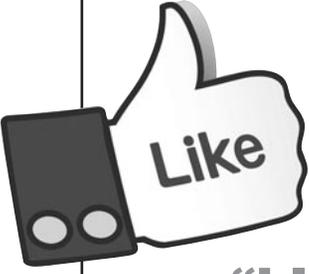
As soon as Governor Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio implemented lockdown measures in late March, Taxi

trips started to dramatically drop. By the beginning of April, passenger demand touched bottom at 16% of where it was before COVID-19. Working drivers saw their earnings slashed in half.

The report also indicated that the industry is coming back very slowly. By late June, demand was at 29% of last year's levels, and working drivers were earning on average 5% less than in June 2019.

Source: NY1





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CONFIDENTIAL HELPLINE

If you or someone you know is suffering from depression, there is a free, confidential helpline called NYC Well that is always available and accessible in 200 languages. You can call 1-888-NYCWell, or text “WELL” to 65173. However, if you are ever in immediate danger of harming yourself or others, please call 911.

Arabic

إذا كنت تعاني أنت أو أي شخص تعرفه من الاكتئاب، فهناك خط مساعدة مجاني، وموثوق يُطلق عليه اسم NYC Well وهو متاح دومًا ويمكن الوصول إليه بـ 200 لغة مختلفة. يمكنك الاتصال برقم 1-888-NYCWell، أو كتابة كلمة “WELL” إلى رقم 65173. في حين، إذا كنت معرضًا لخطر محقق قد يؤدي إلى إيذاء نفسك، أو إيذاء الآخرين، فالرجاء الاتصال برقم 911.

Bengali

যদি আপনি বা আপনার পরিচিত কেউ হতাশায় ভুগছে, তাহলে তার জন্য NYC Well নামক একটি বিনামূল্যের গোপনীয় হেল্পলাইন আছে, যেটি সর্বদা 200টি ভাষায় উপলভ্য। আপনি 1-888-NYCWell নম্বরে ফোন করতে পারেন অথবা 65173 নম্বরে “WELL” টেক্সট করতে পারেন। তবে, আপনি যদি নিজেকে বা অন্যকে আঘাত করবেন এমন পরিস্থিতি হয় তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে 911 নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

Chinese

如果您或您认识的人患有抑郁症，可以使用一个叫作 NYC Well 的热线电话，此热线免费、保密，并提供200种语言，全天候可用。您可以拨打 1-888-NYCWell，或编辑短信 “WELL” 至 65173。但是，如果您当下正有伤害自己或他人的危险，请拨打 911。

French

Si vous ou l'une de vos connaissances souffrez de dépression, sachez qu'il existe un service d'aide téléphonique gratuit et anonyme appelé NYC Well disponible à tout moment en 200 langues. Appelez le 1-888-NYCWell, ou envoyez « WELL » au 65173. Toutefois, si vous risquez de vous faire mal ou de faire mal aux autres dans l'immédiat, appelez le 911.

Hindi

यदि आप या आपका परिचित कोई व्यक्ति अवसाद से पीड़ित हैं, तो NYC Well नामक एक निशुल्क, गोपनीय हेल्पलाइन है, जो हमेशा उपलब्ध रहती है और 200 भाषाओं में पहुंच योग्य है। आप 1-888-NYCWell पर कॉल कर सकते हैं, या “WELL” लिख कर 65173 पर टेक्स्ट संदेश भेज सकते हैं। लेकिन, यदि कभी भी आप खुद को या दूसरों को नुकसान पहुंचाने के तत्काल खतरे में हों, तो कृपया 911 पर कॉल करें।

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਜਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਜਾਣ-ਪਛਾਣ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਤੋਂ ਪੀੜਤ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ NYC Well ਨਾਮਕ ਇੱਕ ਮੁਫਤ, ਗੁਪਤ ਹੈਲਪਲਾਈਨ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ 200 ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਹੁੰਚਯੋਗ ਹੈ। ਤੁਸੀਂ 1-888-NYCWell 'ਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ, ਜਾਂ “WELL” ਲਿਖ ਕੇ 65173 'ਤੇ ਟੈਕਸਟ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼ ਭੇਜ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ। ਪਰ, ਜੇ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਖੁਦ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਂ ਦੂਸਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਨੁਕਸਾਨ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਤਤਕਾਲ ਖਤਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਵੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 911 'ਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰੋ।

Russian

Если Вы или кто-то из Ваших знакомых страдает от депрессии, бесплатная конфиденциальная телефонная линия помощи NYC Well всегда доступна на 200 языках. Вы можете позвонить по телефону 1-888-NYCWell, или отправить смс “WELL” на номер 65173. Однако, если Вы оказались в непосредственной опасности и можете навредить себе или другим, позвоните по номеру 911.

Spanish

Si usted o alguien que usted conozca sufre depresión, existe una línea telefónica gratuita y confidencial llamada NYC Well que siempre está disponible y accesible en 200 idiomas. Puede llamar al 1-888-NYCWell, o enviar un mensaje de texto con la palabra “WELL” al 65173. Sin embargo, si existe el riesgo inmediato de lastimarse o dañar a otros, llame al 911.

Urdu

اگر آپ یا آپ کا کوئی جاننے والا افسردگی (ڈپریشن) کا شکار ہے، تو NYC Well کے نام سے ایک بلا معاوضہ اور رازدارانہ ہیلپ لائن موجود ہے جو ہمیشہ دستیاب اور 200 زبانوں میں قابل رسائی ہے۔ آپ 1-888-NYCWell پر کال کر سکتے ہیں یا 65173 پر “WELL” ٹیکسٹ کر سکتے ہیں۔ تاہم، اگر آپ کو کبھی بھی اپنے آپ کو یا دوسروں کو نقصان پہنچانے کا فوری اندیشہ ہو تو براہ کرم 911 پر کال کریں۔

NYC'S BANGLADESHI COMMUNITY HARD-HIT BY CORONAVIRUS

Sadly, there are many stories about Bangladeshi New Yorkers who died due to the coronavirus. The virus is hitting low-income communities of color especially hard, and while much attention has been on the toll on Black and Latino communities, the Bangladeshi community is similarly, largely confined to less-affluent, crowded living spaces in Queens, Brooklyn, and the Bronx.

On June 8, the city Health Department reported that 7.6% of the city's coronavirus victims were of Asian descent. If word-of-mouth counts are correct, the Bangladeshi community, which makes up less than 8% of the city's Asian population, accounted for about a fifth of those deaths.

"Often our community isn't seen because it falls into the South Asian category," said Thahitun Mariam, a Bangladeshi activist, and community organizer. Bangladeshis constitute an out-sized share of New York's working class. They drive cabs, cook in restaurants, serve fast food, sell clothes, and run grocery stores. Many have risked their health by continuing to report to work for the much-needed income and to help keep the city running.

"Bangladeshis need to understand the data so the people in the community can take measures and precautions they need to take as a collective. We didn't get a chance to do that," added Moumita Ahmed, a Bangladeshi-American activist.

Bangladesh is among the top 10 countries of origin for the city's 3.1 million foreign-born residents. The Bangladeshi population of the city stands at around 100,000, according to a 2018 report by the Mayor's Office for Immigrant Affairs. Yet many in the Bangladeshi community feel ignored by those in power. An outbreak in the Bangladeshi community should have been anticipated and addressed, critics said.

The Bangladeshi diaspora lives in many of the city's hardest-hit neighborhoods and many are undocumented and lack health insurance. Plus, the community as a whole has high rates of diabetes and other underlying health conditions that cause complications with the virus and lead to higher fatality rates.

Among the most glaring failures, critics say, is that information about the virus wasn't translated into Bengali and there was no outreach to the community despite being the fourth most common language among foreign-born New Yorkers. Critics also said the city's limited halal food distribution system left many Bangladeshis, who are predominantly Muslims, hungry during Ramadan. Additionally, many

Bangladeshis are self-employed and service workers who are encountering complications and delays in receiving unemployment benefits with little guidance and clarity from the state.

The de Blasio administration has pointed to its launch of a multi-million-dollar media campaign in multiple languages including Bengali to reach vulnerable communities. City officials also stress they have worked closely with Muslim New Yorkers to establish their halal food distribution, which served hundreds of thousands of halal meals provided during Ramadan.

The AAFNY found that one in three Bangladeshis live in poverty, which is much higher than the citywide poverty rate of about 21%. They're also more likely to live in overcrowded households with 42% of households having more than one occupant per room compared to 9% citywide.

"Usually in Bangladeshi households, women will take care of the children and won't work. The single-income household makes it hard for those families to mobilize and save," said Mariam. "Our community members are [also] the essential workers."

Among these workers are many undocumented Bangladeshis who are ineligible for unemployment and other government assistance programs. The Bronx has also seen double the amount of positive cases, compared to Manhattan.

When news first broke about the importance of social distancing, the Trump administration only released the guidelines to address coronavirus in English. After outrage from Congress and Latino groups, they released it in Spanish, but the guidance was never released in other languages.

State and city officials failed to quickly communicate the severity of the virus and the importance of staying home to low-income neighborhoods where languages other than English are prevalent. In the early critical days of the pandemic, Bangladeshis, unaware of new social distancing rules, lived their daily lives like they always had.

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene published coronavirus fact sheets in nine languages including Bengali on March 15, but the site was only checked 92 times from March to June. Although virus information was available online, Bangladeshi activists say navigating the internet is a challenge for many elders.

In April, when the city released data on the hardest hit zip codes and ethnicity groups, showing stark disparities wherein

New Yorkers of color were the most devastated by the virus, the mayor launched an additional \$10 million media campaign in more than 15 languages to inform people and attempt to slow the spread in those communities. Efforts included TV, radio, and digital ads in those areas as well as individual phone calls and texts, according to the city. The health department also created an Emergency Partner Council, an advisory group including 80 community partners, to better inform New Yorkers through neighborhood-based sessions, according to a spokesperson.

The mayor's office mass texted and shared messages in Bangla with hundreds of community members and organizations serving Bangladeshi communities. But their outreach wasn't as effective and didn't equip the community with accessible information from the start, community members said.

Thousands of Bangladeshi New Yorkers tune into Bangla networks like TBN24 for coronavirus news. Anchor Habib Rahman said he quickly realized the level of misinformation and confusion about the virus in the Bangladeshi community.

"We took the burden on our shoulders to translate the news. The people who live here should know what's happening here," said Rahman. The 24-hour network has 2.7 million followers on Facebook, averages roughly 20,000 views per show over multiple outlets, and has been a main news source for Bangladeshi New Yorkers.

But still, the gap in language access left thousands of Bangladeshis at a disadvantage, Mariam said. "There should've been a concentrated effort to get them the information they need because so many are immunocompromised."

Bangladeshi internal medicine physician Raihan Faroqui, who is also a community organizer, along with a team of volunteers created C-BASH, a smart hotline for Bangladeshis living in New York City experiencing coronavirus symptoms. The hotline asks pre-recorded questions in Bangla that are put into a database that tracks symptoms. Later on, callers receive a call back from one of the 600 Bangladeshi health-care volunteers nationwide with advice on their situation. Volunteers also speak with families of COVID-19 patients to assist them with any concerns or anxiety.

Critics say that one of the reasons the community has been hit especially hard is because there are no Bangladeshis in elected office at city and state levels and very few on staffs, and thus no one to draw attention to their unique challenges.

Source: Gotham Gazette

TAXI AND FOR-HIRE VEHICLE RELIEF STANDS

Taxi relief stands allow drivers to park their vehicles for up to one hour. This affords drivers the opportunity to leave their vehicles and take care of personal needs. Taxi relief stands should not be confused with taxi stands, which are locations where drivers can wait, in their cars, to pick up passengers.

DOT is not responsible for regulating taxis. Taxis are regulated by the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission. DOT regulates taxi relief stands.

The type column indicates if the relief stand is for taxis alone, or for both taxis and For-Hire Vehicles (FHVs).

Staten Island currently has no relief stands.

The following information was found at www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/motorist/taxirelief.shtml (as of July 24, 2018). We recommend checking back periodically, in the event changes are made to these lists.

MANHATTAN

Type	Street	Cross Streets
Taxi/FHVs	10 Ave (east side)	W 26 St & W 28 St
Taxi/FHVs	11 Ave (east side)	W 45 St & W 46 St
Taxi/FHVs	3 Ave (west side)	E 14 St & E 15 St
Taxi/FHVs	3 Ave (west side)	E 15 St & E 14 St
Taxi/FHVs	6 Ave (east side)	Thompson St & Grand St
Taxi/FHVs	6 Ave (west side)	W 22 St & W 23 St
Taxi/FHVs	6 Ave (west side)	W 38 St & W 39 St
Taxi/FHVs	6 Ave (west side)	W 39 St & W 40 St
Taxi/FHVs	6 Ave (west side)	W 55 St & W 56 St
Taxi/FHVs	8 Ave (west side)	W 46 St & W 47 St
Taxi	9 Ave (east side)	W 30 St & W 29 St
Taxi	Ave A (west side)	E 2 St & E. Houston St
Taxi/FHVs	Church St *E Rdway (west side)	Franklin St & White St
Taxi/FHVs	E 116 St (south side)	.3 Ave & 2 Ave
Taxi	E 15 St (north side)	Irving Place & Union Square E
Taxi	E 23 St (north side)	.1 Ave & 2 Ave
Taxi	E 26 St (south side)	.3 Ave & 2 Ave
Taxi	E 27 St (south side)	Park Ave S & Madison Ave
Taxi	E 28 St (north side)	Park Ave S & Lexington Ave
Taxi/FHVs	E 29 St (south side)	Madison Ave & 5 Ave
Taxi	E 32 St (north side)	Madison Ave & Park Ave S
Taxi	E 77 St (south side)	.1 Ave & 2 Ave
Taxi	E 78 St (north side)	Lexington Ave & 3 Ave
Taxi	E 78 St (south side)	Lexington Ave & 3 Ave
Taxi	E 86 St (north side)	Henderson Pl & York Ave
Taxi	E 87 St (south side)	.1 Ave & 2 Ave
Taxi/FHVs	Grand St (north side)	Forsyth St & Chrystie St
Taxi/FHVs	Madison Ave (west side)	E 26 St & E 27 St
Taxi/FHVs	Maiden Ln (south side)	Front St & South St
Taxi	Park Row (east side)	Ann St & Beekman St
Taxi/FHVs	South St (west side)	Wall St & Gouverneur Ln
Taxi	University Pl (east side)	E 13 St & E 14 St
Taxi	W 33 St (north side)	.9 Ave & 10 Ave
Taxi	W 39 St (south side)	.8 Ave & 9 Ave
Taxi	W 41 St (north side)	.10 Ave & 11 Ave
Taxi	W 55 St (south side)	.10 Ave & 11 Ave
Taxi/FHVs	W 181 St (south side)	Pinehurst Ave & Fort Washington Ave
Taxi/FHVs	West St (east side)	Laight St & Vestry St

QUEENS

Type	Street	Cross Streets
Taxi	31 St (west side)	.34 Ave & 35 Ave
Taxi	31 St (east side)	.37 Ave & 36 Ave
Taxi	31 St (east side)	.38 Ave & 37 Ave
Taxi	34 St (west side)	.37 Ave & 38 Ave
Taxi/FHVs	35 St (south side)	Starr Ave & Bradley Ave
Taxi/FHVs	36 St (east side)	Skillman Ave & 43 Ave
Taxi	43 Ave (north side)	.35 St & 36 St
Taxi/FHVs	43 Ave (north side)	.11 St & 12 St
Taxi	44 Rd (south side)	.21 St & 11 St
Taxi/FHVs	43 Ave (north side)	.36 St & 37 St
Taxi	49 St (west side)	Newtown Rd & Northern Blvd
Taxi/FHVs	45 Ave (south side)	Jackson Ave & 23 St
Taxi/FHVs	47 Ave (south side)	.11 St & Vernon Blvd
Taxi	55 St (east side)	Queens Blvd & Roosevelt Ave
Taxi	64 St (west side)	.34 Ave & 35 Ave
Taxi/FHVs	61 St (east side)	Roosevelt Ave & 39 Ave
Taxi	Queens Blvd (south side)	.50 St & 51 St
Taxi/FHVs	Pearson St (west side)	Jackson Ave & DeadEnd
Taxi	Queens Blvd (north side)	.55 St & 54 St
Taxi	37 Ave (north side)	.32 St & 31 St
Taxi/FHVs	Van Dam St (west side)	Queens Blvd & Skillman Ave

BRONX

Type	Street	Cross Streets
Taxi/FHVs	E 233 St (south side)	Carpenter Ave & White Plains Rd
Taxi	Park Ave (east side)	E 135 St & E 138 St
Taxi	Park Ave (west side)	E 135 St & E 138 St
Taxi/FHVs	Pelham Pkwy S (south side)	Wilson Ave & Eastchester Rd
Taxi/FHVs	W 231 St (north side)	Albany Cr & Broadway
Taxi/FHVs	West Kingsbridge Rd (south side)	Sedgwick Ave & Webb Ave

BROOKLYN

Type	Street	Cross Streets
Taxi	4 Ave (west side)	.3 St & 6 St
Taxi/FHVs	4 Ave (east side)	Prospect Ave
Taxi	N 6 St (north side)	Berry St & Wythe Ave
Taxi	New Utrecht Ave (north side)	.55 St & 13 Ave



LIVERY NEWS

TLC BEGINS ENFORCING 2-YEAR-OLD HIGH-VOLUME FHV RULE

The New York City Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC), in August, began enforcing a 2018 city law requiring High-Volume For-Hire Vehicle (HVFHV) companies like Uber and Lyft to document driver compensation, and their impact on the environment and the cab industry.

HVFHV licenses are required under the law for companies that provide more than 10,000 rides per day. The TLC can fine companies without the proper license \$10,000 per car per day.

“The TLC has approved the applications for Lyft, Uber, and Via,” TLC spokesman Allan Fromberg confirmed.

The belated actions taken by the TLC concerned some taxi medallion owners.

“It’s like a miracle,” said Carolyn Protz, a medallion owner. “Did some miracle occur between the middle of June and the middle of August?”

“This is all baloney, and it’s going to stay the way it is unless someone in the [City] Council investigates,” said Christopher Lynn, who ran the TLC from 1996 to 1998.

Bronx Councilman Ruben Diaz, who introduced the bill, has called on Attorney General Letitia James to investigate what he said is a lack of oversight by the TLC.

Sergio Cabrera, a medallion owner and member of Yellow Taxi United, said the agency acted in bad faith. The industry group has called on the council to investigate the TLC’s “willful refusal to implement the law,” arguing that delaying action on the regulations amounted to “licensing fraud.”

“It has not followed its statutory obligations to support the medallion and its ‘protected access to market,’ it has aided and abetted the [for-hire vehicle] invasion and in the process destroyed the taxi medallion as a city franchise,” Cabrera said.

Source: Crain’s New York Business

LA TLC COMIENZA A APLICAR LA NORMA DE VEHÍCULOS DE ALQUILER DE ALTO VOLUMEN CON DOS AÑOS DE VIGENCIA

En agosto, la Comisión de Taxis y Limusinas (TLC) de la ciudad de Nueva York comenzó a aplicar una ley local de 2018 que exige que las empresas de vehículos de alquiler de alto volumen (HVFHV), como Uber y Lyft, registren la remuneración del conductor y el impacto que producen en el medioambiente y la industria de taxis.

La legislación exige que las empresas que realizan más de 10 000 viajes por día obtengan una licencia de HVFHV. La TLC puede imponer multas de USD 10 000 por automóvil al día a las empresas que no cuenten con la licencia adecuada.

“La TLC aprobó que esta norma se aplique para Lyft, Uber y Via”, confirmó Allan Fromberg, vocero de la TLC.

La demora de la TLC en la aplicación de la norma preocupó a algunos propietarios de medallones de taxi.

“Parece un milagro”, comentó Carolyn Protz, propietaria de un medallón. “¿Ocurrió algún milagro entre mediados de junio y mediados de agosto?”

“Todo esto es un invento y nada cambiará, a menos que alguien del Concejo Municipal investigue”, opinó Christopher Lynn, quien estuvo a cargo de la TLC desde 1996 hasta 1998.

Rubén Díaz, concejal del Bronx que presentó el proyecto de ley, pidió a la procuradora general Letitia James que investigara lo que él consideraba como una falta de supervisión por parte de la TLC.

Sergio Cabrera, propietario de un medallón y miembro de Yellow Taxi United, dijo que la agencia actuó de mala fe. El grupo industrial pidió al concejo que investigara el “deliberado rechazo a que se aplique la ley” por parte de la TLC, con el argumento de que demorar esta medida sobre las reglamentaciones equivalía a “fraude en el otorgamiento de licencias”.

“No ha cumplido con sus obligaciones legales de respaldar el medallón y su ‘acceso protegido al mercado’, ha facilitado e incitado a la invasión [de vehículos de alquiler] y, en el proceso, destruyó al medallón de taxi como franquicia de la ciudad”, denunció Cabrera.

Fuente: Crain’s New York Business

LIVERY NEWS

LIVERY DRIVERS ON “HIGH ALERT” AFTER ROBBERY SPREE

For-Hire Vehicles (FHV) drivers in New York City are being warned about an armed man that participated in at least seven robberies, all of them in Brooklyn. Police say he wears a mask and has a gun – adding that all the victims were told to put their hands up, and then were instructed to hand over all of their cash.

A driver names Luis was reportedly robbed of \$180 on Linwood Street in East New York. He said waiting for police so he could report the crime cost him time and money, six long hours' worth. He claims other drivers wouldn't bother because they feel like they are wasting their time.

According to sources, no drivers were injured in the robberies. Despite the suspect wearing a mask, his tattoos should easily give him away. Video of the assailant can be viewed [here](#).

The Federation of Taxi Drivers – which is offering a \$3,000 reward for information that leads to an arrest – stated that, in the future, the NYPD should quickly notify drivers when it uncovers this kind of crime pattern, with an “AMBER-type” alert.

Source: CBS New York

CONDUCTORES DE VEHÍCULOS DE ALQUILER EN “ALERTA MÁXIMA” TRAS UNA OLA DE ROBOS

Se advierte a los conductores de vehículos de alquiler de la ciudad de Nueva York sobre un hombre armado que participó en al menos siete robos, todos ellos en Brooklyn. La policía afirma que usa una máscara y lleva consigo un arma; además, agrega que a todas las víctimas les dijo que levantarán las manos y, luego, les indicó que le entregaran todo el dinero.

Según informó un conductor llamado Luis, le robó USD 180 en Linwood Street, en el este de Nueva York. El conductor explicó que tuvo que esperar a la policía para denunciar el delito, lo cual le hizo perder tiempo y el dinero que hubiera ganado en seis horas de trabajo. Además, comentó que otros conductores no se molestan en denunciar los robos porque sienten que pierden el tiempo.

Según las fuentes, ningún conductor resultó herido en los robos. A pesar de que el sospechoso usa una máscara, sus tatuajes deberían delatarlo fácilmente. El video del agresor se puede ver [aquí](#).

La Federación de Conductores de Taxis, que ofrece una recompensa de USD 3000 por información que permita arrestar al agresor, sugirió que, en el futuro, el Departamento de Policía de Nueva York debería notificar rápidamente a los conductores cuando descubra este tipo de patrón delictivo, con una alerta “similar a la AMBER”.

Fuente: CBS New York

UNLICENSED LIVERY DRIVER ARRESTED FOR RAPING 12-YEAR-OLD

An unlicensed Livery driver was arrested on August 10, after allegedly raping a 12-year-old passenger. The incident was reported around 6:00pm, after the girl was picked up near Myrtle and Carlton avenues in Brooklyn. Police say the victim was visiting her grandmother to pick up a bicycle, and her mother had called the car service to pick her up and bring her home.

Authorities say the driver, 32-year-old Rafael Martinez, pulled a gun from the glove compartment, loaded it with bullets, and told the victim, “If you say anything, these bullets are for you.” He allegedly jumped in the back seat, and as she tried to push him away, Martinez punched her in the face multiple times and slammed her head against the window, causing her to lose consciousness, authorities said. When she regained consciousness, she was being raped, court documents said.

After the attack, Martinez allegedly told her, “If you tell anybody, I know where you live, I'll come to get you and your family.” He then drove her to another location and raped her again before taking her home.

Authorities say GPS data recovered from the vehicle corroborated that the vehicle stopped.

Martinez was arrested on August 11 and is facing charges of rape, criminal sex act, sex abuse, endangering the welfare of a child, menacing and assault. The New York City Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC) said that Martinez has never held a TLC license and was operating illegally at the time of the alleged rape.

“TLC-Licensed Drivers are among the hardest working people in New York City, and it is incorrect to call Mr. Martinez, who has been charged with unspeakable crimes, a cab, taxi, or livery driver since he has never actually been one,” the TLC stated. The TLC also moved to suspend and revoke the license of the Brooklyn-based car service that employed Martinez, Evelyn Car Service.

TLC requires all drivers and car services to undertake extensive and strict background checks, which include fingerprinting, fitness reviews, and criminal record searches. TLC-Licensed Bases are required to check the TLC License database daily to ensure their drivers are licensed and in good standing.

“Ignoring TLC regulations and illegally dispatching an unlicensed driver unnecessarily puts everyone at risk,” TLC Commissioner and Chair Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk said. “We are deeply disturbed and saddened by the savage attack on an innocent child earlier this week and our hearts and prayers are with the child and family. Hundreds of TLC-Licensed Bases operate responsibly and in good faith in NYC and we will not put honest businesses or public safety in jeopardy by turning a blind eye to illegal operators.”

Source: ABC7 NY

CONDUCTOR DE VEHÍCULO DE ALQUILER SIN LICENCIA ARRESTADO POR VIOLAR A UNA NIÑA DE 12 AÑOS

Un conductor de vehículo de alquiler sin licencia fue arrestado el 10 de agosto, luego de que habría violado a una pasajera de 12 años. El incidente se informó alrededor de las 6:00 p. m., después de que la niña abordara el vehículo cerca de las avenidas Myrtle y Carlton, en Brooklyn. La policía explicó que la víctima se dirigía a la casa de su abuela con el fin de recoger una bicicleta, y que su madre había solicitado el servicio de vehículo para que la recogieran y la llevaran a casa.

Las autoridades explicaron que el conductor, Rafael Martínez de 32 años, sacó un arma de la guantera, la cargó con balas y le dijo a la víctima: “Si dices algo, te disparo todas estas balas”. Según explicaron las autoridades, se presume que Martínez saltó al asiento trasero del automóvil y, cuando ella trató de alejarlo, la golpeó en la cara varias veces y le golpeó la cabeza contra la ventana, lo que provocó que la niña perdiera el conocimiento. Cuando despertó, él estaba violándola, según se indica en los documentos judiciales.

Después del ataque, Martínez le habría dicho: “Si le cuentas a alguien, sé dónde vives; voy a ir por ti y por tu familia”. Luego la llevó a otro lugar y la violó nuevamente antes de llevarla a casa.

Las autoridades dicen que los datos de GPS que se recuperaron del vehículo confirmaron que este se detuvo.

Martínez fue arrestado el 11 de agosto y enfrenta cargos por violación, acto sexual criminal, abuso sexual, poner en peligro el bienestar de una menor, amenaza y agresión. La Comisión de Taxis y Limusinas (TLC) de Nueva York aclaró que Martínez nunca tuvo una licencia de la TLC y que operaba de manera ilegal en el momento de la presunta violación.

“Los conductores de vehículos de alquiler con licencia de la TLC son algunas de las personas que trabajan más arduamente en la ciudad de Nueva York, y es incorrecto llamar al Sr. Martínez, que ha sido acusado de delitos atroces, taxista o conductor de vehículo de alquiler, ya que nunca lo fue”, declaró la TLC. La TLC también decidió suspender y revocar la licencia del servicio de vehículos de Brooklyn Evelyn Car Service que empleaba a Martínez.

La TLC exige que se realice una averiguación de antecedentes exhaustiva y estricta de todos los conductores y servicios de vehículos, lo cual incluye huellas dactilares, exámenes físicos y averiguaciones de antecedentes penales. Las bases acreditadas de la TLC deben verificar la base de datos de licencias de la TLC a diario para asegurarse de que los conductores tengan licencia y estén en regla.

“Ignorar las reglamentaciones de la TLC y autorizar ilegalmente a un conductor sin licencia pone a todos en riesgo innecesariamente”, declaró Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk, comisionada y presidenta de la TLC. “Estamos profundamente consternados y entristecidos por el salvaje ataque a una niña inocente a principios de esta semana, y tanto la niña como la familia están en nuestros pensamientos y oraciones. Cientos de bases acreditadas de la TLC operan de manera responsable y de buena fe en la ciudad de Nueva York, y no pondremos en peligro a los negocios lícitos ni a la seguridad pública al ignorar la situación de quienes operan ilegalmente”.

Fuente: ABC7 NY

FEATURES

ARE YOU USING HAND SANITIZER THE WRONG WAY?

Keeping your hands clean is critical to protecting you against the spread of the coronavirus. Using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer is a convenient method of hand hygiene on the go, especially when soap and water — the more effective way of getting rid of all types of germs — is not readily available. But just because you spray or squirt some on your hands and give them a quick wipe doesn't mean your sanitizer is working to the best of its ability.

The following are common hand sanitizer mistakes to beware of:

1. You don't use enough hand sanitizer. The Centers For Disease Control and Prevention says you need to use enough sanitizer to cover all surfaces of your hands. This is a common mistake people make. Too much is better than too little.

Once sanitizer is on your hands, take the time to cover every crevice. The World Health Organization said this should take 20-30 seconds. Thomas Russo, chief of the infectious disease division at the University of Buffalo in New York, said not covering your whole hand is the biggest risk with hand-sanitizer use.

"You get the palm side of your fingers. You'll get your fingertips, but you won't get the other side, or between the fingers and the outside of the thumbs," Russo said. "You have to make sure you get all those other parts."

2. You don't wait for the hand sanitizer to dry. The CDC says you should rub your hands together for about 20 sec-

onds until they feel dry. If you don't wait for that, you can "essentially end up wiping it off on something, and then it's not really doing its job," explained Dr. Zeke J. McKinney, the primary occupational and



environmental medicine provider at Minnesota's HealthPartners Riverway Clinic. The time that it's on your hands is when it's working to inactivate certain bacteria and viruses, he added.

Russo noted that rubbing hand sanitizer dry helps because it encourages peo-

ple to thoroughly rub it onto every surface of their hands.

3. You're only relying on hand sanitizer and not storing it safely. You may be in need of clean hands after handling messy food or playing sports. But spritzing hand sanitizer should not replace thoroughly cleaning your hands with soap and water when there's grit or grease on them. If there is "dirt covering part of your hand, hand sanitizer can't really effectively get to the surface of your hand," McKinney said. "The reason scrubbing your hands... is more effective, is because you get the mechanical action of getting off bacteria by virtue of scrubbing."

Using hand sanitizer properly is an effective way to slow the potential spread of the coronavirus, but it should not be the only preventative measure you are taking.

"People think [hand sanitizer] is a reasonable replacement for washing your hands, but it definitely is not," McKinney said. "Washing your hands is by far the best."

Also, be mindful of where you store hand sanitizer. Russo warned it should be kept away from children, citing a rise in cases of kids being poisoned from ingesting it.

And remember to wear your mask. COVID-19 is believed to primarily spread from person to person through respiratory droplets. "If I get to choose one thing, I choose a mask, and I'll let my hands go dirty," Russo said.

Source: Huffington Post

TIPS FOR GETTING THE MOST MILEAGE OUT OF YOUR CAR

As a professional driver, your car is an essential tool, and one that you have to take care of, if you want to optimize your profitability. If you're hoping to get 200,000 (or more) miles out of your vehicle, it's essential to stay vigilant on preventative maintenance and consider the other tips included in this article.

1. Buy the right vehicle. It all starts with buying the right vehicle. According to a recent article from motor1.com, the following are the top 10 most likely vehicles to last 200,000 miles. There are plenty of other quality vehicles available — many of which get much better gas mileage than some of the SUVs listed here — but this list is a good starting point.

1. Toyota Land Cruiser
2. Toyota Sequoia
3. Ford Expedition
4. Chevy Suburban
5. Toyota Highlander Hybrid
6. Chevy Tahoe
7. GMC Yukon XL
8. Toyota 4Runner
9. GMC Yukon
10. Honda Ridgeline

2. Follow your car's maintenance schedule. Every car has its own maintenance schedule, set by the manufacturer. Typically, you can find these recommendations in your vehicle's owner's manual. Schedules vary by car model.

It's tempting to skip preventive maintenance. After all, why spend money fixing something that isn't broken? The answer: If you catch a problem early, you'll save money and likely extend the life of your vehicle. To achieve 200,000 miles, you need to service your car as suggested.

3. Change the car's timing belt before something goes wrong. This should be part of your car's maintenance schedule, but it's so important that it deserves a category of its own. Many people skip replacing the timing belt because it can cost several hundred dollars — but ignoring it can be a big mistake.

Depending on how your engine is configured, the timing belt might be responsible for keeping the valve's stroke and the piston's stroke from crashing into each other. If it snaps, they collide, caus-

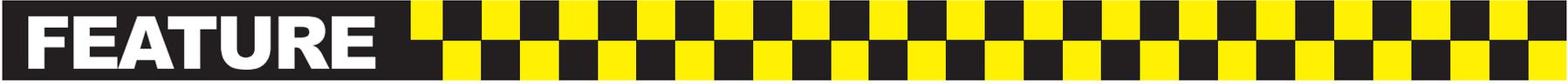
ing bent valves (most common), cylinder head or camshaft damage, and possibly piston and cylinder wall damage.

4. Purchase quality parts. Buying car parts or fluids on the cheap is another way to save money today that tends to cost much more in the end. As Consumer Reports (CR) notes: "The wrong type of oil or transmission fluid, for example, could cause damage leading to expensive repairs, voiding your warranty and diminishing long-term reliability. Cheap and no-name belts and hoses might not wear as well as those from a name-brand supplier."

Instead of shopping for bargain-basement deals, CR suggests using parts and fluids that meet manufacturer specifications. It might pain you a little right now, but your future self will thank you.

5. Find a great mechanic. If you want to live to be 90, you'll likely need the help of some good doctors to get you there. The same is true for your vehicle. Find a mechanic who can provide sound advice and car care without ripping you off.

Source: Money Talks News


FEATURE

UBER AND ITS DAY OF RECKONING FOR THE PAYMENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

BY STEVEN J. SHANKER, ESQ.

For 10 years, Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) have been operating outside the law. While transportation is a heavily-regulated industry, TNCs busted into just about every market without permission or authority.

Uber and Lyft claimed they were not a transportation service, but a technology company. It is beyond doubt that Uber and Lyft rely heavily upon technology to operate their business, but at the end of the final analysis, they are no different than any other transportation company. A customer contacts the TNC and the TNC arranges to have that person transported by a driver. The fact that the customer contacts the TNC via an app is nothing more than a high-tech, 21st century way of calling a car service.

The fact that the driver can sign up to provide service in a remote fashion and gets paid via direct deposit is nothing more than a modern way of allowing the driver to receive a dispatch from the TNC, complete a job and be paid – just like any traditional company.

Eventually, Uber and Lyft were forced into compliance with state and local transportation regulatory authorities, but not before they wreaked havoc on the incumbents in the industry.

In New York City, the streets are flooded with vehicles of those who drive for Uber and Lyft. The taxi medallion market imploded. The incumbents were not prepared for massive disruption of an industry that is older than the automobile itself. Drivers who already provided transportation flocked to Uber and Lyft. In New York City, they did so because they offered incentives such as free iPhones, a \$5,000 “sign up bonus” and all the jobs they can handle.

Eventually, drivers became increasingly agitated by having to follow Uber and Lyft’s “platform rules.” Moreover, the more drivers Uber and Lyft added, the less each driver made.

The entire industry is based on the laws of supply and demand. Demand for transportation is almost always high, but when you flood the market with an oversupply of drivers, there are less and less jobs for each driver. What started out as a means for drivers to make as much money as they wanted by simply working more hours turned into working more and more hours for less and less money.

Uber and Lyft drivers became increasingly disillusioned.

One thing Uber and Lyft never intended when they set out to disrupt for-hire transportation was to hire drivers as employees or having to pay unemployment

benefits. The purpose of unemployment benefits is to compensate a person for lost wages when they lose their job due to no fault of their own.

When Uber, Lyft and the other gig companies were created, they knew of the labor laws around the country but had no intention on calling or treating their drivers/delivery people employees. This is not because the gig companies didn’t direct and control their activities, but because the Uber and Lyft business models were simply never able to financially support having drivers as employees. The cost was cost prohibitive from day one and still is today.

After 10 years, Uber and Lyft have yet to make a profit in any one year, even since going public in 2019. A company that is not profitable cannot afford to have employees, much less afford to pay unemployment benefits to drivers.

In good times, state governments can look away and let private parties deal with their own issues. The creation of the gig economy fueled the growth of the overall economy and kept the stock market humming.

Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit. All of a sudden, the use of transportation dropped 90%. Drivers for Uber and Lyft had virtually no work to perform. Seemingly overnight, unemployment became rampant. Most of all, drivers for Uber and Lyft realized they not only had no benefits to fall back on (such as sick time and paid time off), but as independent contractors they were not even entitled to unemployment benefits.

While COVID-19 brought these issues to the forefront on a national level, the writing was on the wall for Uber long before COVID-19.

In 2016, three claims were made by three different Uber drivers claiming they were employees and thus entitled to unemployment benefits. By initial determinations dated August 5, 2016, September 13, 2016, and October 31, 2016, the New York State Department of Labor (NYS-DOL) found Uber driver to be employees and thus entitled to unemployment benefits.

Uber contested the determination and a hearing was held before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ). On June 9, 2017 an ALJ found Uber drivers to be employees. The following is a link to the decision. <https://src.bna.com/pRr>.

It was opined at the time of the decision by the NYSDOL that such a ruling, giving Uber drivers jobless benefits, could have a nationwide impact. Thus far, Uber and Lyft have depended on their lobbyists

and the “political machine” turning a blind eye. What COVID did was force a microscopic review of drivers’ employment status by elected officials and government agencies. The politicians may have turned a blind eye, but over time, the legal system proved to not be deferential to Uber’s claim of being simply a technology company.

Uber appealed certain decisions of the ALJ, as listed above, which found its drivers to be employees.

In a decision dated July 12, 2018, the Unemployment Insurance Appeal Board (UIAB) affirmed the decision of the ALJ and found Uber drivers to be employees: <https://gigeconomyresources.files.wordpress.com/2019/09/uber-tech-a.l.j.-case.pdf>

In a decision dated April 29, 2019, the UIAB again affirmed the decision of the ALJ on another case and found Uber drivers to be employees: <https://uiappeals.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2019/09/603938-appeal-decision.pdf>

In the UIAB decisions, the Board made the following findings of law: The credible evidence establishes that Uber exercises sufficient supervision, direction or control over the three claimants and other similarly situated drivers. Despite the above legal decisions, Uber never paid any unemployment benefits and the State of New York never took action to compel them to do so.

Typically, after a company loses an unemployment case, the NYSDOL would conduct an audit of the company and assess them fines and penalties. In the case of Uber, this would mean to go back to the day they started operating in New York State and assess a fine and a penalty for each and every driver whom they did not pay unemployment tax on, which would be every single one. Despite the obligations of the State of New York and the NYSDOL, they did nothing. Once again, the enjoyed an uneven playing field, where the state agency treated Uber differently than every other base in NYC.

Then the unimaginable thing happened: COVID-19 hit. FHV drivers were not prepared for this. None of us were. FHV drivers were essentially “laid off” en masse because no one was traveling and the need for FHV transportation dropped by 90-95%.

All of a sudden, FHV drivers found themselves with no work due to no fault of their own. Here is where it gets a bit murky. Most FHV drivers are independent contractors as their affiliated base does not direct and control their actions to a sufficient extent to make them employees. Thus, many FHV drivers in NYC are

not entitled to unemployment benefits. But remember what I stated above: It was already found by the NYSDOL that Uber's drivers were employees. Thus, Uber drivers were entitled to unemployment benefits.

Unfortunately, the NYSDOL was, once again, woefully deficient in its duties to enforce the law. Uber drivers applied for benefits, but they were not receiving unemployment benefits from the State of New York. Why was this the case? Why was the State seemingly treating Uber differently and thus prejudicing the rights of Uber drivers?

Some questions cannot be answered because there is sometimes no rhyme or reason why the state does or does not do certain things. But when there is a law and a violation of a law by a company, there usually exists a legal remedy to those who have been harmed.

On May 26, 2020, certain individuals – along with the New York Taxi Workers Alliance (NYTWA) – brought a lawsuit in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York against Andrew Cuomo, Governor of New York; the New York Department of Labor (NYDOL); and Roberta Reardon, Commissioner of Labor; alleging, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, violation of Title III of the Social Security Act of 1935, for failure to pay unemployment insurance benefits when due. According to the plaintiffs, unemployment insurance benefits due to Uber drivers in New York have been delayed or altogether denied by systemic failures at the New York Department of Labor, in violation of

the “when due” clause of the Social Security Act.

On July 28, 2020, U.S. District Judge Lashann Dearcy Hall issued a speedy decision in the case filed by the NYTWA. The Court acknowledged that as early as 2016, the NYDOL determined that three Uber driver claimants, employed between November 2015 and August 2016; in April 2016; and between August 2014 and September 2015, respectively, and those similarly situated to them were employees of Uber for the purpose of unemployment insurance benefits. She noted the practice by app-based FHV companies of appealing the NYDOL's determinations that a driver is an employee but subsequently abandoning the request for a hearing has allowed the companies to avoid a potential determination that any given driver is an employee may be broadly applied to other drivers.

The court went on to state that “[t]he NYDOL has been on notice of the FHV companies' “appeal and abandon” practice described above. Indeed, the NYDOL attested that this practice is often employed by FHV companies and went so far as to agree that this practice is “gamesmanship.” Particularly troubling is that in the face of such gamesmanship, the NYDOL's own practices, have allowed for the app-based FHV companies to lead it by the leash.

In the end, Judge Lashann Dearcy Hall issued a preliminary injunction requiring the state to, among other things, urgently pay unemployment insurance to Uber drivers who have been waiting

months to receive benefits. A copy of the Court's decision can be found here: <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/7008780-New-York-Taxi-Workers-et-al-v-NYS-Dept-of-Labor.html>.

As of this date it is still not clear what the State of New York or the NYSDOL has done to comply with the order of U.S. District Judge Lashann Dearcy Hall. One thing is for sure: Uber is going to be in some very hot water.

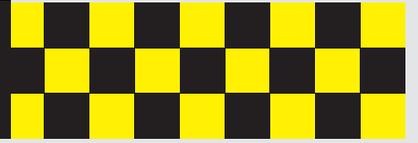
It is bad enough for the state to ignore its obligations under the law to Uber drivers. But here we have a United States Federal Court Judge issuing an order for the State of New York to comply with the law. I believe the State and NYSDOL will comply with the Court's order. The question remains whether the State and the NYSDOL will then audit Uber and make them pay the massive fines and penalties for the failure to pay unemployment insurance for all of its drivers for the past 10 years.

It is about time that that Uber drivers be given the benefits they are entitled to. Most of all, it is about time that Uber not be given any more special treatment and that the playing field finally be leveled for everyone in the industry.

Steven J. Shanker, Esq. is General Counsel to the Livery Roundtable, Inc. and the New York Independent Livery Driver Benefit Fund.



COMMISSIONER'S CORNER



BY ALOYSEE HEREDIA JARMOSZUK

Greetings, I hope this message finds you safe and well. In this Industry Update, I will share information on Driver Safety, early voting, the census, rapid COVID-19 testing, and how to avoid common issues at TLC Vehicle Inspections.

DRIVER SAFETY

Everyone deserves a safe and secure place to work, whether that's an office, taxi, or for-hire vehicle. In recent Industry Updates, I shared new procedures the TLC has put in place to help Drivers report physical and verbal assaults. We work closely with the NYPD to ensure that anyone who harms a TLC Driver is brought to justice, and that victims receive the assistance and advocacy they deserve. Unfortunately, there were several attacks against TLC Drivers in July and August.

Last month, we shared some critical information with TLC Drivers on how to avoid potentially dangerous situations. Some of the worst assaults against Drivers have been by passengers on trips not dispatched by a licensed base. If you are a For-Hire Vehicle Driver, never pick up a passenger on the street without a dispatch. New York State Workers' Compensation benefits are only available for TLC Drivers who complete a trip dispatched by a licensed base in a TLC licensed vehicle.

When you start a trip, it is helpful to make eye contact and greet your passenger, in case you ever need to identify them. Be aware of their body language, try to keep a safe distance, and remain calm when speaking. Taxi and livery vehicles can have a partition, or an approved in-vehicle camera system installed for additional security. You can find a list of approved installers on the TLC website. Dashboard cameras that record events that occur on the road and inside their vehicle are allowed in Black Cars and Luxury Limousines. The footage can be very helpful in case you are involved in a collision or if you have a negative interaction with a passenger.

VOTING AND CENSUS

I wanted to use this opportunity to let you know that all New Yorkers can now obtain an absentee ballot to vote safely in the November Election, due to the recent changes to the State law. According to NYC Votes, you can request your absentee ballot now at nycabsentee.com and avoid lines on Election Day. You can also vote early between Oct. 24 and Nov. 1. If you have not registered to vote yet, the deadline to register and vote in the November election is October 9. If you mail in your application, it must be received by the Board of Elections by October 14. You can find information on how to register to vote here: <https://vote.nyc/page/register-vote>.

Another great way you can help your community and be civically engaged is to complete the Census. The Census completion deadline has been moved to September 30. It is more important than ever that everyone complete the Census so that New York can receive critical federal dollars for healthcare, education, and other public services. It's also important to ensure that New York does not lose any Congressional representation due to undercounting. Please head to my2020census.gov to complete the Census today -- it only takes about ten minutes.

GET TESTED FOR COVID-19

Last month, the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene began to offer rapid, free COVID-19 testing in 24 hours or less. This is a very important step to identify coronavirus cases early to prevent community spread, and help the city reopen safely. Most patients receive their tests results on the same day that they visit. You can make an appointment for rapid testing online: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-rapid-testing.page>.

PASSING YOUR TLC VEHICLE INSPECTION

To ensure public safety, TLC vehicle owners must have their vehicles inspected several times a year. Inspectors catch safety

Actualización de la Industria compartiré información sobre la seguridad del conductor, votación anticipada, el censo, pruebas rápidas de COVID-19 y cómo evitar problemas comunes en las inspecciones de vehículos de la Comisión de Taxis y Limusinas (Taxi and Limousine Commission, TLC).

SEGURIDAD DEL CONDUCTOR

Todos merecen un lugar seguro y protegido para trabajar, ya sea una oficina, un taxi o un vehículo de alquiler. En recientes Actualizaciones de la Industria compartí nuevos procedimientos que la TLC ha puesto en marcha para ayudar a los conductores a denunciar agresiones físicas y verbales. Trabajamos en estrecha colaboración con el Departamento de Policía de Nueva York (New York Police Department, NYPD) para garantizar que cualquiera que le haga daño a un conductor de la TLC sea llevado a la justicia, y que las víctimas reciban la asistencia y defensa que merecen. Desafortunadamente, hubo varios ataques contra conductores de la TLC en julio y agosto.

El mes pasado compartimos información fundamental con los conductores de la TLC sobre cómo evitar situaciones potencialmente peligrosas. Algunas de las peores agresiones contra los conductores han sido por parte de pasajeros en viajes no despachados por una base con licencia. Si usted es conductor de un vehículo de alquiler, nunca recoja a un pasajero en la calle sin un despacho. Los beneficios de Indemnización Laboral del estado de Nueva York solo están disponibles para conductores de la TLC que completen un viaje despachado por una base con licencia en un vehículo con licencia de la TLC.

Cuando comience un viaje es útil hacer contacto visual y saludar a su pasajero, en caso de que alguna vez necesite identificarlo. Esté alerta de su lenguaje corporal, intente mantener una distancia segura y conserve la calma cuando hable. Los taxis y los vehículos livery pueden tener una partición o un sistema de cámaras en el vehículo aprobado e instalado para mayor seguridad. Puede encontrar una lista de instaladores aprobados en el sitio web de la TLC. Se permiten cámaras en el tablero de instrumentos que graban eventos que ocurren en la carretera y en el interior de su vehículo en automóviles negros (black car) y limusinas de lujo. La grabación puede ser muy útil en caso de que esté involucrado en una colisión o si tiene una interacción negativa con un pasajero.

VOTACIÓN Y CENSO

Quiero aprovechar esta oportunidad para informarles que todos los neoyorquinos ahora pueden obtener un voto en ausencia para votar de manera segura en la elección de noviembre debido a los recientes cambios en la ley estatal. De acuerdo con las votaciones de la ciudad de Nueva York, usted puede solicitar su voto en ausencia ahora en nycabsentee.com y evitar las filas el día de la elección. También puede votar de forma anticipada entre el 24 de octubre y 1 de noviembre. Si aún no está registrado para votar, le fecha límite para hacerlo y votar en la elección de noviembre es el 9 de octubre. Si envía su aplicación por correo postal, la Junta de Elecciones la debe recibir antes del 14 de octubre. Puede encontrar información sobre cómo registrarse para votar aquí: <https://vote.nyc/page/register-vote>.

Otra manera excelente en la que puede ayudar a su comunidad y estar cívicamente involucrado es al completar el censo. La fecha límite para completar el censo se ha movido para el 30 de septiembre. Es más importante que nunca que todos completen el censo para que Nueva York pueda recibir fondos federales fundamentales para atención médica, educación y otros servicios públicos. También es importante garantizar que Nueva York no pierda ninguna representación en el Congreso debido a un recuento insuficiente. Diríjase a my2020census.gov para completar el censo de una vez. Solo toma alrededor de diez minutos.

HÁGASE LA PRUEBA DE COVID-19

El mes pasado, el Departamento de Salud e Higiene Mental comenzó a ofrecer una prueba rápida y gratuita de COVID-19 con resultados en 24 horas o menos. Este es un paso muy importante para identificar los casos de coronavirus temprano con el fin de prevenir la propagación comunitaria, y así ayudar a la ciudad a reabrir de manera segura. La mayoría de los pacientes reciben el resultado de su prueba el mismo día de la consulta. Puede hacer una cita para la prueba rápida en línea: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-rapid-testing.page>.

APROBAR LA INSPECCIÓN DE SU VEHÍCULO DE LA TLC

Para garantizar la seguridad pública, los propietarios de vehículos de TLC deben inspeccionar sus vehículos varias veces al año. Los inspec-

issues that can put drivers and passengers at risk. We created the guide below to help you keep your vehicle in excellent condition and smoothly pass your TLC Inspection.

The most common issues that vehicles have during inspections involve tires, lights, seatbelts, and windshield wipers.

Before your inspection, ensure that the tire tread depth is at least 2/32 inches, and that the tire pressure meets the car manufacturer's recommendations. There should be no missing lug nuts, which are used to secure the wheels. For exterior lights, always make sure they are DMV approved, properly mounted and in working condition. These lights include the vehicle's headlights, tail lights, brake lights, parking lights, signals, back-up lights, and hazard warning lights. Check that all seatbelts are present and in working order, and that the windshield wipers are fully operational.

Taking these steps will help your inspection process go smoothly.

Sincerely,
Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk

1. Tires
Tread depth must be at least 2/32 in.
Tire pressure must be within the manufacturer's recommendation
There must be no missing lug nuts.

2. Lights
All lights must be DOT/DMV approved, properly mounted and not broken.

- Headlights (low and high beam)
- Tail lights and Brake lights
- Parking Lights
- Directional signals
- Back up lights
- License plate lights
- Hazard warning or four-way flasher

3. Seat Belts
All seat belts must be present and in working order.

4. Windshield & Wipers
Blades need to be operational and not torn.

tores pueden detectar problemas de seguridad que pueden poner en riesgo a los conductores y a los pasajeros. Hemos creado la siguiente guía para ayudarle a mantener su vehículo en excelente estado y para que apruebe sin dificultades la inspección de la TLC. Los problemas más comunes que tienen los vehículos durante las inspecciones involucran neumáticos, luces, cinturones de seguridad y limpiaparabrisas.

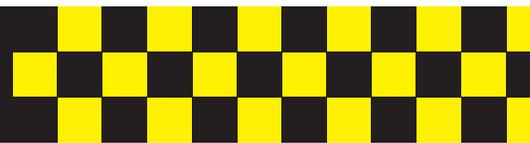
Antes de la inspección, asegúrese de que la profundidad de la banda de rodamiento de los neumáticos sea de, al menos, 2/32 pulgadas, y que la presión cumpla con las recomendaciones del fabricante del automóvil. Las tuercas que se usan para asegurar las ruedas deben estar completas. Para las luces exteriores, siempre asegúrese de que estén aprobadas por el Departamento de Vehículos y Motores (Department of Motor Vehicles, DMV) y de que estén adecuadamente instaladas y en funcionamiento. Estas luces incluyen las luces delanteras, traseras, de freno, de estacionamiento, de retroceso y de emergencia, así como las señales. Verifique que todos los cinturones de seguridad estén presentes y en óptimas condiciones, y que los limpiaparabrisas estén completamente operativos.

Tomar estos pasos ayudará a que su proceso de inspección se desarrolle sin dificultades.

Atentamente,
Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk

Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk is the recently-appointed Commissioner/Chairwoman of the New York City Taxi & Limousine Commission.

THE TAXI ATTORNEY



BY MICHAEL SPEVACK

Hello everybody. This month I want to talk about the necessity of fighting your DMV TVB tickets and TLC tickets during the pandemic.

These are troubling times. As I write this, COVID cases are relatively low in the NYC metro area right now, but as of early August there is some sense that there might be a second wave ready to hit in September when you are likely reading this article.

The traffic violations bureau, an arm of the NYS DMV, operates traffic courts in NYC and OATH, which operates TLC court. Both are open in semi-modified ways for hearings on your tickets.

I am not certain that TLC or TVB will be open when you are reading this

article, but the idea is the same: YOU MUST HANDLE YOUR TLC OR TVB TICKETS or you will face negative consequences. If you fail to properly pay attention to your tickets you can be arrested and jailed for failure to pay fines or respond.

PAY ATTENTION TO THEM!

If you have any questions about what to do – either if you have received a letter from DMV or TLC or because you have lost your paperwork, etc. – please contact me so I can help with your issue. I will not charge a fee, unless and until I need to perform legal work for you.

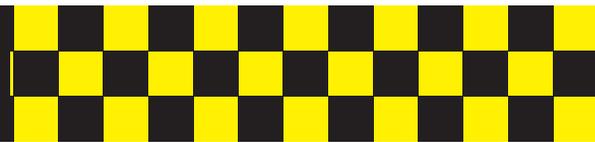
Please do not blow off your obligation to respond to tickets during these crazy times. Be professional, be pre-

pared, and be careful.

Thank you for reading my article. Until next month and always, be well.

Michael Spevack is a 1992 graduate of NYU School of Law and has been a lawyer in good standing in New York State since 1993. He has been helping for-hire vehicle drivers in New York City since 1995, when he opened his own law firm dedicated to "helping individuals, not large corporations." Mr. Spevack can be reached at 212.754.1011; he also welcomes visitors to his office at: 97-77 Queens Blvd, Suite 1120, Rego Park, NY 11374.

DEFENSIVE DRIVING



MAINTAINING GOOD HEALTH, PLUS INDUSTRY-RELATED ACCIDENTS

*By BERTRAM MERLING
LOSS CONTROL COORDINATOR,
HEREFORD INSURANCE COMPANY*

This month, we address the importance of keeping yourself healthy, along with tips to avoid accidents and what to do in the event one does occur.

Health is Wealth

Experts agree that maintaining a healthy lifestyle is your best defense against stress.

- Try to fit at least 20 minutes of aerobic activity into your schedule three to four days a week.
- Eat well balanced meals – more grains, nuts, fruits, and vegetables.
- Do your best to get a good night's sleep every night.
- Avoid too much caffeine, alcohol, and sugary drinks.
- Avoid cigarette smoking entirely. Smoking cigarettes not only affects your health, it affects your coordination and concentration. Smoking while driving can cause you to drive unreasonably fast or slow and may cause you to weave in and out of traffic. Smoking and second-hand smoke contribute to lung cancer, heart disease, emphysema, and general poor health. It also contributes to the high cost of health insurance.

Special Industry Related Accidents

- Taxis should always cruise for a passenger in the extreme right or left lane.
- Always obey posted bus lane restrictions. Red zone cruising can result in a moving traffic violation.
- Never speed up to run a red light to

respond to a street hail.

- Always signal when you are changing lanes to respond to a street hail.
- Always obey the law. If you are not permitted to respond to street hails, the vehicle behind you will not anticipate you making a sudden stop to do so.
- Always anticipate your passenger making an unannounced abrupt and unsafe exit due to excess traffic conditions.
- Never eat, drink, or use a tablet or cell phone while your vehicle is in motion.
- Always read your GPS prior to starting your trip. If you must refer to directions, pull over to a safe area first. (This may not be necessary for voice-active GPS.)
- Always anticipate inexperienced drivers behaving unsafely. Always be prepared to take defensive and evasive actions in the event you encounter such a driver.
- Never follow a handsome cab too closely or blow your horn in its vicinity. Horses react erratically to abrupt actions and noises.

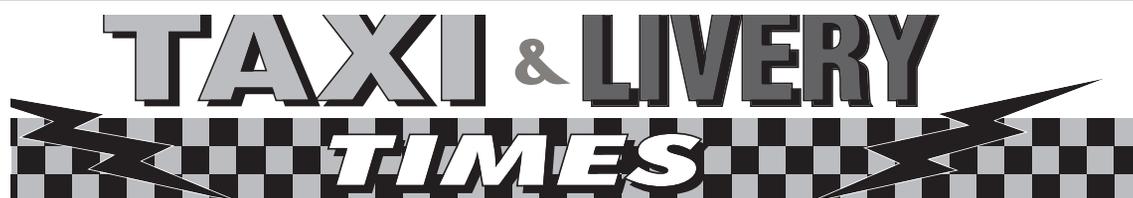
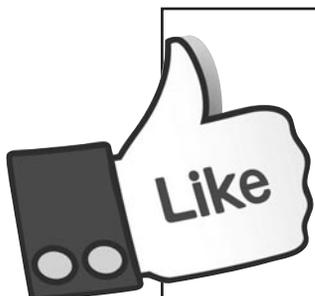
In the Event of an Accident, Please Obtain the Following

- The names of all drivers and passengers involved – plus addresses, license numbers and phone numbers.
- The vehicle owner's name, address and phone number – if different from driver.
- Insurance company names or 3-digit

code, policy number, and expiration date.

- Witness's names, addresses and phone numbers.
- The phone number and precinct number of all responding police officers, along with the accident report number.
- The name, address and phone number of any medical facility anyone involved is taken to from the scene by ambulance.
- The name, address and phone number of any tow trucks responding to and removing vehicles from the scene.
- Take pictures of all vehicles involved. Make sure you get the point of impact and all sides of all vehicles involved from all angles. Take photos of any skid marks, traffic signals, and any related factors that may have caused the accident. Take photos of the scene from up close and from a distance. Photograph nearby buildings and stores as witnesses may have witnessed the accident from inside and were unable to come forward at the scene.
- Under no circumstances should you attempt to settle the accident at the scene by offering to or accepting cash from any involved driver or passenger.
- If you don't have it already, please obtain your passengers' contact information prior to them leaving the scene so they can be contacted on your behalf, if necessary.

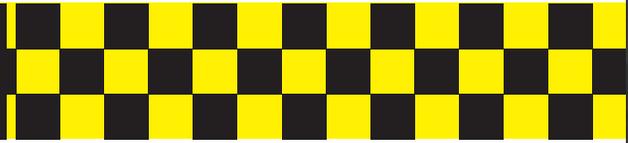
Bertram Merling is the Loss Control Coordinator for Hereford Insurance Company. He welcomes your questions and comments, and can be reached at 718.361.9191 ext. 7235, or via email at bmerling@herefordinsurance.com



**An Insider's Look at Both NYC TLC Regulated Industries
FOR BREAKING NEWS!**



IATR OUTLOOK



THE POST-PANDEMIC FUTURE FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES

BY PROFESSOR MATTHEW W. DAUS, ESQ.

The future of Electric Vehicles (EVs) was something that was unclear a little over a decade ago. With the advent of the Great Recession, many were predicting that hybrid-electric vehicles would be competing with hydrogen-fuel cell technology and other forms of alternative fuel.

Of course, EVs were in the mix, but midway past the last decade, Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) started to emerge as a viable option in the U.S. due in part to the country's energy independence movement, an increase in the fracking business to provide local jobs, and increased fueling infrastructure (especially for truck and vehicle fleets and on the west coast in California).

The Gold Standard for alternative fueled vehicles established by the California Air Resources Board (CARB), coupled with Federal laws and regulations with more stringent emissions standards during the Obama Administration, led to various efforts by manufacturers over the years to introduce increasingly more clean and efficient vehicles (i.e., Super-Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles or "SULEVs"; and Ultra-Low Emissions Vehicles or "ULEVs"). So, across the board, while all vehicles have become cleaner and more fuel efficient, with federal emissions standards being met and exceeded, there is still a growing and revived sustainability political movement, with the stage being set by the "New Green Deal" plan put forward by U.S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and supported by U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders, and the Presidential election of 2020, which may determine the course of EVs during the next decade.

The environmental movement in the U.S., which started in the 1970s, did not gain mainstream or significant traction with respect to alternative fuel vehicles until the 2000s, with the announcement of PlaNYC in New York, with many other cities developing sustainability plans, and with cities and private companies alike hiring Chief Sustainability Officers to "go green."

Celebrities in Hollywood were driving to awards shows and around town in Toyota Priuses, and commercials and the fuel-efficiency of hybrid-electrics made economic sense before the Great Recession (and through it) due to the high cost of fuel in the 2000s.

In the mid-2000s, as part of PlaNYC, former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and I announced the hybrid-electric vehicle miles per gallon fuel-efficiency mandate for taxicabs, and later for for-hire vehicles, with other cities following suit. The taxi industry brought a successful lawsuit against the Mayor, myself, and the New York City Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC) to strike down the TLC's mandate. In the interim, up to 63% of the TLC taxi fleet became hybrid-electric, and since 2018 there are more than 30,000 hybrid TLC vehicles on the road.

The green movement of the early 2000s experienced serious setbacks during the Great Recession, when a different type of "green" (the dollar) became a primary concern for Americans. Nevertheless, other countries around the world before then, and during that timeframe, continued to make strides well ahead of America on alternative

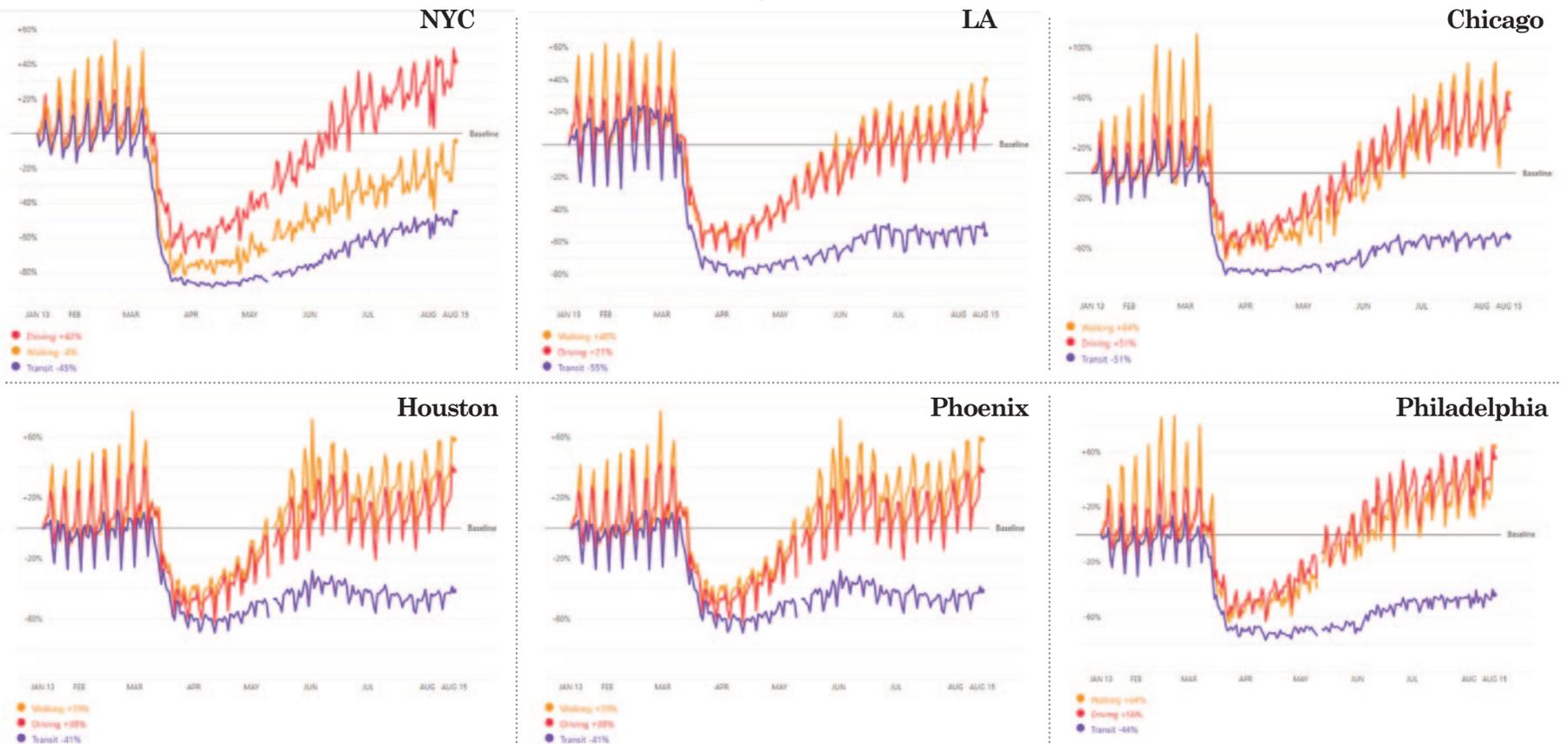
fuel vehicle policy.

We are now at a turning point in U.S. history, with the results of the Presidential and Congressional elections setting the stage for federal, state, and local sustainability priorities. The anti-car culture movement's criticisms are partially blunted and resolved by zero-emissions vehicles such as EVs, and manufacturers like Tesla and others are pushing for more infrastructure, longer-lasting battery life, and even more attractive vehicle designs, including convertibles, trucks and sports cars; something that was not possible only a decade ago, as U.S. manufacturers were far behind Honda and Toyota on vehicle battery technology.

The times have changed, and are continuing to change in the direction of EVs. However, without proper and smart political support by elected officials and sound policy, we may not realize the emissions reducing policies that would help blunt any increased congestion resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused people to feel safer taking personal motor vehicles (PMVs). Researchers at Vanderbilt University have predicted a sweeping modal shift to single-occupancy vehicle commuting, resulting in the risk of extreme traffic in large metro areas.

The mobility trend report from Apple for several major U.S. cities seems to support this prediction. As shown in *Figure 1*, the recovery of public transit is trailing significantly behind driving, which has returned to, and even surpassed, pre-pandemic levels.

Figure 1



As cities are gradually emerging from lockdowns, there is a very real risk of a spike in car traffic. If people are going to abandon mass transit in the short or long term, post-pandemic, and use more for-hire vehicles, taxicabs, Transportation Network Company (TNC) vehicles, or PMVs, then there is an opportunity now for the government, working with private industry, to make a profound change benefitting the environment and to allow the U.S. to play catch-up, and even exceed EV usage in other countries.

The inspiration for this article was a recent webinar hosted by Companies for Zero Waste, titled “Emerging Technologies Accelerating Circularity.” The program was a two-hour, virtual think tank on the global EV industry (the recording can be accessed here).

Panelists included OEM representatives, corporate sustainability and supply chain directors, investors, consultants, policymakers, and regulators. I was one of the speakers during the webinar, and shared my thoughts on the regulatory climate with respect to promoting EVs in the U.S., in addition to noteworthy initiatives by federal, state, and local governments. This article expands on that discussion by exploring the various factors that shape the future of EVs. Specifically, the key dimensions of the EV industry that support greater EV adoption include market forces, political support, public policy and regulation, private sector innovation, and public-private partnerships. Several international case studies worth emulating will be covered.

EV Market Outlook

Sales of EVs have been growing steadily over the past ten years in the U.S., but sales reached their zenith in 2018. That year, the total number of EVs sold shot up 81% from 2017. Plug-in electric vehicles hit a record of 361,315 sales —approximately 17% of global EV sales in 2018. In 2019, sales started strong the first half of the year but declined beginning in July due to falling fuel prices. As a result, the total number of EVs sold in 2019 was roughly 10% lower compared to 2018.

As shown in *Figure 2*, the Tesla Model 3 alone is responsible for almost 40% of all EV sales in 2018 and 50% in 2019. In terms of market share, Tesla, GM, and Nissan absolutely dominate the U.S. market: the top five EV models – Tesla Model 3, Tesla Model

S, Chevrolet Volt, Nissan Leaf, and Toyota Prius Prime – account for nearly 60% of all EV sales. That said, EVs account for only 1.3% of all cars sold in the U.S. The percentage of EVs is much higher in other countries, accounting for 2.6% of global new vehicle sales last year.

The actual number of EVs on the road, however, paints a more optimistic picture. Despite the drop in the number of EVs sold in 2019, *Figure 3* shows that the number of EVs on the road increased steadily from 2011 to 2019. In fact, by the first quarter of 2019, there were close to 1.2 million EVs on the road in the U.S.

What, then, is the EV market outlook for 2020? Not surprisingly, U.S. car sales fell sharply in the first three months of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. By April 2020, EV sales were down 55%. The pandemic is undoubtedly set to cause a major downturn in global auto sales in 2020 – and EVs are not exempted. Furthermore, the recovery in EV sales is likely to be slower in the U.S. than in other major regions, as automakers delay the launch of new models and consumers cling to internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles due to low oil prices.

The EV market will be bumpy over the next few years. Nonetheless, the long-term trajectory has not changed, with price parity between EVs and ICEs expected by the middle of this decade, primarily due to the falling cost of batteries and automakers’ optimization of their manufacturing processes, with expected increased profitability due to economies of scale. Increases in the driving range of EVs and the expansion of charging infrastructure may further boost public acceptance.

Looking forward, the Light-Duty Vehicle (LDV) sector may remain the primary segment in the EV market. LDVs are certainly the direction where Tesla and the other automakers have been heading. Batteries still take up around 30% of the cost of an EV, so any major reduction in their cost will have significant impact on the price of the vehicle. Beyond passenger cars, delivery vans, two-wheeled vehicles -scooters, mopeds, and motorcycles – along with municipal buses, are heading for electrification at a relatively fast pace, and will accelerate further over the next 10 years. There is a growing sense that heavy-duty vehicles and pick-ups are headed for electrification as well.

Also, there is a growing frame of mind

that it is a “given” that the autonomous vehicle (AV) movement will include mostly all EVs – working hand-in-hand so much conceptually that the industry and academic terminology speaks of these vehicle technologies together as Connected and Autonomous Electric Vehicles (CAEVs). To this point, RethinkX published a report predicting that by 2030, within 10 years of regulatory approval of AVs, 95% of U.S. passenger miles traveled will be served by on-demand CAEVs owned by fleets, not individuals, in a new business model known as Transportation-as-a-Service (TaaS).

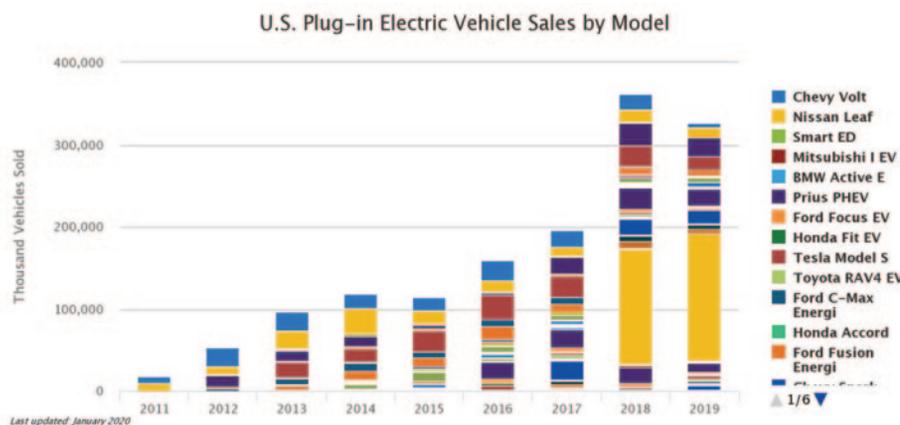
**Factors Affecting EV Adoption
Political Support**

Beyond the market forces described in the preceding section, government support will prove crucial in getting EVs up and running. The regulatory outlook of EVs is not so much a question of the pandemic, as it is who sits in the White House on January 20, 2021. If it is the present occupant, then the future for EVs may be much, much slower in coming to fruition. The Trump administration has made clear of its intent to end the federal tax credit (of up to \$7,500) for EVs, and research has shown that ending incentives for EVs prematurely can harm their growth. The other consequential action by the Trump administration is the rollback of federal fuel efficiency standards earlier this year, and this risks creating uncertainties for U.S. automakers and might put them at disadvantage in a global market that is trending towards EVs. Over the past few years, nine countries, including the U.K., France, and China, have announced eventual bans on ICEs.

If former Vice President Joe Biden wins the election, then there may be a higher likelihood of an EV ramp-up. On July 4, 2020, Biden revealed details of a \$2 trillion climate plan, which would create one million jobs in EV manufacturing. The plan would also create replacement schemes to subsidize U.S. consumers with rebates to swap old, less-efficient vehicles with EVs built from materials and parts sourced in the U.S.

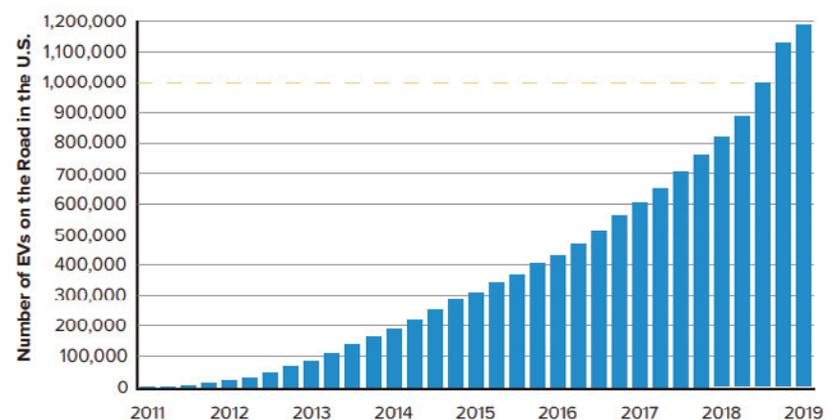
Other spending commitments on automobile infrastructure include building half a million EV charging stations. It is interesting to note at this point that unlike other emerging technologies, such as connected and autonomous vehicles, EV proliferation policy is inextricably intertwined with polit-

Figure 2



Source: Transportation Research Center at Argonne National Laboratory

Figure 3



Source: Edison Electric Institute

Continued from page 27

ical ideologies. Policies enacted at the highest office in the land, whether in favor of fossil fuel or clean energy, will prove to be either a potent barrier or enabler of EVs. This is because the manufacturing process and a plethora of funding for states is available to assist a comprehensive national plan, although many states and cities have already been committed to EV proliferation through policy incentives.

For example, to highlight the potential partisan divide on this issue, Senator Mitch McConnell recently mocked the City of Malibu on the Senate Floor for wanting to use stimulus money to buy a new electric fleet.

State/City Initiatives

Even in the absence of a consolidated federal mandate towards clean fuel, the adoption of EVs is still possible through the initiatives of public and private sector entities. The first problem to tackle is the supply and demand of EVs. Leading the charge on this is, of course, the Golden State of California, which is well known for its ambitious climate and energy goals.

To address the supply side of the equation, California has led the nation through its Zero-Emission Vehicle (ZEV) mandate, which requires manufacturers to sell a steadily increasing share of EVs each year in order to be allowed to sell ICE vehicles. Currently there are 12 states that have adopted the ZEV program: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington.

Altogether, these states represent nearly 40% of new vehicle sales in the U.S. Five more states are about to do the same: Minnesota, New Mexico, Colorado, Ohio, and Nevada. To spur the demand of EVs, California has introduced the Clean Vehicle Rebate Program, which offers rebates up to \$7,000 for the purchase or lease of new EVs. Less generous but still competitive is New York's

Drive Clean Rebate, which provides up to \$2,000 for the purchase or lease of an EV.

The second problem to tackle, often described as the “chicken or egg” problem, is the availability of charging infrastructure. This moniker came about due to the conundrum that EVs will not be popular until charging networks are readily available, and charging will not be widely deployed until EVs are popular. There are now 26,000 public charging stations in the U.S., with more than 84,000 plugs, but will this be enough?

To spur more installations, New York State has introduced the Charge Ready program, which offers a rebate of \$4,000 per charging port for standard Level 2 charging stations. Stations can be located in public facilities, workplaces, or multi-unit dwellings. In addition, the New York Power Authority has set aside \$250 million to build Level 3 fast-charging stations across the state through 2025.

The initial goal was to install 200 chargers by the end of 2019, but that deadline has been extended by a year. More recently, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced a new “Make-Ready” program that will improve EV economics for developers by covering up to 90% of the costs to make a site ready for EV charging. *Table 1* summarizes some of the key incentives available today.

Private Sector Innovation

The proliferation of charging infrastructure would not be possible without the private sector. In late 2016, Volkswagen created Electrify America with \$2 billion in funding as part of its emissions scam settlement with the U.S. and California. It has committed to a goal of building hundreds of stations and installing 2,000 chargers by the end of 2020. *Figure 4* shows the number of public charging connections by network provider. Electrify America currently comes in second after Tesla.

Public-Private Partnerships (P3)

One good example of a public-private partnership (P3) approach is the EV Shared Mobility project. This project is led by the City of Seattle and Atlas Public Policy, and it brings together the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Efficient Mobility Systems program and major industry stakeholders with the cities of Seattle, New York, Portland, and Denver to test different electric, shared mobility interventions. As part of Seattle's ride-hail outreach efforts, workshops on the benefits of EVs and the process of acquiring EVs are being held in collaboration with a driver advocacy group called Drive Forward. Seattle also submitted a proposal to the Department of Energy to re-purpose its funds to conduct a shared mobility electrification needs assessment. This assessment would identify barriers to making all shared mobility options electric by 2030, including for-hire transportation, car share, bike share, and scooter share.

International Case Studies Europe

Looking beyond the U.S., there are several international cities representing leading paradigms for EV transport. On the top of the list is Oslo, Norway, which, as of July 2020, has the most EVs per capita in the world (approximately 18%). With over 3,000 public charging points per million population, the EV share of sales is around 60%.

How did they get there? Oslo's plentiful incentives include zero-rated purchase tax and no value added tax (VAT) charged on EVs, free passes on toll roads, access to bus and taxi lanes, free parking on municipal parking spaces, and free travel on ferries that are part of the national highway system.

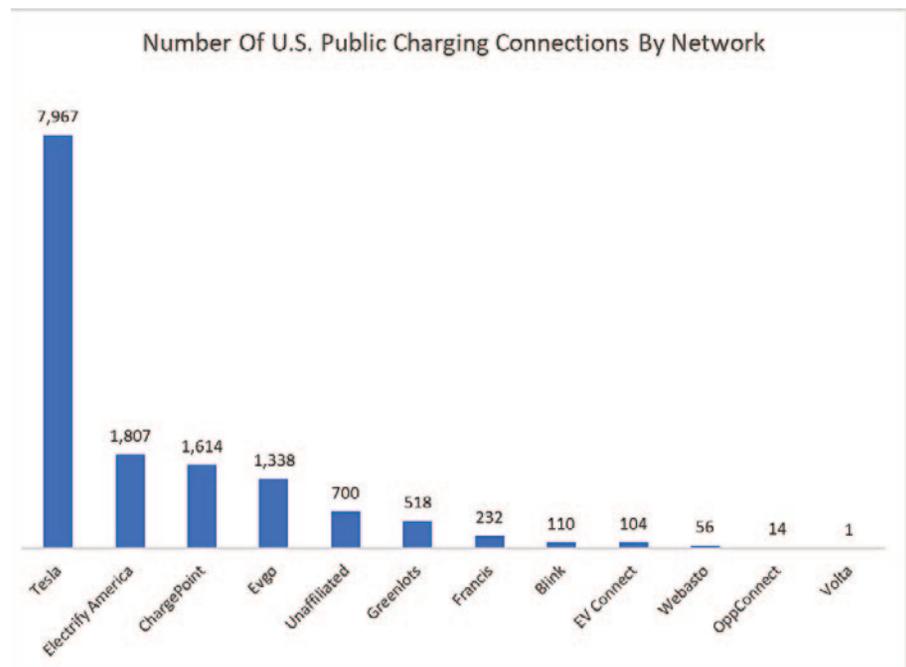
Amsterdam, on the other hand, has been handing out freebies, including charging stations, to residents who help rid the city's streets of internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles. EV owners that do not have their

Table 1

Jurisdiction	Incentives	Details
State (CA)	Clean Vehicle Rebate Program (CVRP)	Up to \$7,000 to purchase or lease a new plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) or battery electric vehicle (BEV)
State (NY)	Drive Clean Rebate	Provides up to \$2,000 for the purchase or lease of an EV with a battery capacity of at least 4 kWh
	Clean Pass Program	Allows EVs, PHEVs, and some hybrid vehicles access to HOV lanes on the Long Island Expressway
	Charge Ready NY	Provides a rebate of \$4,000 per charging port for Level 2 charging stations. Stations can be located in public facilities, workplaces, or multi-unit dwellings.
	NYS Income Tax Credit	Available for 50% of the cost of alternative fueling infrastructure, up to \$5,000. Must be for business use and used more than 50% of the time. Unused credits may be carried over into future tax years. The credit expires December 31, 2022.
Port Authority (NY/NJ)	PEV Toll Discount Program	Provides a discounted toll rate for EVs and hybrid vehicles on all Port Authority off-peak hour crossings, after registering with E-Z Pass New York. Applies to the George Washington Bridge, Lincoln Tunnel, Holland Tunnel, Goethals Bridge, Outerbridge Crossing, and Bayonne Bridge.

Source: Alternative Fuels Data Center

Figure 4



Data Source: Alternative Fuels Data Center

own charging station at home will be able to request the city to install one for free at a location of their choosing, provided it is accessible to the public.

Among the other benefits available to EV owners in Amsterdam include parking permit prioritization. Starting from July 1, 2020, residents of the Netherlands will be eligible for a €4,000 (\$4,425) subsidy to purchase a new EV and €2,000 (\$2,211) to purchase a second-hand EV.

London has undertaken a novel approach to increase the appeal of EVs. In 2019, the city created the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) in central London, which operates 24/7, year round. Vans, large trucks, coaches, buses, cars, motorbikes, and all other vehicles that enter the zone must meet the stricter emission standards or pay the daily ULEZ charge. To avoid paying the charges, one would need to have an EV or at least a Euro 4 petrol-engine car or Euro 6 diesel-engine car. As shown in *Figure 5*, the introduction of the zone has caused 22.8% of those surveyed to switch to low-emission vehicles.

Asia

Shenzhen, China is another city that has pursued vehicle electrification aggressively. In 2009, the city initiated its New Energy Vehicles Plan, an innovative business model that mobilizes vehicle manufacturers, grid companies, and bus and taxi operators to transition to electric, hybrid, and fuel cell vehicles. By the end of 2017, all public buses in the city were electric. By January 2019, nearly 95% of the city’s more than 21,000 taxicabs were powered by batteries. For the uninitiated, Shenzhen hosts the headquarters of BYD, a prominent electric car maker in China backed by Warren Buffett. The city is not alone in its pursuit of electrification of fleets; as there are a dozen other EV pilot cities in China. China is undoubtedly the largest EV market on the planet today, and is tying subsidies to improving range and power efficiency to foster technological im-

provements.

In Singapore, the Land Transport Authority (LTA) has introduced electric taxis, electric buses, and an electric car-sharing program in its quest to contribute to better air quality and improve the environment. In 2017, the LTA launched a trial fleet of 50 electric taxis that has since been issued a full-service operator license and is expected to grow to 800 electric taxis by July 2022. In 2018, the LTA rolled out 50 pilot hybrid buses to better understand the operational and technical challenges that come with the wider deployment of such buses under the tropical climate and traffic conditions in Singapore. Lastly, the LTA, together with the Economic Development Board (EDB), created the nationwide electric car-sharing program BlueSG (a subsidiary of the Bolloré Group), with the express goal of deploying 1,000 EVs and building 2,000 charging points by 2020. As of August 2020, BlueSG has reached its one-millionth rental since its launch in 2017.

Conclusion

EVs are, without a doubt, poised to reach a high degree of mass adoption over the next decade with the onset of technological maturity and substantial commercial applications. Taxicabs, black cars (other for-hire vehicles), and TNCs may be prime candidates for electrification given the fact that TNC trip proliferation often replaces less-polluting transportation modes, such as walking, biking, and mass transit, and has created a congestion crisis in most major U.S. cities. In addition, TNCs accounts for up to 14% of vehicle miles traveled in some cities, and this number is expected to grow rapidly.

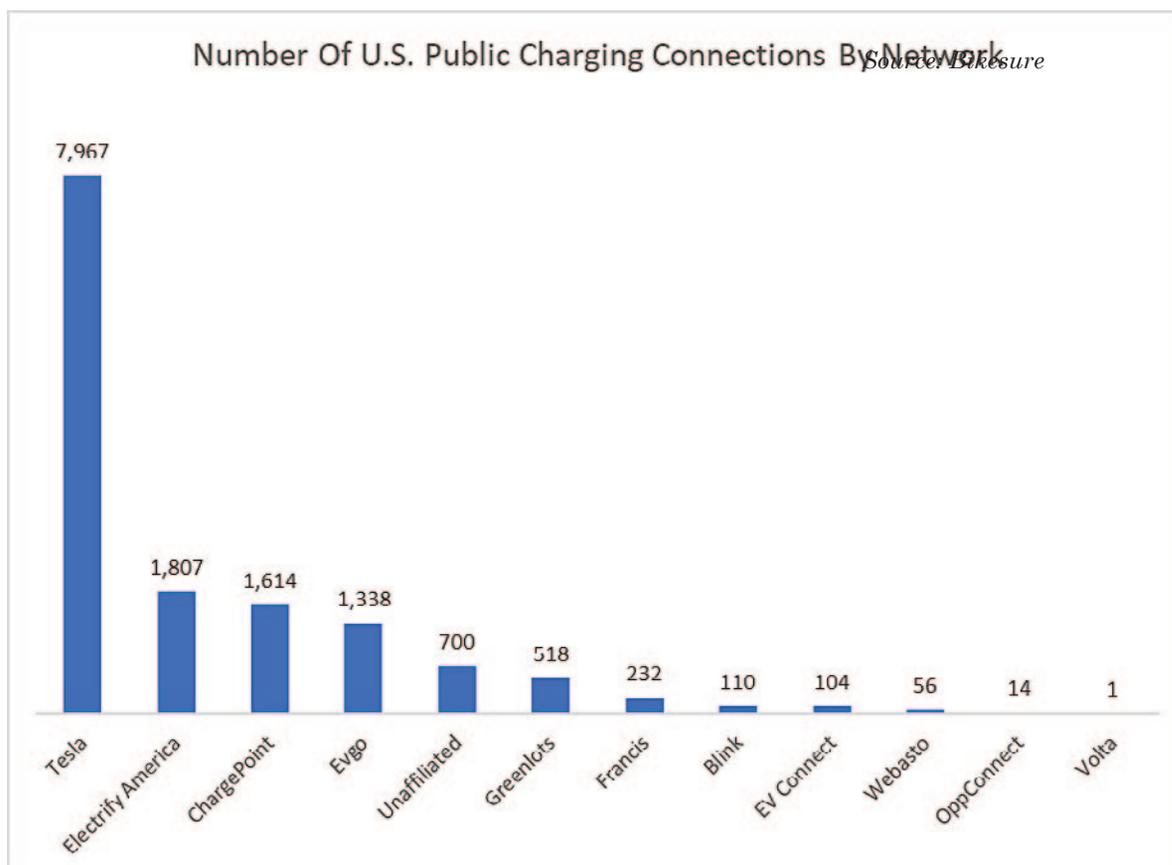
There does not appear to be any widespread plans by a private company or government regulator to push incentives or mandates in the for-hire vehicle, taxicab, or TNC arena. As cities move toward congestion pricing, EV fleets should be considered exempt to encourage proliferation.

It is undeniable that EVs would not be experiencing the exponential growth over the last decade without government backing. Unfortunately, EVs have become increasingly controversial – what was once perceived as transitional technology has now taken on distinctly political overtones. The Presidential election is a major inflection point in this process. However, to blunt the expected impact of increased post-pandemic vehicle proliferation, state and local governments will need to make key decisions, with or without federal support or funding, which could very well have a significant impact on EV proliferation.

The public-private partnership model is also an effective path for fleet electrification and development of charging infrastructure. All said, the benefits of EVs are undeniable, as they help improve fuel economy, reduce emissions, and increase energy security, so we should not lose sight of this next revolution in transportation. Yet, there must be a multi-tiered policy approach employing as many incentives as possible, as was successfully implemented in many countries, and especially Norway. Federal, state, and local incentives, coupled with pro-EV transportation policies (such as HOV, or high occupancy vehicle lane usage, parking preferences, land use planning for increased EV charging infrastructure, and congestion pricing exemptions), could truly make a difference to chart a course from the U.S.’ current state to Norway!

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Figure 5





THE FISHBOWL

WHEN THE TRUTH IS FOUND TO BE LIES

BY LARRY FISHER

The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines truth as:

(1): *the body of real things, events, and facts: ACTUALITY*

(2): *the state of being the case: FACT*

(3) *often capitalized: a transcendent fundamental or spiritual reality*

Some political and social commentators say that the reason Americans are so polarized is that we can't even agree on facts. Former New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan famously said, "Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not to his own facts." Because we receive our news from separate silos, we are constantly fed news angled by the particular leftward or rightward leaning network, newspaper, or platform. And because this seems to be known, one side automatically discredits the other by virtue of their source.

Ask around, and let me know who your friends and family say is an honest broker of information without an axe to grind. I have, and the field is largely wide open.

It doesn't help when the politicians of the day lie straight to our faces even when the lies are easily disproven. The gaslighting is designed to exhaust us, to make us disbelieve our own eyes and ears, and to ultimately cede power to the authorities. Former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani didn't help matters a couple years ago when he declared

that "truth isn't truth" in an appearance on Meet the Press during a discussion of why President Trump should not submit to a deposition by the Mueller special Counsel Probe.

Later, on CNN's Chris Cuomo's broadcast, Cuomo said, "Facts are not in the eye of the beholder."

Giuliani's response? "Yes, they are. Nowadays, they are."

George Orwell's book 1984, about a totalitarian state, contained a few examples of autocratic gaslighting.

"War is peace."

"Freedom is slavery."

"Ignorance is strength."

Those few examples of doublespeak rival the infamous Kellyanne Conway remark that "He has alternative facts."

Opinion is one thing, but facts are... well, facts. $2 + 2 = 4$, no matter how you slice it.

Immigrants to our country have long suffered at the hands of autocrats from Haiti's Duvalier family to Russia's long line of dictators like Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev. The repression in these nations is largely the cause of their emigration here. They don't really believe the streets are paved with gold. Immigrants have always held out hope that their children's lives would have a chance at success if they emigrated to America.

In the taxi industry, that was true.

Many of my former clients' children were able to advance their social class going to medical school or law school. And the medallion was the vehicle towards that advancement.

I used to take heat from some clients for being too direct and honest. I told some borrowers the way things were without leading them on. Some borrowers appreciated that I didn't waste their time. Others I told not to borrow due to the onerous prepayment penalty they would incur from their existing lender. This served to enhance my credibility as an honest broker or banker in this case.

So, if we lose the ability to determine fact from fiction because our leaders lie directly to our faces, or tell us half-truths that are unprovable either way, then we will lose faith in our leaders and ultimately in each other. Or, have we already reached that point?

During the George W. Bush administration, there was a term of art called "truthiness," which is defined as the quality of seeming or being felt to be true, even if not necessarily true. That dangerous development is the forefather of the current situation we find ourselves in regarding the incessant gaslighting.

There must be someone or something we can all believe in, to have faith in, or we will simply wither away as a free nation.

Larry Fisher entered the NYC transportation industry in 1982 as a yellow taxi driver, and has also worked as a black car driver. In 1987, he became a lender for Progressive Credit Union, then took the position of lending supervisor in 2003 for Melrose Credit Union – which he held until he retired in 2016. Currently, Mr. Fisher is a consultant for his own firm, LAF Consulting Services Corp. He can be reached at: lafisher292@gmail.com.

NEWS

DRIVERS WORRIED AS NYC CLOSES MORE STREETS TO CARS

New York City’s expansion of its Open Streets program has provided relief to socially-distancing New Yorkers, along with many cash-strapped bars and restaurants. In addition to shutting down a growing number of streets to cars, the city also expanded bus lanes and busways, and demand for bikes has skyrocketed.

While many residents and commuters have yet to return to NYC since the initial pandemic-related shutdown, some streets are already getting crowded due to the Open Streets program. This adds to the financial and health-related stress of For-Hire Vehicle (FHV) and Taxi drivers, as access to more roads is blocked off.

“Our drivers have been awakened to a new norm: smaller streets, more space for buses, more space for bikes,” explained Cira Angeles, spokesperson for the Livery Base Owners Association. “When new busways, new streets are closed, and also new spaces are given for delivery trucks

and loading zones, all that represents an issue of reeducating our community, of reeducating our drivers.”



Ms. Angeles – who serves on Mayor Bill de Blasio’s newly formed Surface

Transportation Advisory Council – added that she hopes the city reminds people the FHV industry is a safe option, even more so since drivers started to equip their cars with partitions and taking other safety measures: “The city is geared up to have no vehicles on the road, and is using more of an approach on bikes and walking and open streets, which we support because the community needs that space, but at the same time, we provide an essential service in the city because many people still refuse to go on mass transportation.”

Recently, the mayor advised New Yorkers not to buy new cars, and encouraged “mass transit, biking [and] walking” – but FHV and Taxi drivers desperately need a boost as well. From late March to May 31, the Department of Motor Vehicles – with some exceptions – only processed new registrations for essential workers, making FHV and Taxis an essential option.

Source: NY1

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NEWS

GRIDLOCK SAM'S "RIBBON BRIDGES" GAIN SOME FANS

The engineering firm of Samuel "Gridlock Sam" Schwartz recently floated a proposal for three dedicated bicycle/pedestrian bridges linking Manhattan to Long Island City, Downtown Brooklyn, and New Jersey. The so-called "ribbon bridges," named for their lightweight steel construction, would cost about \$100 million apiece and would provide a ready solution for the burgeoning number of walking and cycling commuters, carrying 20,000 commuters each daily, Schwartz's team says.

The proposal addresses a pressing need: If bike commuting continues its rate of growth, congestion on the existing bridges "would reach conditions of bike-lock; ultimately many would be forced to walk their bikes; many more would give up."

Transportation advocates, who for years have pushed for more room for walkers and bikers on the existing spans into Manhattan, were unimpressed by the proposals, however, citing pandemic-related budget restraints and the need to "keep it simple." However, others are warming up to the idea of the proposed bridges, which they say could cut travel times for some routes, making cycling more desirable and increasing ridership. This could benefit transportation citywide.

The proposed Queens Ribbon was initially criticized because of its proximity to

the 59th Street Bridge – the site of a long struggle for more space for cyclists and pedestrians, who now share a dangerously crowded path. But, if its Queens-side entrance hugged the waterfront, the proposed ribbon span might confer some advantages for cyclists seeking more direct routes to Manhattan from the westernmost edge of Queens, including those approaching from Vernon Boulevard in the north and the Pulaski Bridge in the south, experts say.

Similarly, Schwartz's proposed ribbon bridge connecting Brooklyn and Lower Manhattan would have a central exit at Governors Island. It could connect Battery Park and Red Hook, by following the route of the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel. Such a bridge would offer new options for bikers and pedestrians going to and from Brooklyn, with an access point further south than the Brooklyn and Manhattan bridges, and making West Street and the Hudson River Greenway more accessible.

Schwartz also proposed a Hoboken/Jersey City ribbon bridge across the Hudson to Midtown but did not specify where he would locate it.

Schwartz did not propose a Bronx-Queens ribbon, but such connections are needed, according to some. Even as Bronx-Queens commuting grows, there is now no legal way to bike the existing crossings. Cyclists have pushed for legalizing bike

riding on the Triboro Bridge, but currently, they can only legally walk their bikes across it.

Schwartz calls his ribbon bridges cheap at the price, especially given that current crossings allow for a very limited future growth of biking.

Source: Streetsblog

DRUNK TROUBLEMAKER IN CANADA MISTAKES COP CAR FOR FHV

After locals called the cops on a drunken troublemaker in Manitoba, Canada, he fled and tried to make his getaway by hopping into the back of what he thought was a For-Hire Vehicle. Instead, it was a police cruiser that had been called to the scene because of a "disturbance," that was looking for him.

"Take me to 17th St., bro," the unidentified 19-year-old told the officer, around 5:00am on an August Sunday morning. According to Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Manitoba.

"Police obliged and taxied him to the detachment, where he was held until he was sober," Manitoba police reported. "He was released without any charges."

Source: MSN News



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An Insider's Look at Both NYC TLC Regulated Industries

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NEWS

TLC OFFERS IMPORTANT DRIVER SAFETY TIPS AS CRIME SPIKES

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) recently launched a process allowing TLC-Licensed Drivers to report physical and verbal assaults. TLC works closely with New York City Police Department “to ensure that anyone who assaults a Driver is brought to justice and that Drivers who are victims of verbal and physical attack or robberies receive the assistance and advocacy they deserve.”

The TLC urges drivers who feel in danger or are the victim of a crime to immediately call 911.

“Filing a police report is important so law enforcement can investigate and prevent future incidents from occurring,” the TLC stated. “After you have called 911, please report it to TLC at tlcexternalaffairs@tlc.nyc.gov. We can help connect you with important services for crime victims.”

The TLC also offered tips to help avoid potentially dangerous situations:

- The most violent assaults have been by passengers who were not dispatched by a licensed base. Accepting trips that were not dispatched by a licensed base is dangerous, and you are potentially putting yourself at risk if you illegally pick up a passenger. Additionally, New York State workers’ compensation benefits are only available for TLC-licensed drivers who become injured while completing a trip dispatched by a licensed base in a TLC licensed vehicle.
- When starting a trip, always make eye contact and greet the passenger. This is important if you need to identify the passenger in case of an incident.
- If you are a yellow taxi, green taxi, or livery driver, you can either have a partition or an approved in-vehicle camera system installed. Visit the TLC website for a list of approved in-

stallers.

- If you are a black car or luxury limousine driver, a dashboard camera (dash-cam) records events that occur on the road and inside your vehicle. It is helpful in an event of a car crash, or if you have a negative interaction with a passenger.

If an incident does occur, the TLC recommends that drivers:

- Maintain eye contact, if possible
- Try to keep a safe distance from the person
- Be aware of their body language
- Remain calm; and when speaking, use a tone lower than your attacker

“Remember, the most important trip you will take is back home to your loved ones,” the TLC stated.

Source: NYC TLC



FIREFLY ACQUIRES TAXI ROOF RIGHTS AFTER BATTLING FHV AD BAN

Firefly, a San Francisco-based startup that has pushed for New York to allow advertisements on For-Hire Vehicles (FHVs), says it now holds the rights to nearly half the rooftop ads on yellow and green cabs. The company announced in August a deal to acquire the outdoor advertising business of Strong Outdoor, which holds the rights to about 3,500 ads on taxi roofs. Firefly says the deal gives it control of advertising for roughly 45% of taxi-top media in the city.

Strong Outdoor acquired the rights to advertise on taxis in 2018, through a deal with the Metropolitan Taxicab Board of Trade, an association representing owners and operators. The deal included about 3,500 of the 9,000 taxis with rooftop ads at

the time. Firefly picked up a part of that business last year when it acquired the rights to the roughly 300 digital taxi-top ads run by Strong Outdoor. The new agreement gives Firefly full control over the company’s analog taxi-top ads as well.

The move comes after Firefly was in the middle of an advertising battle over a bill to allow For-Hire Vehicle (FHV) drivers to display ads on their car. A small number of FHV drivers had signed deals with Firefly last year before the city’s Taxi & Limousine Commission reinstated a ban on the practice.

City Councilman Ydanis Rodriguez, head of City Council’s Transportation Committee, proposed a bill at the start of 2020 to negate the TLC policy. But the leg-

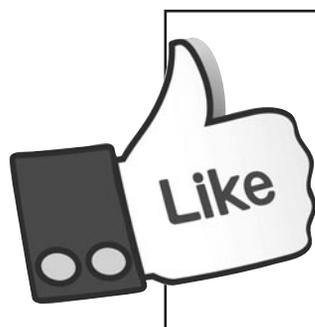
islation stalled after a tense hearing in January, in which yellow-cab drivers told the council that ads from FHV drivers would saturate the market.

Firefly supported the bill and testified that it had paid about 25 drivers \$300 each month for the right to their ad displays before the ban was enforced.

TLC spokesman Allan Fromberg confirmed the rule is still in effect. The TLC described the rule as a way to “rein in advertising in the public sphere.”

Firefly’s digital displays are programmable based on location, which means advertisers can buy placements designed for certain neighborhoods.

Source: Crain’s New York Business

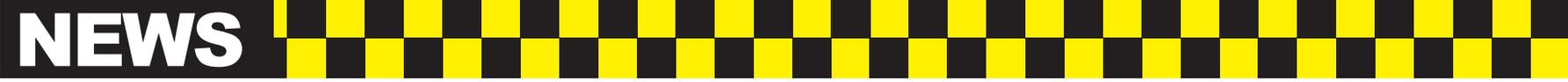


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NEWS

MTA TO END FHV PROGRAM IN SEPT, CITING HIGH COSTS

The MTA was set to end its temporary For-Hire Vehicle (FHV) program, effective Aug. 30 at 5:00am, leaving some New Yorkers without options for overnight transportation. The MTA cited high costs and the fiscal crisis for ceasing operations.

“At the height of the pandemic, it was critically important to ensure essential workers who were subway-dependent could get to overnight shifts reliably, and without spending considerably more time on their commute than they were used to,” said Sarah Feinberg, New York City Transit Interim President. “Given our significant financial challenges, we are unfortunately no longer able to provide this service to the limited number of peo-

ple it was serving sporadically, and the even smaller population it was serving regularly. We have recently added three new bus routes – all of which we believe will significantly assist our overnight passengers in this transition.”

The FHV program was launched in May as an alternative to overnight subway service, which had been suspended so subway stations and cars could be disinfected and cleaned thoroughly during the pandemic. Since the program began, roughly 1,500 customers have been using the service per night, costing the MTA over \$6 million. The average cost per trip was estimated at \$49.

For those who came to rely on the FHV

service, the MTA said it is adding three more bus routes that mirror the more frequented trips taken by FHV program users: the B99, the M99, and the Bx99. The B99 connects Midwood in Brooklyn to Midtown West and follows a similar route to the 2 train. The Bx99 connects the Woodlawn section of the Bronx with Manhattan’s West Village. The route travels on Jerome Avenue and down the east side of Manhattan much as the 4 train does. It then crosses west on 57th Street and travels south to the West Village. The new M99 route runs between East New York, Brooklyn, and Hell’s Kitchen, via 14th Street in Manhattan.

Source: AM New York

NYC COUNCIL APPROVES BLACK CAR/LIVERY TASK FORCE

New York’s City Council approved the creation of a Black Car & Livery Task Force in late August, by a 47-0 vote. The bill was sponsored by Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, establishing “a short-term task force that would study challenges to the viability of the Black Car and Livery industries, as well as the impacts of advertising and the viability of advertising as a source of revenue for Black Car and Livery drivers.”

The task force will be comprised of 11 members, including Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk, Chairperson of the NYC Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC), or her designee, as well as individuals appointed by the Mayor, the Speaker of the Council, and the Public Advocate. The task force

would be required to hold at least one public hearing and issue a report with recommendations for “identified challenges.”

The formation of the task force is expected to move quickly, and interested parties are waiting to see who gets appointed and the degree drivers will get a say in what it accomplishes. In addition to the issue of advertising as a source of revenue, the group is expected to address the impact Uber and Lyft have had on traditional FHV bases and the future of the FHV cap.

“Restricted” FHV licenses, sought by traditional bases in the past, could also be a topic of discussion. A restricted FHV license would essentially allow bases that don’t fall into the High-Volume FHV cate-

gory to add vehicles based on demand, to avoid adding so many vehicles that it hurts current TLC-licensed driver incomes. Those vehicles would only be allowed to work for a specific base or industry category.

Rodriguez, who also chairs the Transportation Committee, has already shown support for such a measure, including correcting other issues related to the current FHV license cap.

The bill (Int. No. 1865-A) will now go to the Mayor, who has 30 days to either sign it into law, veto it, or take no action. If the Mayor doesn’t sign or veto the bill within 30 days, it becomes law and it would take effect immediately.

Source: TLCMKT

ATIC DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT JOINS NYS CHAPTER OF THE NYSSIU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The New York State Chapter of the International Association of Special Investigation Units (NYSSIU), a not-for-profit organization founded in 1997, has recently welcomed Edward Kurathowski of American Transit Insurance Company (ATIC) to its Board of Directors.

On July 31, Kurathowski joined members of local, state, and federal law enforcement and prosecutors who are involved in or provide special expertise or services, for the investigation and/or prosecution of insurance fraud crimes.

NYSSIU was founded to encourage high professional standards of conduct among insurance professionals and sup-

port legislation that acts as a deterrent to insurance fraud crimes. Its mission is to promote a coordinated effort within the insurance industry to combat insurance fraud, as well as develop and promote awareness of the rampant problem of insurance fraud by providing education and training seminars throughout New York State.

Edward Kurathowski, an insurance investigative professional for over 27 years, states, “Insurance fraud has become increasingly sophisticated and its consequences negatively impact all of us. I look forward to working with NYS-SIU and supporting its mission to fight fraud and protect our industry and the

public we serve.”

Ralph Bisceglia, ATIC President and Chief Executive Officer said, “We congratulate Edward on this important appointment. ATIC has a long-standing commitment to our clients to provide excellent service at a fair price. Insurance fraud is a crime and a threat to all of us.”

Kurathowski joined ATIC in 2019 as the Director of Special Investigations Unit. He has over 26 years of experience in all areas of claim handling, claim investigation, major case investigations, declaratory judgment actions, and the supervision of SIU Investigators and staff.

Source: ATIC

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