

**August 2023**

## **Heroes Drive Here**

For all we celebrate it, summer can be merciless. Crime and crashes rise, wars ramp up, and of course we also have those hellacious forest fires. But I'd like to share a couple stories about people in our community who, in recent weeks, turned otherwise tragic events into triumphs of humanity.

On the morning of June 22<sup>nd</sup>, one of TLC's own, Chief of Safety and Emissions Anthony Moran, came across an accident on the Staten Island Expressway; an SUV had rear-ended an Amazon truck. As Moran exited his vehicle, he noticed the SUV was drifting backwards, with the unresponsive driver locked inside. Acting fast, Moran broke into the vehicle with a hammer, put it in park, then pulled out the driver, who had no pulse. Moran administered CPR and saved that driver's life!

Just a month later, one of our TLC drivers saved someone's...well, death. On July 16, bereaved family members accidentally left their patriarch's ashes in the trunk of Taxi Driver Omar Nyass's cab. Working with TLC's Lost Property Unit, Nyass was able to return the ashes to the family, who wryly noted that their father was a prankster who would have appreciated the last spin around town.

Those are just the heroes we know about. Both are being recognized by the TLC. One of the greatest aspects of this job is hearing about acts of bravery, kindness, and generosity that people in this community frequently perform.

At our next public hearing on August 9, we are hoping to discuss some acts (okay, "proposed rules") that, if not particularly heroic, will at least save you money. The first rule would update the specs for the in-vehicle camera system (IVCS) for taxis and street hail liveries, and remove the requirement that liveries have either a partition or an IVCS. The "camera or partition" requirement, intended to increase safety, has been around since 2000. The required camera tech is just about as dated, and that means it is getting more expensive to maintain. The idea is to give folks who want cameras more current options, which should save everyone money and improve the product. It also doesn't make much sense to require liveries to have one or the other while black cars have the option of going without either.

The second rule is also pretty straightforward. Since 2020, the Verrazzano Narrows Bridge has been operating a two-way tolling system. Since passengers are required to only pay tolls heading *to* their destination, drivers are often stuck paying a toll to leave Staten Island. TLC already requires passengers to pay the tolls on the city's other two other bridges with two-way tolling, both of which connect to the Rockaway Peninsula, so we'd like to pass that extra Verrazzano toll on to the customer as well.

Lastly, an important reminder: August 31 marks the end of the COVID-19 License Storage Program for FHV's. This program saved drivers many millions of dollars during the Lockdown, but we still have about 3,500 FHV licenses sitting in storage. If one these licenses is yours, I can't stress enough how important it is that you get it out before then—otherwise it will be subject to revocation. We have proposed a rule creating a new, short-term FHV storage program which will be up for discussion at our August 23<sup>rd</sup> hearing, but that storage program is *not* a continuance of the COVID program. If you want to keep that FHV license you've had in storage, get it out now. Don't end the summer with a bummer!

See you out there,

David Do  
Commissioner, NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission