Showing Appreciation

Taxi lines are a welcome sight for native New Yorkers returning home from their travels, and for first-time visitors, they offer a glimpse into the adventure of the Big Apple. Taxis are a gateway to the most recognizable skyline in the world, and that begins at the airports.

I was greeted by that iconic sea of yellow on October 7 at Taxi Driver Appreciation Day, when I visited LaGuardia and JFK alongside our Port Authority partners to thank our taxi drivers for their dedication. This was my first time as Commissioner at this wonderful annual event, and it was a pleasure to return to LaGuardia, where Mayor Mamdani announced my nomination in January.

We honored the four taxi drivers who have done the most airport trips they made almost 5,000 combined trips in the last year and I also spent time engaging with many of the dedicated licensees who serve as ambassadors to this city. As Commissioner, listening to drivers and understanding their needs has been an honor and my top focus.

This administration has made driver dignity a priority, and cracking down on unlicensed operators at the airports has been a major emphasis. That's why Taxi Driver Appreciation Day was a great place to provide some important updates on that mission.

When I last spoke at JFK in June, we introduced Operation Legal Ride our partnership with the Port Authority on a sustained effort to protect passengers, support licensed drivers, and hold illegal operators accountable. I also vowed it would not start and end there.

The Port Authority also announced that'starting October 14, unlicensed operators at airports will face even harsher penalties. Thanks to our coordination, hustlers who get a summons at the airport will get a five-point penalty on their Department of Motor Vehicles license. This protects trips and earnings for all licensed drivers especially at the two major airports, where millions of trips start and end every year.

I've also heard from taxi drivers about unlicensed and improper activity at certain hotels. In response, I have reached out to the Hotel Association of NYC to partner on addressing these complaints.

With these ongoing efforts, TLC is advancing safe transportation that delivers reliable service for all New Yorkers and keeps our city moving safely. Working to thwart unlicensed activity strengthens driver trust, builds a more equitable system, and improves mobility while supporting the people who keep the city moving.

I am incredibly privileged to lead an organization that supports 180,000 drivers, the majority of whom are immigrants. So I want you to know that TLC is listening to your stories and shaping policy around your dignity.

Thank you for all you do for this city every day.

Midori Valdivia
Commissioner and Chair

Taxi and Limousine Commission