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## Right Idea, Wrong Taxi

by Abe Mittleman

Jun 14, 2011 | 2464 views | 1 | 18 | |

How do we provide quality taxi service to all the people in the City of New York?

The problem really isn't as complicated as is turning out to be. The answer is simple: Have enough legal medallion taxis to service everyone, end of story!

The latest plan by the current administration in City Hall is to create hundreds of taxi stands in the boroughs where livery taxis can do business legally with people off the street. This is a good idea. But, they have chosen the wrong taxi.

This should be done with medallion taxis. Currently, there are not enough medallion taxis in the fleet to accomplish this, so they want to do this with livery taxis because they claim this will legitimize them and appease the politicians who are on their side.

This shortage of medallion taxis should have been recognized many years ago, but past politicians chose to look the other way. Instead they let an illegal industry flourish and grow to the point where they are claiming legitimacy by default. Legalizing these cars is not right!

Livery drivers have known all along that they were doing business illegally by picking up street hails. Their radio bases knew it and also looked the other way. It didn't matter how many cars were affiliated with their base, the more the better to insure that their customers were serviced.

Why should they care if they didn't have enough work for all their cars? Those drivers could get by stealing street hail fares. Livery car owners never paid one dime to the city for the right to do business on the streets while hard-working medallion owner drivers paid hundreds of thousands of dollars for the right to do it legally!

It's time to get it right!

1. Establish taxi stands and find incentives for the current fleet of medallion taxis to work there. Allow taxis who volunteer service radios for borough calls to support their business in the boroughs while a way is worked out to create enough medallion taxis.
2. Go over the call records for radio bases and limit the number of cars affiliated to these bases to what is needed for radio calls.
3. Prohibit livery cars from doing street hails and do not renew the licenses of those that are found guilty of this offense. Medallion taxis are always present and should be able to pick up the slack, more will be present knowing they can do business. Eventually enough medallions will be issued so all customers will be serviced.

Some politicians are worried about putting the livery drivers out of business. Well, consider they weren't really in a legal business in the first place. Those who want a job can still have one driving one of the new medallion taxis that are issued, just like every other legitimate driver!

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**Brooklyn Barry** | June 14, 2011

The guy is right. Where I live in Washington Heights the streets are overrun with gypsy cabs. They tie up available parking on shopping streets and don't put money in the meters. They ride around honking their horns to attract business and don't appear to be subject to any restraints.

They also can't drive worth a damn. One of them mistakenly put his car in reverse on 187th Street and took off the corner of a coop building. Many are uninsured and some unlicensed. Bloomberg & Co don't seem to care because they have the traffic agents out looking for parking violations instead of dealing with dangerous livery cab drivers.

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