TORONTO

Cesar Palacio

City Councillor – Ward 17 • Davenport



March 21st, 2013

TO: **LICENSING AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

RE: **REQUEST TO REVISIT TAXI CAB SAFETY ISSUES**

SUMMARY:

Customers routinely pay upfront or are required to leave a deposit for a wide range of products and services that include; riding public transit, renting a hotel room, attending a sporting event, buying an airline ticket or, purchasing gasoline.

"Fare jumping", has been an on-going problem in the taxi Industry which has lead to a loss of revenue, and in some cases, violent altercations which have placed taxi drivers in serious danger. The Taxi Industry is a critical component of the City's Transportation Network prompting City Council to adopt an Industry-wide review and the creation of a Taxi Advisory Committee to ensure that issues surrounding this industry receive the proper consideration and action.

It is incumbent on the City, as the Taxi Industry Regulator, to ensure that both the taxi riding public and taxi drivers are protected to the best of our ability. Recent serious reports in the media regarding passenger and driver safety have highlighted some imperfections in the system, and the urgent need to revisit safety issues. One example would be to revisit the question of mandatory shields in all taxi vehicles. Although some may argue that they are unsightly and/or unnecessary, case studies in other jurisdictions have demonstrated that they reduce the instances of violence against drivers by more than 50%. This is an alarming statistic that can have a profound impact on the Taxi Industry and the safety of our drivers, and thus highlighting the need to be reviewed and studied in our local context.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards report to the Licensing and Standards Committee meeting as part of the Taxi Industry Review on:

1. A pre-payment or a deposit arrangement to initiate after dark, similar to that in place in most gas stations.
2. The use of protective shields to greatly reduce violent actions against taxi drivers.
3. The use of credit/debit card machines to reduce the amount of cash carried by Taxi Drivers.

Regards,

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Davenport – Ward 17

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