



Councillor Cesar Palacio
Chair Licensing and Standards Committee
100 Queen Street West, Suite B37
Toronto, ON. M5H 2N2

January 19th 2016

Dear Councillor Palacio

I am requesting you as Chair of the Committee to instruct the Executive Director of Municipal Licensing and Standards Tracey Cook to bring forward an injunction stopping UBER and its drivers from operating in the City of Toronto till a new Ground Transportation By-Law is implemented.

As you are aware Uber and its drivers are flouting the current by-law and have no intention of following any rules and regulations that the City has in place for ground transportation providers.

I also remind you that Council voted to ask Uber to stop operating till this issue was resolved and they refused.

The Toronto Taxicab industry is continuing to be severely affected by Uber and its drivers operating outside the by-law.

Many in the industry are experiencing drops in earnings of at least 50% and the industry is continuing to see a dramatic loss of market share while the public is at risk

Councillor I am also including a couple of press releases outlining our position and our request to council.

1. Warning to public. Dated Dec 16th 2014
2. Welcoming enforcement July 9th 2015
3. Injunction against UBER Oct 5th 2015

This has been going on long enough! It is time for council to act.

Thank You
Peter Zahakos

For immediate release: December 16, 2014 - 1:15 PM

Co-op Cabs warns passengers about ride-sharing risks

Unlicensed and uninsured “ridesharing” companies put consumers and their drivers at risk

The CEO of Co-op Cabs says Uber’s business model is putting consumers and their drivers at risk.

Peter Zahakos a long-time transportation industry leader says the recent attempts by Uber to enter the Toronto market leaves many ethical questions about consumer safety and protection. **Is it ethical to put consumers in cars not knowing if drivers have adequate commercial insurance?**

“Uber either doesn't know that Uberx drivers require commercial insurance coverage in Ontario or they don't care. Are they willfully blind to putting drivers and passengers at risk in case of an accident. “ said Zahakos today.

Under the City of Toronto’s licensing regime, every licensed taxi must be adequately insured with commercial coverage. UberX drivers do not need to prove to Uber that they have more than personal vehicle coverage. In a serious accident, drivers and passengers could be left without coverage. Uberx users should heed the warnings of the Insurance Bureau of Canada, who issued warnings to bandit taxi drivers like UberX.

“I have been in the transportation business for 35 years. I would never let my teenage daughter get into an unlicensed and uninsured bandit taxi, would you? The current taxi rules require taxis to have commercial insurance to protect consumers.” added Zahakos.

An Ontario driver found to be operating a commercial enterprise in their personal car without paying commercial premiums could face fraud charges from their insurer if they make a claim without disclosing the commercial activity.

Is it ethical to gouge passengers during a police emergency or natural disaster? “The Uber business model world-wide is such that when you need them most they will triple or quadruple your fare” said Zahakos, referring to the tragedy in Sydney Australia yesterday when Uber fares were almost four times the rate of traditional taxi rates during the hostage crisis at a downtown cafe.

“Price gouging is not a Canadian value and it is certainly not a Toronto value. If last year’s ice storm ice storm happened again the Uber business model would triple and quadruple the taxi fares for residents trying to get to warming stations or to check on seniors to make sure they have power and heat”

Licensed and insured taxis are not allowed to quadruple fares simply because your need is higher. When customers use the Co-op app we don’t triple their fares because there is a natural disaster or police emergency. All the major licensed taxi brokerages in Toronto have a smartphone app that allows customers to order a licensed and insured cab at the tap of a finger at a set tariff.

A business built on gouging your customers in-need and putting them at risk without adequate insurance is not reflective of Canadian Values. We welcome Uber to compete in the marketplace, but that should not happen at expense of consumer safety and protection.

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Contact:
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Regular Taxi fare in Sydney Australia using a licensed insured car



TAXIFARE CALCULATOR

Home

Taxi Rates

Tour

City

Sydney ▾

From

113 Pitt Street, Sydney, New South Wales

To

Sydney Airport, New South Wales

Time

10 ▾ 01 ▾

Day

Monday ▾

Estimate Taxi Fare

Estimated Fare

**\$41.04 to
\$57.45**

Distance: 17.1 KM

Travel Time: 18 mins

For Immediate Release

Uber's free ride is coming to an end!

Co-op Cab's Campaign a Big Win as Uber Faces Crackdown Following Toronto City Council Vote

TORONTO, ON, July 9, 2015 – After months of campaigning for the City of Toronto to begin regulating Uber and enforcing its own bylaws, Toronto City Council has voted overwhelmingly in favour of reviewing the bylaws governing the taxi industry and cracking down on Uber.

City Council voted to launch the review, and the crackdown, days after Mayor John Tory held a high-profile meeting with cab companies including Co-op Cabs and representatives from Uber.

“We have been calling on the City for quite some time now to introduce one set of rules for the entire industry and to level the playing field,” says Peter Zahakos, CEO of Co-op Cabs. “And that is exactly what is about to happen. Our campaign has clearly resonated not only with the people of Toronto but also with the government. This is a big win for the riding public.”

With the slogans ***Do You Know Who's Driving You?***, and ***Friends Don't Let Friends Take Uber X***, Co-op Cabs raised questions about personal safety and the risks associated with riding in an unmarked UberX car and took a leadership position urging the city to take action against UberX.

For months UberX has been allowed to operate outside any rules. Not just the city's taxi rules but insurance rules allowing their drivers to use personal vehicles to transport passengers without proper commercial insurance.

“From the start our position has been one of concern for public safety while also pushing the city to create a level playing field so taxis can compete against new technologies,” says Zahakos. “The city has now stepped up and heard our pleas. In the coming weeks we will see new rules for the taxi industry. Mayor Tory said we will see one set of rules for all. He said this clearly and we will hold him to that. However, until we see these new rules go into place we expect law enforcement to do its job and stop UberX from operating outside the rules. “

Zahakos adds “We look forward to working with the mayor and with Uber on this new framework, and to serving Torontonians during the Pan Am Games. Thousands of athletes and tourists are here to see what we offer. Let's show them what we do best by offering safe, fast service with a smile. Again we ask our colleagues NOT to disrupt these events. We have been heard and are moving forward in a positive direction.”

Contact Information

Media Contact:

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Spokesperson, Co-op Cabs

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NEWS RELEASE – Oct. 5, 2015

Co-op Cabs Demands the City File An Injunction Against UberX

Mayor Tory Throws His Hands Up as Uber Thumbs Its Nose at the City

TORONTO, ONTARIO – October 5, 2015- Co-op Cabs is calling on the City of Toronto to stand up to the questionable tactics and illegal business practices of Uber and order an immediate injunction against UberX, the illegal ride-sharing service.

“Uber’s decision to keep operating illegally despite Council’s vote makes a mockery of our city, our regulations, and our politicians,” says Peter Zahakos, CEO of Co-op Cabs. “Where’s the political will to enforce our laws and deal with a company that continues to flaunt the law?”

Last week, city council kicked the can further down the road, deciding to delay making a decision on regulating Uber and to keep studying the issue despite having made a similar motion back in July.

Mayor John Tory even went so far as to say despite the fact UberX “operates outside the law” the city doesn’t “have the necessary resources” to go after the company.

“We see this lack of political will as a betrayal, not just of the taxi industry, but of everybody in this city,” says Zahakos. “The City has not only failed to level the playing field, but it has undermined its own authority as a regulatory body.”

“For a company to get up and say it intends to keep operating in the City of Toronto when it has just been asked to stop operations is completely unacceptable,” Zahakos says. “We have been operating legally and ethically in this city for over 55 years. And now we are being asked to compete against a company that plays dirty and has no regard for the law. We welcome competition. But where’s the level playing field?”

Uber’s business practices and disregard of the law are coming under increasing scrutiny around the world as it faces a number of legal challenges, cease and desist orders and outright bans because of its lack of safety measures, comprehensive commercial insurance, and unfair business practices.

“We are no longer willing to stand by and watch a multi-billion dollar company flaunt the law,” says Zahakos. “It is patently unfair that taxi drivers and Uber drivers can operate in the same city subject to different rules.”

“The City continues to shackle us with rules and regulations while allowing bandit companies like Uber to get away scot-free. What the City is telling Uber is it’s okay not to play by the rules, and we’ll let you continue to do so while we figure out what to do with you,” Zahakos says. “How is that leadership? This is the fourth largest city in North America, and the sixth largest government in Canada. And it’s choosing to give a free ride to a company that has shown no respect for the law.”

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