

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee](#)
Subject: Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015
Date: Thursday, 8 October 2015 2:44:25 PM

Research Director
Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee

Submission on the Private Members Bill introduced by the Member for Mt Isa MR Rob Katter MP on 16/09/2015.

General.

My wife & I have been in the Taxi Industry for over 25 years .During that time we have conscientiously implemented, upheld & maintained the operating rules as required by law. These laws have always been developed by Government or as a consequence of Government action. I have occupied various roles from that of Driver , Operator, multi owner,& investor & we now rely on the return of our investment to provide for us in our retirement. We do not receive any Government assistance & we pay income tax. Further I was deeply involved in Company management occupying the positions of Company Director & Company Chairman & I provided assistance when required on Transport Dept working parties. Naturally because we have given so much of our time & effort over time we are strongly opposed to any freelance taxi service (e g Uber) that seeks to erode our hard earned position with little or no effort.. Uber accepts none of the responsibilities and acts illegally by flaunting established laws and by taking all the benefits they can funnel their way at the expense of law abiding taxi personnel. We urge the Committee to critically examine these & other comments with an open mind & we have no doubt it will concur that Mr Katter is on the right track in trying to deter illegal Taxi Operators. It is all a matter of Law.

Facts supporting Regulated Industry.

The first regulation of the Taxi Industry was in London when freelance operators in abundance sought to ply their trade & traffic ground to a halt. Regulation was necessary then to reduce the pressure & it will be necessary here for additional unregulated taxis if they are allowed on the streets of Brisbane. Under the existing regulated model there is a fine balance that recognises demand & service without traffic disruption. Why is there a need for additional Taxis? If the Government has a problem with their laws they should change the law not flood the market with illegal taxis. It is their Law. My reading of Mr Katter's Bill is that it seeks to exercise some control over these illegal operations & we support that approach. It is all a matter of Law.

The Deputy Premier has quoted on various occasions that her Department had issued several breach notices to Uber drivers & that Fines had been applied. This has been ineffective because if the fines have been paid at all the story is that they have been paid by Uber & not the Driver. These drivers continue breaking the law seemingly without concern. Further staff from the Department has indicated that they are not pursuing Uber drivers for further breaches. Why has this been stopped? Under the Katter Bill accumulation of points will ensure that the law is followed.

Each member of the Queensland Police Force (including the Commissioner) has sworn to uphold the Laws of Qld but in the case of illegal taxis Police have not been involved in action citing that

it is a Transport matter .There are other cases where Police get involved in Transport matters & this has brought the Qld police Force into disrespect No doubt this will filter through to the masses.. If the Commissioner cannot fix it then he should resign however the Katter Bill gets around this dereliction of duty by the use of points to ensure the Law has effect.

The appeal of Uber taxis is that when compared with regulated taxis they are cheaper. Everyone wants to save money so it is not difficult to understand why they are popular in the first instance. But we have Laws in this State that have been developed over time & established by Queenslanders for Queenslanders to suit Queensland conditions They provide for an effective ,safe, clean ,cost effective & good standard of Taxi service that Queenslanders can rely on to meet their local passenger transport needs. Most of the cost difference between unregulated & regulated services can be captured in the need to meet the costs of regulation. Queenslanders generally warm to the idea of having established standards for themselves & their families particularly personal safety, vehicle safety, accredited drivers (appropriate licencing & criminal checks) & adequate training. For regulated taxis these additional services are specified by Law & their cost is recovered. For Uber because they operate outside the law the cost of these services is not included in the fare structure. Their cost structure does not reflect the additional services provided by regulated taxis.

So we have a choice, do we accept that our leaders over time were right when they opted for a regulated system developed for Queenslanders by Queenslanders ,a system that provides passenger & driver safety & security but costs more or a system that is cost cutting with little regard for the personal safety & security of our families. Currently the Law at the moment makes the decision for us which is why the Amendment Bill by Mr Katter should be allowed to proceed.

There have been recent cases of Uber Drivers reportedly being assaulted with police investigations progressing. My information tells me that the police are investigating regulated taxi drivers regarding the assaults but doing nothing about the illegal taxi operation by the Uber drivers. I can only say that while there is a system that restricts one group by Law & then allows another group to operate outside the Law with impunity then you must end up with civil unrest. The longer it goes on the worse it will get. Again Mr Katter's Bill must be allowed to proceed.

Finally one of the things being bandied about in taxi land (regulated) is the possibility of a class action by regulated taxi licence owners to recover the capital cost of licences & lost income should they be disadvantaged as a result of conforming to State Laws in purchasing licences from the State.

It seems to have popular support with advice already taken so it could proceed. The Government might wish to contest these claims & it might win but if it doesn't the cost of at least \$1.5B would break Queensland. It is time for common sense to prevail which is why illegal taxis must be removed from Queensland & the first step is to facilitate the Bill from Mr Katter.

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