

James Smart

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Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee
Parliament House
George Street
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Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to make a submission to the committee regarding the Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill. While the recording of demerit points is a step in the right direction, I believe suspension of driver's licences would be more effective in curbing illegal taxi services. Because the corporation that is administering most of these services is worth more than fifty billion US dollars, fines have been ineffective and legitimate taxi drivers are still suffering as a result.

I also feel that policing of existing laws is inadequate. Despite almost two million dollars in fines being issued, there seems to be little or no action on this front. Those in charge of the mobile application that dispatches so called "ridesharing" in this state may be able to ascertain the account information of compliance officers and possibly the IP addresses of the devices used in sting operations. This effectively means that unless multiple accounts on multiple devices are used alongside software like VPNs to disguise the location of the user, undercover operations will be useless. I believe that Queensland Police should be able to issue infringement notices and fines to those providing services in breach of the Passenger Transport Act and that the administration of such services should also be an offence.

The major reasons the public is citing for using ridesharing are price, convenience, not having to pay eftpos fees and the ability to see the driver's name and picture. While enforcement of the law is important, at the same time taxis need serious and radical reform. While I understand that this particular bill is in regard to the penalties associated with the operation of an illegal passenger service, I believe they will be effectively useless at assisting legitimate taxi drivers unless sweeping changes are made to the existing cab industry.

In summary, while I believe the recording of demerit points will go some way into curbing illegal passenger services, suspension of licences may be more effective. Furthermore, these changes will not assist taxi drivers unless sweeping reforms to the cab industry are made. I hope you can take my suggestions into consideration and I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours Faithfully

James Smart