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21st October 2015

Research Director  
Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Sir/Madam

**Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015**

**Reason for this Submission:** This submission is written in support of the above Bill which has been tabled as an amendment to existing legislation in order to provide for the recording of demerit points against individuals' driving licences for operating taxi services without a taxi service licence (TSL) or peak demand taxi permit.

**Background to the Bill:** This Bill came about as a result of illegal taxi services operating in Queensland in complete disregard of Queensland law, namely the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 (TOPTA). These illegal taxi services are specifically designed to operate outside the law.

**My Background as a Taxi Proprietor:** My taxi vehicles are affiliated with the Yellow Cabs booking company. I am a member of the Yellow Owners' Association. I back Yellow Cabs management in the support it provides to its affiliated members in all matters.

**Legal Taxis are Accredited and Licensed:** Legal taxis are required to comply with TOPTA which exists for the safety and protection of passengers. Over the years, the taxi industry has worked with the Transport Department to mandate a reliable and safe passenger service. Legal taxis these days are fitted with hard-wired security cameras and GPS which cannot be switched off by the driver; taxi booking companies have the ability to track any of their cars; legal taxis are clearly marked for immediate identification whereas illegal taxis operate in the shadows without any identifying markings and without any of the safeguards offered by legal taxis. Legal taxis are required to have taxi CTP at great expense. Taxi vehicle insurance is also very different to insuring a private car. Legal taxi booking companies look after passengers with disabilities at any time of the day or night. Legal taxis are predominantly newer vehicles. In accordance with tax law, legal taxis are GST-compliant from the first dollar a driver earns.

Taxi booking companies are always embracing new technology and the Queensland taxi industry leads the world in the way it does business. The maximum fares of legal taxis are mandated by regulation. If the illegals are allowed to prosper, fare levels will increase beyond the mandated maximum. The community therefore cannot afford illegal taxis. This Bill will provide significant disincentive to drivers of illegal taxis to cease their illegal activities.

**Summary:** Illegal taxis provide none of the service or back-up mentioned above. It is requested that the IPNRC consider that illegal taxis, by whatever name, are outlaw private vehicles acting as taxis and by their deceptive, illegal and unfair mode of operation they are placing the travelling public in danger and putting more cars onto our already congested roads. They are competing for scarce kerbside space and stealing from law-abiding taxi drivers. The viable number of taxi licences permitted by TMR from time to time is arrived at by TMR using a proven formula and to expect a population to support so many additional and potentially unsafe private cars masquerading as taxis makes a complete mockery of Queensland law. The Queensland Government owes it to the public to support its own laws by enforcing them.

**Conclusion:** Until the review into point-to-point passenger transport services in Queensland is complete and its findings implemented, the illegal taxis must be stopped and the identified best way to stop these illegal activities is to pass this Bill. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

**A. James** (signed)  
Taxi Proprietor