

Statement in Support of Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015.

Personal History

- I own a taxi licence and lease it through B&W Cabs. Retiring from 20 years employment with Telstra, I used all my savings and termination payments to buy the licence in 1993 (22 years ago).
- I purchased this licence to provide a modest income without becoming a taxi driver. That way, I could be a stay at home Mum, something that doesn't happen too often, even 22 years ago.
- I also had the view that as I entered my retirement years, this taxi licence could continue to provide me with an income as a self-funded retiree.
- In all, a significant financial investment in my future.
- I lease my licence for \$31,800 per annum, a low income, out of which I pay the following annual costs:-
 - Operator accreditation fee to Queensland Government \$165.20
 - Taxi service licence \$ 165.60
 - Taxi industry security levy \$373.95

Impact on me/my family

- I turned 60 this year and currently have the licence up for sale to roll it over into my superannuation fund to become a self funded retiree, and not a burden on the pension and health care system, even though I have worked and paid taxes since I was 17, and am still paying them. The erosion of my licence value certainly affects that ability. Licence sales are not doing well at the moment because of the illegal Uber taxi business.
- Illegal taxies have devalued my licence, and have put my superannuation, income and financial future in jeopardy.
- Illegal taxies are cheaper because they do not have to recoup the high costs of putting a legal taxi on the road, thereby enjoying a much bigger profit margin. In addition to the purchase cost of the licence itself, there is the much higher Transport (registration) charge and higher public liability insurance charges. Although I don't pay some of these costs directly myself, the flow on effects are certainly reflected in my lease payments.
- The high costs associated with legitimate taxies are avoided by the Uber drivers operating their vehicles as Private Use Vehicles. It comes as no surprise that by purporting to be a "ride sharing" facility, their fares can be lower; without these charges, the conventional taxi fares could also be substantially lowered.
- We are told by government that we need to "pull in our belts" to get this country out of debt. Illegal taxies are adding to this problem by not paying income taxes, as we have done all our lives.

Industry Facts

- One of the Qld Government's objectives is for "taxi standards to provide a high level of safety for the taxi industry and the people of Queensland." An

example is the security camera systems that are compulsory in every operating taxi.

- The Qld Taxi industry is self-sufficient, paying its own way and operating by very strict regulations determined by the Government.
- The Queensland Government has determined the high level of service it requires for taxis to operate in order to move the public wanting door to door (point to point) transport.
- Licences are released by the Queensland Government in a tender process – the prices determined by the Queensland Government. The issuing of further licence numbers is made when data input from all participants shows the current numbers need increasing; taxi numbers are directly proportional to the population figures.
- Tariff and fare pricing is determined by the Queensland Government such that passengers pay a fair price based on running costs, tariffs and a minimum wage for drivers.

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- Until the Taxi Industry Review (due August 2016) is completed illegal taxis must not be allowed to further erode the legal taxi operations in Queensland.
- The proposal to increase certain penalties in the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 will deter illegal taxi operators. By recording demerit points against the traffic history of a person who provides a taxi service without a taxi service licence or a peak demand taxi permit, drivers will be penalised for their actions – a penalty that cannot be transferred to another individual or be absorbed by another organisation.

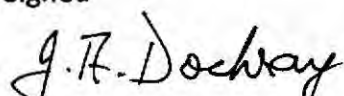
Conclusion

The Queensland government is failing the people in the Queensland taxi industry, who have continued to operate within the legislation laid down by this government.

The Queensland government is also failing the people of Queensland by allowing the operation of Uber's illegal taxi service which does not provide a high level of safety nor conform to any other rules set down in the Transport Legislation.

I urge the Queensland Parliament to vote in favour of this Bill. While it will not put an end to illegal taxi operations, it will be the first step in deterring illegal taxi drivers from operating in an unfair and unregulated fashion.

Signed



Joy Anne Dockray (Mrs)

22/10/15