

David Hughes



21 October 2015

Submission to Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee

Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015

Firstly, I would like to congratulate the Katter Australia Party for taking a stand and supporting this Bill Amendment.

I have been a Taxi Service Licence owner and operator for the last 8 years and pride myself on providing a vital service as part of the On-Demand Point to Point Public Transport system.

During this time, myself, the various drivers supporting me along with the Booking Company I have been associated with, have been required to adhere to a very strict regulated environment. A simple internet search will provide a good history on why regulations exist; they are there to protect the passenger.

Protection for the passenger is mostly viewed from a safety point of view. Whilst this is ultimately a very important aspect, protection should also be viewed from the point of;

- Access to a reliable, on demand, point to point transport
- Known regulated fare structures
- Government inspected vehicles
- Government approved drivers
- Discrimination in all its forms
- Access for all, not just people with a smart phone and a credit card

Illegal Taxis have always existed to the detriment of existing law abiding operators. This Bill Amendment simply gives the government more ways to impose the law as it currently stands.

As you would be aware 'uber' and their drivers over the last few years have become the most visible and vocal provider of illegal taxis. I say vocal because the spin doctors at uber are in permanent overdrive.

Some very important points I think should be considered when looking at uber and the current Qld taxi industry;

- New Technology – Qld Taxi booking companies had similar apps 12 months before uber's arrival in Australia
- uber fares are cheaper – In an unregulated environment anyone could offer cheaper services. You only have to travel to some overseas countries to see what a circus unregulated taxi services have become, The current court battle between uber and the ATO over GST and uber's recent disclosures on company tax highlight this point; is this what we want for Qld and Australia?
- Access for all – Taxi Fleets in Qld are required to provide services 24 Hours a Day, 7 Days a week to everyone. "Everyone" includes the disabled, elderly and disadvantaged, not just someone with an app.
- Safety – Who is driving who and in what?

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I trust this submission along with the many others from like-minded individuals and organisations will clear away the smoke and mirrors put up by uber and its many so called supporters. From what I have seen and studied in the history of the Taxi Industry world wide, theoretical economists never take into account human nature.

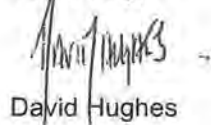
Human nature and greed will always take over. Whilst I think the majority of people are good decent citizens, I'm afraid some are not and that's a fact, I do not need to labour this point. Where does it end if the likes of uber are allowed to continue unimpeded? We already have copy cat drivers not associated with uber prowling the streets preying on the public and the government seem to be unwilling or unable to stop them.

I encourage the committee to "do their homework" so to say, look at what's been happening around the world, look deeply into uber's media propaganda. Uber say they want sensible regulation where in fact they want and insist on zero regulation. Study which countries have taken a stand and outlawed them and why!

Queensland has a world class On Demand Point to Point Public Transport Service, which improves day by day thanks to it's law abiding members. Are we willing to pick up the various Acts, Legislation and Regulations and throw them away because some multinational foreign company tells us we will be better off? I ask you, how does predatory surge pricing make us better off? While only providing a service when it's busy whilst leaving out our most vulnerable behind, not to mention tax avoidance.

I trust you will come to the only just conclusion and recommend the government support this amendment.

Yours truly,



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