

Dear Sir/Madam

I am taking the opportunity to express my sincere reservations about the ongoing illegal taxi service and the international company facilitating their activity in Queensland. Their actions have disturbed the taxi industry and even more perturbed law abiding professionals associated with it.

The legal, regulated Queensland taxi industry provides work for thousands of Queenslanders – driving taxis, operating taxis, managing the function of taxis and much more. This entire legal industry is now in dire straits.

I have been involved in the taxi industry for over 40 years. The industry has supported my family extending to three generations. More recently, I paid all of my savings and borrowed to pay over \$1.2 million dollars for three Queensland Government taxi licences.

I am devastated and sickened by the prospect of worthless licences. I cannot sell my licences without suffering an immense loss. I cannot lease my licences as the income has been reduced by 40% and there are no leasees willing to take responsibility for a taxi. I cannot run the taxis myself as I am old and no longer have the physical capability; and drivers no longer want to drive legal, regulated taxis as their income has been eroded so far that the costs outweigh the income they make.

As an owner of legal cabs, I find it absolutely imperative that an immediate and concrete step has to be taken at the state level. This is a Queensland Government imposed regulated taxi industry – they are responsible for ensuring this industry is not destroyed.

Illegal taxis, their operators and the international company that facilitates their activity, contribute nothing to our Queensland State purse. Contrastingly, our legal, regulated taxi industry contributes well over \$25 million dollars to the Queensland State Government every year. The owners, operators, clients and professionals of the legal and regulated contribute to our state of Queensland. We do not have a choice about our overheads, tariffs and expenses set by the Queensland Government. On the other hand, the illegal taxis can run with absolutely no costs or repercussions.

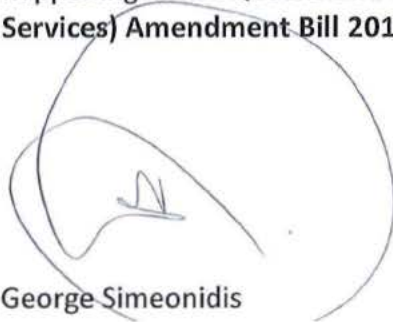
I am outraged that the Queensland Government has taken little to no action against the illegal industry to date. I am outraged that the Queensland Government has stopped fining the illegal taxi drivers. I am outraged that the Queensland Government is ignoring the blatant defamation of the legal taxi industry meanwhile publicly publicising and falsely advertising their illegal taxi services.

The Queensland Government who sets the laws, makes the regulations and then forces legal taxi drivers and owners to follow them is responsible for fixing this disaster before it is irreversible.

My family and I have never relied on the Government for support. Now I am facing the prospect of total dependence on all Government systems to survive in my retirement.

Measures must be taken to ensure that illegal taxi drivers are personally penalised in a way that will make them pay for operating illegal taxis and providing an illegal taxi service.

I ask the Queensland State Parliament to see the inequity of what is currently happening in the Queensland taxi industry – **pass this Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, loopy 'G' followed by 'eorge Simeonidis'. The signature is written over a faint circular outline.

George Simeonidis