

I am writing in support of the Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015 to increase certain penalties in the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994. I understand that this measure is intended to act as a deterrent to illegal taxi operators by providing for the recording of 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.

My wife, Nicole and I, made a decision in 2007 to buy a taxi licence through the Queensland Government tender process. This was not a decision we made lightly; we carefully researched our options and were reassured by the Queensland Government's highly regulated and legislated approach to the taxi industry.

This purpose for this purchase was three-fold: (1) the taxi provided me with my employment; (2) the taxi income subsidised our living and independent-retirement; and (3) we could look to this as an asset to hand down to our children on our passing.

Our plans have been somewhat foiled by my unexpected diagnosis with cancer in July 2015. Since this time, we have attempted to sell the taxi with no prospects to date.

Instead, the taxi licence we purchased is now a financial, emotional and psychological imposition to us as we face the growing-threat of illegal taxis and their facilitator in Queensland.

As a taxi owner I am implicitly aware of the impacts that the growing illegal taxi service:

- (1) Reduced income due to over supply of taxi service providers (illegal taxis taking jobs)
- (2) Depreciation of taxi licence value – arguably negligible at present due to investor confidence
- (3) Public confidence erosion by defamation campaign of Queensland Government taxi industry providers by illegal taxi service facilitator
- (4) Personal struggle due to inaction by the Queensland Government who have legislated and regulated the industry

To date, no measures have been taken by the Queensland Police to enforce the laws set by the Queensland Government and Queensland Government TMR operations to fine illegal taxi drivers have ceased. The Queensland Government's own Cease and Desist Order is blatantly being ignored also. False branding and advertising of the illegal taxi industry portraying the service as an acceptable public transport system and a viable small business for Queenslanders is further propagating what is quickly becoming an illegal racket.

I am personally affected by this illegal taxi invasion in Queensland. I cannot sell my taxi and my income is drastically reduced. I am reliant on these options to assist me in my medical treatment and to support my young family through my uncertain future.

Although the reasons are different, the illegal taxi providers are affecting every Queensland Government taxi licence holder. If this issue continues to be ignored by inaction by the Queensland Government, compensation of psychological, emotional and financial stress must be a consideration for the Queensland Government.

The Queensland Government imposes many regulations which are enforceable by law. Taxi drivers and owners in Queensland abide by all of these regulations, at an huge financial cost, as the alternative is hefty fines and suspension of licences and vehicles.

The Queensland Government that has imposed these regulations and laws is obligated to apply these laws across the entire industry – including illegal taxis. The legislation and regulations have been developed and refined over many decades with the ultimate goal of protecting the public.

This **Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015** represents the first positive action towards addressing this growing issue by the Queensland Government. The Bill requires that the Queensland Government enforce the laws they have set for the taxi industry by addressing the issue of illegal taxi drivers. While this will not address all the issues faced by legal and regulated taxis in Queensland, it is a measure that will help restore some confidence amongst the Queensland Taxi Industry that is in an immeasurable, economic crisis.

I urge the Queensland Parliament to support the **Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015**.



Manuel Carracedo