

20th October 2015

I am writing in support of the Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015.

I am a proud Queensland taxi licence owner of 8 years. Prior to moving to Australia in 1999, I was a professional teacher and had also enjoyed a career in tourism. When I immigrated to Australia, I was unable to work in the profession I was trained for without further study that I was unable to afford. After driving for many years, I put my savings into a taxi licence which I bought in 2007. I have been working 12 hour shifts on this taxi licence, 7 days a week, to help pay off this my first investment and to support my young family including one daughter.

I do not own a home; I own a Queensland Government regulated taxi. I am a proud taxi driver that provides Queensland's disabled community with a taxi service. I have put my life, efforts and savings into this taxi and undertake this in a lawful and honest manner.

In the last year, there has been an increasing number of illegal taxis, disguised as digital technology ridesharing, providing an illegal, unlicensed service. This by passes all Government-enforced laws, rules and regulations and acting in a manner that suits their own purposes.

In law-abiding, democracy of Australia, it is hard to believe that this attack on our laws is underway.

My horror and disbelief at the Queensland Government's inaction is widespread amongst my peers. It is promoting the attempts by usual, law-abiding taxis to undertake illegal activities of taking fares 'off the books' and off the record. The Government's inaction is creating a culture of law-breaking and illegal activities that is destroying the taxi industry in Queensland.

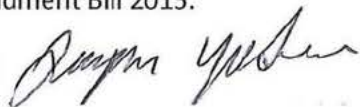
Since the emergence of illegal taxis in Queensland, the work available has been drastically reduced. My takings in the last financial year have been cut by 40% and it has become extremely difficult to keep drivers with such a shortage of work opportunities and low work levels. Taxis are released on the market according to the requirements of the population – and illegal taxis are now taking away the opportunities from legal, regulation-abiding taxis.

I am facing bankruptcy – the loss of my taxi in value and work will leave me unable to provide for my family and pay off my taxi.

This Bill presents the first measure by the Government to help control the illegal taxi operations. By applying demerit points to individuals undertaking the illegal activities, it will make illegal taxi drivers reconsider their actions which are unfair and unregulated.

I ask the Queensland Parliament to consider the families and the individuals whose lives and livelihoods are at stake to please consider carefully and support the Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015.

Yours sincerely



Ramazan Yildirim