

Monday 10/04/17

Peter Bonaventura

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Research Director
Transportation and Utilities Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: SUBMISSION TO THE TRANSPORT AND OTHER LEGISLATION (PERSONALISED TRANSPORT REFORM)
AMENDMENT BILL 2017**

My name is Peter Bonaventura and I am a Taxi owner/operator in the Mackay area and I thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission. I wish to support wholeheartedly the submission put forward by the Taxi Council Queensland which represent the specific actions that I wish to see the Government take in terms of amending the legislation. I have attached a copy of their summary to my submission.

Furthermore I wish to let you know how the recent changes to the Taxi industry in Qld have affected me. It is in the form of a letter I was trying to write to send to all the members of Parliament but I believe it covers some of the areas that this bill will affect.

I began driving taxis in 2001. I enjoy driving and talking to people and listening to music and the radio. Taxi driving offered me all of that, plus more. In 2006 my wife and I bought our own licence, a dual wheelchair accessible maxi taxi. We believed that we were making an investment in our future as the taxi industry was a heavily regulated industry and the value of Taxi licences were similar to the value of buying a house and would rise and fall just like house prices did and when it came time to retire our taxi licence would form part of our superannuation plans. That's all gone now. I'm shattered that by the stroke of a pen my future could be thrown into disarray. How could the government just abandon thousands of hard working fellow Queenslanders in favour of an overseas multinational? I'm feeling unwell just writing this.

But even more frightening than the capitulation to Uber it's the opening up of the taxi like industry to any Tom, Dick or Harry. Yes anyone can now go out get a driver's authority, a safety certificate for his car, hand out his phone number and bingo he can start running people about. My goodness how can that be safe? Even uber have some checks on their drivers. My Taxi has fulltime GPS tracking, four cameras, commercial insurance, commercial rego and I'm answerable to Mackay Taxis. These Weekend cowboys have no tracking, no cameras, ordinary insurance and rego and no body to answer too. Why has this been allowed to happen? If there is going to be regulation to control this, why wasn't it put into place before the gate was opened. Talk about putting the cart before the horse. Also I collect and pay GST on every ride, what are ridesharing doing. Every GST dollar that is not paid to the ATO is a dollar unavailable to be returned to the States. Every Rideshare driver must be Registered for GST.

I was quietly confident that the Labor Party would stand up to this multinational bully but the result has been devastating. With the changes announced that started on the 5th September 2016 the value of my licence has dropped by my estimate over \$200 000. If I could find someone willing to buy my licence today it's worth the value of my share in Mackay Taxi Holdings. It should be around \$250 - \$300 thousand.

The following is an analogy I gave to Mr Varghese when he was in Mackay on Monday 30th May 2016 during a face to face consultation forum discussing feedback on his Green paper. It was in relation to a discussion on compensation to the taxi industry if deregulation was brought in. I said "my taxi licence is like owing a home and how would you like it if someone came along and bulldozed your house to the ground and then offered you \$20 000 to make up for it" And that is just what has happened. How would you like it?

The new rules talk about a level playing field, sadly it is far from it. Safety has gone out the window;

No Photo Display cards.

Much higher Rego fees for Taxis.

No Separately wired GPS tracking.

No highly distinguishable uniform signage (we have two:- T rego plates and Hail light)

I also have public Liability insurance which rideshare should have.

I pay GST so they must be made too also otherwise Queensland misses out on the Dollars it brings in.

The one thing that is the same that shouldn't be is that we all have to wear seatbelts. I feel my safety is being put at risk by making me have to wear a seat belt especially when I pick up from a rank and my taxi booking company has no record of who the customer is, name phone details etc.

Thank you and again I wish to reiterate my support for the submission put forward by the Taxi Council Queensland

Peter Bonaventura

Extract from Queensland Taxi Council Submission

To address the fatal flaws of the Bill and Regulations and ensure all Queenslanders have access to reliable, safe and accountable personalised transport in a level playing field, a number of fundamental changes are required. The following points are of equal importance and in no particular order:

1. Establish an independent Personalised Transport Commission with legislative amendment, policing/enforcement, regulatory and policy development capacity.
2. Bailment Agreements must be retained, with the minimum work conditions and standards for all personalised transport drivers enshrined in legislation.
3. Security Camera requirements must establish a minimum standard, be consistent and uniform across all personalised transport providers to ensure the safety of all drivers and passengers (regardless of the service chosen) and to meet Queensland Police requirements.
4. Commercial-grade, anti-tamper GPS units must be fixed to all personalised transport vehicles and be remotely accessible to authorised parties.
5. All personalised transport vehicles to have emergency systems in place to support driver safety.
6. The Bill and Regulation must be fully consistent with all other relevant legislation including, but not limited to, disability discrimination and work, health and safety.
7. All personalised transport vehicles be required to have dedicated number plates (akin to "T" plates), rather than easily removable stickers. Plates to be provided only when evidence of appropriate CTP, public liability and certificate of inspection are provided.
8. Immediately define, and establish appropriate and equitable premiums for, the class/classes of Compulsory Third Party insurance for all personalised transport providers to address continued uncertainty.
9. All personalised transport providers must hold public liability insurance to prevent the State Government becoming the default insurer and to minimise potential risks to the community.
10. In the absence of vehicle age restrictions, establish clear vehicle quality and usage rate standards and hold operators accountable.
11. Increase licence fees for Booked Hire Service Drivers and Authorised Entities to help fund expected increases in regulatory and enforcement costs for Government and to better reflect the level of "trust" being placed on licence holders.
12. All drivers must have an ABN and be registered for GST before receiving a Drivers Authorisation.
13. The Government must establish a process for managing the risks of multiple affiliations by drivers in terms of both "chain of responsibility" and fatigue management. This includes drivers operating across both personalised transport and other transport (i.e. truck, bus) sectors.
14. Fully integrate taxis into the GoCard public transport network in the short-term.
15. Clearly define what constitutes a "hail" and "touting".
16. Expressly prohibit the establishment and operation of Booked Hire Service pick up/and drop off zones, on public and private land, which represent pseudo taxi ranks.
17. Establish and maintain a register of drivers that have been disaffiliated or removed from platforms to prevent drivers from simply shifting to a new platform.
18. Establish clear and enforceable requirements for Government access to all data related to the delivery of personalised transport services in Queensland.
19. Expressly identify Police Check requirements in the Bill for all personalised transport drivers as part of Driver Authorization approval.
20. Maintain the capacity of the Minister to enter into Service Contracts at their discretion to ensure the Government has the capacity to respond quickly, and at the lowest cost, to changing or unique circumstances without the need for regulatory or legislative changes.

Failure to make these required changes will result in the Queensland Taxi Industry withholding its support for the proposed Bill and Regulations.