

Communication from Public

Name: Taxi Workers Association of Los Angeles
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Council File No: 19-0104-S1
Comments for Public Posting: Taxi Workers Association of Los Angeles Supports
Martinez-O'Farrell Advertising Pilot

February 29, 2020

Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Taxi Workers Association of Los Angeles Supports Martinez-O'Farrell Advertising Pilot

Dear Los Angeles City Council Members:

We are writing to express our strong support for Councilmembers Martinez and O'Farrell's motion to establish a pilot for taxis to display digital rooftop advertising. We believe this pilot provides the potential for a critical source of supplemental income for our members.

Rideshare drivers are already earning up to 15% of their income through advertising partnerships with more being planned in the near future. Some Uber and Lyft drivers are earning as much as \$300 a month. Taxi drivers should be afforded the same opportunity.

Our drivers face many challenges – many due to unfair competition from the largely unregulated rideshare industry. This un-level playing field harms our livelihood and has only become worse with the recent decision to end curbside pick-up at LAX. We had already lost about 50% of our tips since Uber and Lyft began operating at LAX and this decision has resulted in further reduction of pickups by another 50%.

We ask that the Council not further jeopardize our livelihoods by prohibiting something you already allow by law. Rooftop advertising is not a new concept. Earlier this decade, digital signs on taxis were inspected and approved by the Los Angeles Department of Transportation and operated on the street for years. The California Vehicle Code allows drivers to install lighting displays if they comply with a number of different requirements. Board of Taxicab Commissioners Rule 415(c) also allows for advertisements on taxicabs. There is no reason why taxis in Los Angeles can't join taxis in other markets – New York City, San Francisco, Chicago and Dallas – in benefitting from digital rooftop advertising. The Martinez -O'Farrell motion will help us put food on our table. This is a pro-worker initiative that the Council must do the right thing and pass. Digital rooftop advertising will help us support our families and keep our industry alive. Please consider our industry's survival and move this motion forward.

Sincerely, Leon Slomovic

President, Los Angeles Taxi Workers Association