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PORT AUTHORITY OF NY & NJ
PUBLIC HEARING
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JFK Airport
Queens, New York

July 30, 2019
7:00 p.m.

BEFORE:

Michael Farbiarz, Hearing Officer and General
Counsel

K O'Toole, Commissioner

G McDonald, Commissioner

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MR. FARBIARZ: Ladies and gentlemen, it's 7:00. We'll get started. Thank you all for being here. My name is Michael Farbiarz. I'm the general counsel of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and I'll be serving as tonight's hearing officer. With me to my immediate right, Chairman Kevin O'Toole, and to his right is Commissioner George McDonald. They're members of the Board of Commissioners of the Port Authority. That's the agency's governing body.

Two distinct purposes for this evening's public hearing: First, to get comments on certain proposed adjustments to Port Authority tolls, and fares, and fees. And second, to get comments on proposed changes to the Port Authority's Capital Plan, 2017-2026 Capital Plan.

Now, for the sake of convenience the various proposed adjustments separate, distinct though they are described in a single video. You're going to see that video in a few minutes. The video is also

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going to be playing outside in kind of a continuous loop so you can pop out and take a look at this anytime you want to.

In addition to the video, all of the various proposed adjustments are described in written materials that are out by the front door. Comments today will be limited to three minutes per person. The commissioners are hear to listen. There won't be a back-and-forth this evening. If you need to convey more than a few more minutes to elaborate, no problem, a couple of ways to do that. First, we have a set of iPads outside so that you can write comments, elaborate further if you'd like. And in addition, our website has an opportunity to provide any comments you want to until September 13th. Our website is PANYNJ.gov.

All the comments that are going to be made here tonight are going to be transcribed by a stenographer and summarized by the Port Authority staff so that the full board of commissioners in

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addition to the commissioners physically present will have the benefit of hearing your comments. We have an American Sign Language interpreter here as well as a Spanish translator here if those are useful to you.

What I'm going to do is I'm going to call people up to the microphones to speak for those three minutes in the order that they've signed in. So if you're in the room and if at any point you decide you'd like to speak, just pop outside if you could, sign in, and then I'll be able to call you up for comments. So the video is going to play now and then we'll start with the comments. Thanks.

(Video is being played.)

MR. FARBIARZ: With the video wrapped up we're now going to be calling speakers up. Just a reminder in the room if you didn't hear before, there are sign up sheets outside so if you'd like to speak, please just sign up and then come forward. First speaker, Cliff Adler.

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MR ADLER: Good evening. I'm a taxi driver. I've been driving for 44 years. I used to have my own medallion until I lost it a couple of years ago. This new proposal for charging \$4 for drop-offs and pick-ups for the Yellow cab is my concern. By the way, it's not for car services because it's not be my business, but for Yellow cabs have had enough trouble, as I'm sure you heard about, for the last several years, and too many guys have lost their medallions to the fact whether it's direct or indirect losing between financial institutions and so on, that have just jacked up their prices and then guys been unable to make their payments and so on. What's also created an a number of suicides, which I believe honestly is go on even more.

This \$4 is not going to help the Yellow cab industry at all. The last few years we had just a fare with no increases on the meters, then they started off with a 50 cent increase for the MTA, then they

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2 raised it to a dollar. The TLC was another
3 30 cents and now more of the congestion
4 pricing add, so on. When you start a fare
5 now people are going crazy saying we are
6 getting all this extra money. They don't
7 understand it is not a fare increase. It
8 is fees and charges by the city and the
9 state. So when you got into a cab right
10 now, their starting -- the fares all on \$6
11 okay, no, it's more than \$6 now. If you
12 add another \$4 on top of that before they
13 have gone one foot, it's going to be a \$10
14 fare to even start the taxi ride. This is
15 going to be an impossible burden for the
16 taxi drivers and we're losing enough in
17 fares between the car services. We're
18 losing enough in fares because of the
19 additions put onto the fares. We're losing
20 a lot of our short fares especially. If
21 you do this at the airports, it is
22 basically going to kill us. I don't know
23 what else I can tell you right now. Thank
24 you.

25 MR. FARBIARZ: Galina Kaminiker.

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MS. KAMINIKER: Hi. My name is Galina Kaminiker. I am a taxi owner of Yellow cab and I'm here to protest the \$4 pick-up fee. As a gentleman in front of me said that, as you all know the taxi industry suffered a lot. Our numbers went down and fees went up. When we purchase the Yellow cab we said there was agreement with the Port Authority and everybody else that we bought the exclusive rights to pick up and drop off and that was all part of the medallion price that we paid. And now when the industry in such crisis, we are now charged with another \$4. It's going to kill us. I mean, I think people who is going to make that their decision, sorry I'm not meaning anything personal, but you're going to be killers, killers to the industry, killers to the people who already died, who are going to die. Plus when you say you adopt it from LA, LA probably doesn't Yellow -- I mean whatever cabs they have there, they don't have the \$2.50 surcharge that are currently implemented on

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2 us. They don't have a 50 cent MTA taxes
3 that's been also and 30 cents for
4 wheelchair. They don't have all of this.
5 When people are getting the cab, they don't
6 have 5.50 already on their meter. So plus,
7 you know, Port Authority took away our spot
8 on the airports. I'm sure you aware of it
9 that Uber is actually in the front row
10 where Yellow is somewhere, who knows where,
11 nobody sees us people, really.

12 My husband is a driver. He says
13 people cannot see Yellow cabs on the
14 airports. They have to take bus or
15 whatever. Something that we paid to have
16 exclusive rights and we lost that right.
17 So I don't know how fair that all is. But
18 we lost our spot. We lost our spot at
19 LaGuardia. And I'm more than sure you are
20 aware that Uber now picks up at the
21 drop-off area. Somehow Port Authority
22 police are not doing anything and it's all
23 part of the TLC rules. I'm more than sure,
24 you know, that the Port Authority is aware
25 of it. So we are -- we're here. I never

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2 thought I will be here to plead. I'm
3 pleading, begging, whatever you call it.
4 Taxi industry, if you're part of New York
5 City, you have to exclude us because we
6 lost our rights. We lost our privileges.
7 Uber takes over -- it's 13,000 cabs. I
8 don't think there is 13,000 on the market
9 driving around. So you putting \$4 for -- I
10 don't know, 10,000, 5,000, I don't know how
11 many active would that make changes for
12 you. Meanwhile, it will save thousands of
13 lives, families. And -- but you should
14 look at the FHC cars, how they do business
15 because they disobey all rules. They pick
16 up where we're not allowed to pick up.
17 They somehow do the pairing, I don't know
18 what that is. Plus in the city, you're
19 also taking away the waiting line for taxis
20 we are not -- okay. Sorry.

21 MR. FARBIARZ: Lorenzo Curtis.

22 MR. CURTIS: Good evening. My name
23 is Lorenzo Curtis. I'm a Local 3
24 electrician and I'm speaking in favor of
25 the changes, speaking in favor of the

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2 changes because I've directly been able to
3 see some of the funds that are in these
4 plans go to work. I've seen bridges, these
5 new bridges be built like the Goethels
6 Bridge. I've seen work be done inside the
7 Path train when they've brought cell phone
8 service down so that we'll be able to use
9 our phones underneath the ground. I've
10 seen work be done down at the Trade Center
11 that I've been directly a part of. In the
12 past, I may have been upset, disgruntled by
13 the change on tolls and things of that
14 nature, but that only would have been lack
15 of knowledge, lack of understanding of what
16 is actually taking place. And I've been
17 able to understand these things and be part
18 of it by reading the literature that's been
19 put out before today and things that's
20 given to us out in the lobby before coming
21 in. So as a Local 3 electrician, I stand
22 in favor.

23 MR. FARBIARZ: Tamara Vishnyakova.

24 MS. VISHNYAKOVA: Hello everybody.

25 My name is Tamara Vishnyakova. I'm the

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2 owner of taxi fleet. What I want to tell
3 you, I don't owe city a dime, any bank, any
4 broker and still my medallion is in big
5 huge problem because for exclusive rights
6 when I bought the medallions, I pay
7 hundreds thousands of the dollars. What
8 happened to my business now? It's taken
9 away. It's taken away by Uber. It's taken
10 away by Lyft.

11 Yellow taxi business reminds now a
12 milk cow. Everybody wants the milk from
13 the Yellow taxi but nobody wants to feed
14 us. All our exclusive rights, all our
15 privileges are taken away from us. We
16 cannot pick up in LaGuardia, in JFK by Port
17 Authority in convenient places. Everything
18 is taking away from us. What we are
19 getting in exchange? Nothing. So I don't
20 want to talk a lot of because my friend,
21 Galina, explain you all this problems that
22 we have now. Just I want to ask you,
23 please take away those charges, \$4. It
24 will be too much on our back. It will be
25 too much. We are dying. We are dying from

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2 heart attacks. We are dying from
3 depression. Them ears, drivers and owners
4 Yellow business didn't ask for it,
5 increase. Why do you think? Because they
6 are scared it will kill our business. Have
7 you ever heard people don't want check
8 increase? Everyone wants money but we are
9 not asking for money. We are just asking,
10 please don't kill us. Don't kill us
11 completely. Thank you.

12 MR. FARBIARZ: Nino Hervias.

13 MR. HERVIAS: Good afternoon,
14 Commissioners. My name is Nino Hervias. I
15 am a medallion owner/driver for last
16 35 years. I just wanted to know something,
17 I'm against this new surcharge toward
18 Yellow cab drivers -- I mean Yellow taxi
19 industry. The actions of the state, of the
20 city, along with the Taxi Commission have
21 brought consequences to the taxi industry,
22 suicide, dozen of fatal heart attacks,
23 thousands of bankruptcies filed. And
24 people who are really in favor, and I
25 understand also if I benefit from this new

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2 surcharges, but you have to understand that
3 we already paid the price to have the
4 right, privileges and rights to service
5 every airport and every NYC -- why they
6 doing this to us? Everybody knows and it's
7 in the news every day now that we are
8 dying. We own the business right now
9 gaining one or two more fares a day, not
10 losing. The more surcharges that
11 passengers see, the less willingness they
12 have to take a taxi.

13 Something else, I see this as a
14 platform once for all the beginning to
15 engage to the Port Authority commissioners,
16 something you have to know. We all know
17 that Uber and nobody likes, they sort of
18 the like black cars and they are
19 prearranged. Therefore, my question to you
20 is: Why they haven't allow to wait on
21 airport facilities when in fact they have
22 to be prearranged and then come and pick up
23 their passengers, but not waiting inside
24 the facilities? Yellow cabs are the
25 official taxi of New York City and have

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been well known in the state by the previous administration. What is going on today? I don't know. But we have to find out who is following whose orders up here. I mean, it is about time that we get this right.

And also, my last point, that there's so many, I believe Port Authority police officer, they have been instructed on enforcing Port Authority rules including Yellow cabs, no one is allowed to pick up at level departures, whether it be LaGuardia, Kennedy, or Newark Airport. Especially at Newark Airport we have noticed and we have videos that New York City Uber cars are picking up at departure levels up there, unthinkable. So I mean, we going to get back to you. There's so much to talk about that three minutes is not enough. But I want to thank you for this opportunity.

MR. FARBIARZ: Senator Comrie.

SENATOR COMRIE: Good evening. I'm Leroy Comrie, New York Senator New York

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2 City 14 Center District. I'm also the
3 chair of the Senate Standing Committee on
4 corporations, authorities, and commissions.
5 And as a representative of many hardworking
6 constituents who use the AirTrains, the
7 Path, and JFK to travel due to the Port's
8 bridges and tunnels. I want to offer the
9 following comments on the Port Authority
10 plan for toll fare increases as well as
11 some related policy changes.

12 To start, just to get this out of
13 the way, I want to recognize the Port for
14 their focus and timely efforts on recent
15 mega projects, in particular the two Queens
16 airports, LaGuardia and JFK. These two
17 revitalization initiatives were long
18 overdue and are proceeding forward in a
19 positive way but also listening to the
20 concerns of the community and creating new
21 pathways for the community to be involved.
22 I am hopeful that the Port again will be
23 mindful of community concerns with respect
24 to their proposed toll, fare, and fee
25 increases. After careful review and

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deliberation on the plan, I'm still left with a number of very significant concerns.

One, the current plan lacks necessary financial transparency. It is silent on how the \$235 million will be raised from each of the several proposed actions. I do not believe that good governance is served with lump sums that lack data and actual schedules all the while very specifically affecting the budgets and bottom of line of my constituents.

Second, it is unclear how the proposed \$235 million will be spent. Will it be bonded out and thus create more debt? Will it add to the current Port debt load of over \$25 billion? Will it be used to bail out innumerable cost overruns at the project within the Port Authority portfolio? If so, how is this responsible and fair to our commuters, drivers, and straphangers who will be paying more now and pay more in debt service later.

Third, the plan proposes to

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arbitrarily block in permanent inflationary increases for all future tolls and fares. This is an unwise decision that relies on negative social economic trends and ignores the fact that many riders and drivers are not guaranteed to see their own wages keep up with inflation.

Fourth, I believe the plan in some will have disproportionate impacts on certain communities. I agree the new fee on taxis and liveries is unwarranted given the very tenuous nature of the industry's literal existence. The plan proposal proposes new increases on Staten Island drivers in the form of increases on all three of the boroughs which is while making the discount program much harder to qualify for.

Lastly, the riders of the AirTrain at JFK will see ticket prices increase by \$2.75 which is too steep of a one-time increase no longer -- no matter how long the fare remained level.

In conclusion, I believe that the

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2 Port Authority should carefully and
3 diligently review all of the feedback
4 received at their public hearings and
5 seriously consider amending certain aspects
6 of the plan to achieve a final resolution
7 that has less impacts on the riders,
8 drivers, and working families and where
9 such increases are absolutely necessary
10 that they are executed in an equitable
11 manner. I want to thank you for holding
12 this hearing. I wish it was held near a
13 transportation hub, not out here at the
14 airport. More people would have been here
15 from Queens to express their indignity.

16 I just want to echo one thing, that
17 I do think that the \$4 surcharge on taxis
18 is unnecessary. They're overburdened now.
19 And as you are well aware of they are
20 mostly dealing with a fact that they are
21 overburdened with a financial inequity
22 because they are charged way too much for
23 their medallions. A lot of them don't even
24 own cabs. They're paying a loan. And as
25 you've heard from many other people this

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evening, they are really suffering so we need to lighten up on them and give them an opportunity. Thank you for letting me speak over time. Thank you.

MR. FARBIARZ: Sergio Cabrera.

MS. PROTZ: I can speak for him.
Is that allowed?

MR. FARBIARZ: Sure. If you can come up, ma'am, and say your name, please.

MS. PROTZ: My name is Carolyn Protz. I'm also a medallion owner for many, many years. I think Sergio was stuck downstairs because they're not letting anybody else up. But I know what he wanted to talk to you about was the lack of enforcement. My area of expertise is the City Council and TLC and perhaps now I'm going to develop a whole new interest in you, because you should know that Lyft has an illegal hack line at LaGuardia. All their trips are supposed to be prearranged. So what happened before was the passenger might have been on the plane or getting luggage and on the phone arranging for the

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2 ride; okay, that's prearranged. Now what
3 the passengers are doing is they're getting
4 into the first available Lyft car and then
5 the passenger is syncing up with the
6 driver. That is not allowed. That's
7 illegal. I don't think the TLC is giving
8 out summonses for it. They should be. Do
9 you know about this? Now you do. So this
10 is clearly illegal. It's step-by-step, one
11 thing at a time. This is the latest thing
12 that's happening. I am in contact with the
13 TLC. Several of us have been. We haven't
14 gotten an answer yet. I want you to know
15 about this too and that's what Sergio
16 wanted to tell you. Thank you.

17 MR. FARBIARZ: Brian Hunt.

18 MR. HUNT: Hello. How are you?
19 Good evening, everybody. I'm with
20 Local 638 Steamfitters Union. We're
21 looking forward to the development of these
22 infrastructure projects. Obviously the
23 city needs to have our infracture
24 continuously developed and improved upon.
25 I think you can see that just by walking

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outside and looking around. We're also looking forward to seeing the continuous use of union labor on those developments and those projects into the future. And like we've had a good relationship for the most part, I believe, and I hope to see that continue on into the future with these new developments taking place. Thank you.

MR. FARBIARZ: Michael Simon.

MR. SIMON: Hello. I'm a medallion owner and I object to any added fees to Yellow cabs. We've been through enough. Yellow cab provide a public service. We should be given priority because we fulfill the needs of all of the people, not just some. Do you allow your vendors at the airports not to accept cash or swipe customer's credit cards? Uber doesn't, taxis do. Do you mandate that vendors of all customers? Uber doesn't, taxis do. Former commissioner, Transportation Commissioner Ross Sandler recently wrote in a newspaper for 80 years Yellow cabs have been uniquely successful in New York City.

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This is especially true in the dense business districts and transportation terminals like the airports. At-base services have no advantage at these locations. Thank you.

MR. FARBIARZ: Just a reminder for people who might like to speak, please do sign up and then come forward. Richard Chow.

MR. CHOW: Good morning, everybody. My name is Richard Chow. I'm a taxi medallion owner and driver. So last year my dear brother, Ken Chow, he was suicide, committed suicide, because the TLC allowed Uber and Lyft picking our fare. This is not fair enough. He not make enough money to go home and become depressed and commit suicide. So now this time the Port Authority charging \$4 to the taxi -- for the taxi. This is unfair and this is not right. I am against it. Because too many surcharge to the taxi. I pick up the passenger and, he said, you must surcharge charge plus the fares \$52, the total come

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2 out, the fare and surcharge \$69. It's very
3 hard to explain it. At the end, the
4 passenger didn't give me the tip, zero tip.
5 This is a shame. But we have to be change
6 something, you know. So and not also that,
7 so we are medallion owner, are crisis very
8 bad this time and we need to have help.
9 And then we -- now the Port Authority give
10 Uber and Lyft in the LaGuardia free lot.
11 They don't need to buy medallion. They
12 have a free medallion. They picking up at
13 LaGuardia, and they have a free lot, so
14 this is unfair to Yellow cab driver. So
15 last week a friend of mine, he was died in
16 the JFK holding lot because he working so
17 hard. He not make enough money. He
18 working long hour and money he don't make
19 enough money and then he get tired, he get
20 sick and tired of this business and he
21 dying in the JFK parking lot. It's very
22 sad. So already this nine driver die, nine
23 driver last week died. So if we are --
24 Port Authority charge another \$4 to the
25 driver, the surcharge, we make less money

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and a lot of driver going to financial crisis and very soon a lot of people, the drivers dying and bankruptcy and committing suicide. Thank you.

MR. FARBIARZ: Bhairavi Desai.

MS. DESAI: Good evening. My name is Bhairavi Desai. I'm the executive director of the New York Taxi Workers Alliance. As the brothers and sisters have spoken before me had already said there's been an unprecedented crisis for drivers and medallion owner drivers across this industry. At this point, Yellow cab drivers have seen a loss of revenue of over 36 percent today to compared to 2011. Adjusted for inflation you're talking about a loss of revenue of 43 percent. Given during this time expenses have continued to go up, that loss of revenue has actually meant a loss of income, the take-home income of over 50 to 60 percent per individual driver families. We have done studies and found that on average after paying off their operating expenses,

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2 owner/drivers are at an annual negative of
3 \$28,000. People are living off credit
4 cards and debit cards and personal loans
5 and they simply don't have enough to
6 survive. On top of that, the 6,000
7 individual owner/drivers out there have
8 average debt on the medallion of \$600,000.
9 So imagine your day-to-day earning at the
10 end of the year is negative \$28,000.
11 That's the money you need to pay for rent
12 and house mortgage and food and schooling
13 and, you know, just to live day-to-day.

14 At this point, an additional
15 surcharge would mean a loss of fares,
16 trips. It would mean a loss of tips, as
17 Richard just said, and it would mean
18 drivers would be locked out of the
19 opportunity to get a raise for themselves
20 when they desperately need one. We
21 understand that this is not your intention.
22 But at this point, adding this kind of the
23 surcharge on the backs of this industry
24 would basically be a nail in the coffin.
25 That's how serious the conditions of today

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2 are. And it's not exaggeration and it's
3 not meant to be sentimental. There are
4 more medallion bankruptcies in the month of
5 January 2019 alone than all of 2016 and
6 2017 and 2015 and many of those years
7 combined. People are at a breaking point.
8 On top of that, you basically, as an
9 agency, are going to be trying to squeeze
10 water out of a cactus. The longer the
11 surcharge continues, the less trips drivers
12 will have, the less cars will be on the
13 road. You in the end is going to earn less
14 revenue yourselves. This is a proposition
15 that's out to fail.

16 And finally, I just want to say,
17 don't steal from the poor in order to feed
18 the working class. There are other ways
19 for you to meet this budget and it does not
20 depend on keeping a poor workforce even
21 more poor and in desperation. Thank you.

22 MR. FARBIARZ: Victor Salazar.

23 MR. SALAZAR: Hello everyone. I'm
24 a New York City cab driver for close to 30
25 years. Most of the drivers here, they are

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2 willing to continue to work in New York
3 City even though crisis are literally
4 killing us. And we are here today, our
5 presence here is we are against the
6 increase of the all surcharges, of the \$4.
7 The \$4 obviously is just a killing. And we
8 want to say to Port Authority to actually
9 get other funds, there's got to be other
10 funds. I'm sure Port Authority gets also
11 funding money and all kinds of revenue you
12 get. We have the feeling that Port
13 Authority privately sitting in a gold mine.
14 We hope that you make the right decision
15 and come up with the solution for your
16 budget, but definitely not taking \$4 more
17 out of our pocket and condemning us, you
18 know, to basically in existence. There are
19 other issues besides that.

20 We are here very worried about the
21 situation that is going on in LaGuardia
22 especially with the condition that is given
23 for the black cars to operate freely and do
24 whatever they want, perfect conditions for
25 passengers to be out there. And if you pay

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2 attention, even the way they handle
3 themselves through and the lot through,
4 through the terminals, there's like, you
5 know, no vision. There is zero vision
6 anymore or visions here. So you know, this
7 is threat for, you know, for passengers as
8 well as for drivers, pedestrians, and so
9 on. And so, you know, we urge you to do
10 the right thing to commit yourselves to
11 actually look up and ask we've been serving
12 the city, some of my friends say over 80
13 years. That is commitment is still on. We
14 will continue.

15 You can see only drivers are
16 already faithful to the certain devastation
17 for the airports, for the city. But at the
18 same time we want to be recognized as the
19 force, the mechanism that keeps moving this
20 airport around in the tri-state area. So
21 we definitely against those \$4. We want
22 you to look up at us as human beings, not
23 as tax collectors, not as a budget number.
24 You know, we are human beings who need to
25 feed our families. We have futures. We

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2 have the hopes like all of you have sitting
3 here right now. I believe everybody will
4 agree we have need -- we need a better New
5 York. But a better New York, but not only
6 physically and not only with wonderful
7 airports, but with the people content, with
8 the people happy. The people need to be
9 happy in their line of work. And I hope
10 that with that the Port Authority makes the
11 right decisions. Thank you all.

12 MR. FARBIARZ: Hamza Chaudhry.

13 MR. CHAUDHRY: Hello. My name is
14 Hamza Chaudhry. I've been a Uber driver
15 for about two and a half years now. I've
16 also been a livery driver for about a year
17 and half before that. And I would like to
18 speak today against this fine. In the case
19 of Yellow taxis it will be a \$4 fine at
20 pick up I believe and on Ubers, Lytfs, et
21 cetera, it will \$4 pick up and drop off.
22 And while I believe this that is not going
23 to be the benefit of the drivers and I'm
24 surely compares to the New York City
25 workers line will more than clearly express

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that in much stronger terms than I could.

I also like to say that I don't think this will be to the benefit of the passengers or to the city generally. Our taxi drivers, Lyft driver, Uber driver, et cetera total the constitute of the workforce of hundreds of thousands. The vast majority of that money returns back to the city because we live in here our expenses constitute a large portion of our income. And so by having that tax reduces our ability live and reinvest back into the economy. It's also troublesome for passengers, who naturally enough, I'm sympathetic to people that have to constantly go back and forth even to their home countries. My mother recently, a few years back had to go back to Pakistan and then from Pakistan back to America following the death of my grandfather. I just can't imagine how difficult it would have been with a \$4 charge on both ends which doesn't make very much money. And this will naturally enough like taxes upon

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2 consumption, fall amongst the lower class
3 of city of which we are members but also
4 which constitute so many of our passengers.
5 With that in mind and with also that the
6 Port Authority governs an enormous breath
7 of resources in the airports and the trains
8 combined. I live in New Jersey and the
9 Path trains are the ones I've used for many
10 years so I'd like to thank you for
11 providing those. That there other ways to
12 produce income and ways that is are less
13 deleterious to the city as a whole, to the
14 utilizers of the Port Authority services
15 age to us drivers. Thank you very much for
16 your time.

17 MR. FARBIARZ: Sergio Cabrera.
18 Dorothy LaConte.

19 MS. LaCONTE: Good evening. My
20 name is Dorothy LaConte, you know. I'm
21 been driving a taxi for 32 years. I own
22 some medallion over 29. Well, I think
23 everybody is working just for tomorrow to
24 have a good retirement. And I'm coming to
25 a point right now everything is swipe out

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2 from my hands. I don't even think I will
3 have a home to sleep because if I fell or
4 maybe sick I won't be able to work, bank
5 going to repossess everything I have and
6 I'm going to wipe myself, looking at myself
7 being in the street begging for little
8 money. I never been into welfare because I
9 refuse to go anywhere for people to ask me
10 for all my life. So I work hard, very
11 hard. And beside, I'm losing everything.
12 And instead of getting something, it's
13 people are taking, the government is taking
14 aware from me. So it is hard for me to
15 come into the airports. First of all, we
16 spending two, three hours at the lap
17 waiting for customer. We spending hours,
18 sometime an hour and 45 minutes coming to
19 city, beat up the traffic to drop somebody
20 off. We don't even get paid enough to drop
21 somebody from the city to the airport for
22 \$52 then we have to give \$4 out of that
23 money. And I don't think it's fair. We
24 need a break because we are hard worker.
25 And especially me. I am not going to say

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2 everybody else, especially me. I use to
3 work a certain hours now. I wide be in the
4 street seven days a week, 12, 14 hours even
5 though Taxi Limousine put in 10 hours
6 driver fatigue. But when I got 14 hours of
7 working I still got five hours left in the
8 clock because we spend so much time driving
9 around without a fare. We don't have a
10 fare in the street. We can't live. We
11 cannot survive. So the bills are remaining
12 the same, the bank, pay insurance, we pay
13 everything. So this \$8, I don't know how
14 we going to manage to do that because
15 that's dragging passenger away from us and
16 I don't know where they going to go because
17 they have to come in, they have to come to
18 the airport. Who is going to bring them to
19 the airport? Are you going to force them
20 to take the train because they are paying
21 so much money? You know, we cannot make a
22 living. I think this is charge, you guys
23 going to have a little consideration for
24 that because that is going to hurt us a
25 lot. Charge the airlines. The airline

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able to do it. Okay. Thank you.

MR. FARBIARZ: Rafael Cruz.

MR. CRUZ: Good evening. My name is Rafel Cruz. I'm a member of the Plumbers Local one. My heart goes out to them. I get it. I get it. It's very tough but it's also tough on us. I'm actually working at LaGuardia right now and I work hard just like everybody else in 95 degrees, the sun on my head all day, not just me, the rest of us, to do it. We do it. We all have hard times. We all do. We all pay taxes do. We have to do what we have to do, not just for my family and myself but for the benefit of a greater -- 'cause this is bigger than me and anybody else, this is for the greater for the whole city. And that's how I see it. Thank you.

MR. FARBIARZ: Ladies and gentlemen, no further speakers on the sign in sheets that I have. So just a reminder to sign in if you'd like to speak. And you have an additional card there or not? One other person, Sergio Cabera. If he's in

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the room, he should come forward. So the commissioners will be here for a while yet. What we will do now is just take a quick recess. We'll either perhaps be here or in the next room and we'll wait for anyone else who would like to sign in and speak. Thank you.

Could Mohammed Sultan come forward, please. Ladies and gentlemen, hold on for a moment, please. Mr. Sultan, thank you.

MR. SULTAN: My name is Mohammad Sultan. I'm driving since 2005 as a Yellow cab driver. And it have a forum, theirs is a WhatsApp with more than 5,000 driver and also Viber have around 3,400 driver. So I understand how hard for the driver life going every single moment, every hour, every single second. WhatsApp is updated every minute what is going on in the city, not only the airport but also in the city. So in the airport staying hour and hour. I just delay because I was in the parking lot around an hour to let the driver know what's going on here today. So what I am

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2 saying i driver just sitting there hour.
3 There is no fare. Money is not there.
4 They are struggling. Nine drivers suicide.
5 And all this coming on the meter. Meter is
6 getting heavier and heavier. So this \$4,
7 it will be a huge burden for driver. How
8 is going to burden, the passenger how much
9 pay on the driver's back. I mean, they
10 have alternate source. There is 130,000
11 car around the city. And how this driver
12 can afford? So Port Authority has a huge
13 recourse as a three airport. There is
14 unlimited resource they have. So they can
15 find the money from there. Like a fuel
16 tax, put some little fuel tax on the
17 airplane. Put some taxes on the airplane.
18 It stays -- overstaying in the airport.
19 Put the other service. Put a personal
20 service. I don't want to say a specific
21 name, but there is a big corporation name
22 who is mailing it where is the regular
23 postal service trade by them, so put them
24 the tax. Because they are the one Uber
25 uses this airport, not the passenger.

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2 Passenger who are taking the taxi. They
3 huge number. They are regular, ordinary
4 people, regular ordinary people. It's too
5 much burden for the driver. So if the
6 passenger don't take a taxi on, who is the
7 biggest affected? Driver? How many driver
8 is there? 200,000. Driver is already
9 living under poverty. Nine driver suicide
10 because of the economy hardship. Look at
11 the city has a congestion price now. How
12 many you want this? How many you want
13 this? Port Authority has enough that there
14 that there is a MTA, they put on the taxes
15 since 2009. Driver pay billion dollar.
16 Now the same MTA getting the congestion
17 price in the name of congestion price \$2.50
18 and another is coming end of 2020. So I'm
19 a driver. So I go with the driver. I talk
20 with the driver. As I'm saying that, I
21 have this link. It's a global world,
22 technology world so every post is coming.
23 Please do not put this tax on the drivers
24 back, period. So driver is 200,000 driver.
25 Thank you so much. I really appreciate.

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It will be very kind for the drivers, for the family, for their children. It is not able to survive at this point at this moment. Thank you so much.

MR. FARBIARZ: So we'll take a recess now as we wait for other people to potentially sign in. The commissioners will be here or in the close vicinity. Thank you.

MR. FARBIARZ: Ladies and gentlemen, Sergio Cabrera, please.

MR. CABRERA: Hello. Yes, good evening. My name is Sergio Cabrera. I'm a medallion owner. I've been driving a taxi for about 20 years now. This meeting is supposed to be about the \$4 surcharge that's supposed to be put on each, I don't know if it's drop-off or pick up at the Port Authority installation at the airports. I don't think that the taxi drivers or the taxi riders need anymore surcharges to be put on their backs. I understand that the Port Authority has a

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2 budget shortfall and they need to make up
3 somewhere. But putting it on the backs on
4 the riders and have the taxi drivers to
5 collect this money to send this in after
6 all the other surcharges we pick up is just
7 unnecessary. I would suggest that maybe
8 you put it on the airline tickets for the
9 passengers coming in and out, add a small
10 fee to their, you know, expenses. But I
11 think that all of us as taxi drivers don't
12 agree that another \$4 or whatever it is
13 that you're going to come up with added to
14 the passengers' already significant cost to
15 get to the airport, I just don't think
16 that's necessary. And it shouldn't be on
17 our back.

18 Another thing that I wanted to say
19 whoever is making the decisions, the Port
20 Authority has erased all signatures of the
21 Yellow taxi at LaGuardia Airport. There is
22 no visible sign of a Yellow cab anywhere at
23 the arrivals area at LaGuardia Airport.
24 We've been the official taxi of the city
25 and has been moved to the margins of the

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2 airport. Our customers have been, I don't
3 know, deemed not worthy enough to just hop
4 in a cab as soon as they get off of the
5 plane. They're being bussed outside of the
6 airport to the Marine Air Terminal while
7 our space have been given to a private
8 company. The city official taxi has been
9 displaced by a private company. Who made
10 this decision? I don't know. But it's
11 totally unfair and it's totally shameful.
12 I have passengers that have come out and
13 said where are the taxis, where are the
14 taxis. They're not getting the proper
15 information from Port Authority, the red
16 coats, as we call them, the information
17 people. And we think that this is
18 something that needs to be looked into
19 ASAP.

20 There is also scuttlebutt about
21 Lyft. Let me finish up then. At JFK
22 Airport we also have this issue at Terminal
23 Five. Our passengers are walking about a
24 half a kilometer to get into a taxi. When
25 they built Terminal Five, they made an area

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for the Yellow cabs. Why we're being pushed into Terminal Six? I don't know. It's something that needs to be looked into. It's hurting our customers and it's hurt our revenue. Thank you.

MR. FARBIARZ: William Cantlin.

MR. CANTLIN: Good evening, sirs. My name is William Cantlin. I am a Local 3 electrician and also a Port Authority employee. I am a Port Authority electrician who is represented by Local 3.

My comment is a brief one. I applaud the investment that the Port Authority is taking to revitalize and refurbish the facilities which I, as an employee, work in. And I can say New York is not the capital of the state, it's not even the capital of the country, it's the capital of the world. That's what the monitor of New York is, capital of the world. I applaud this effort for us to have first class, top of the line facilities.

My comment is in the lines of

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2 certain actions that have occurred with
3 some of the bridges that were reconstructed
4 over in Staten Island. And I want to
5 remind the commissioners that there is an
6 existing, in place unionized maintenance
7 workforce of the Port Authority who is here
8 to serve and to do our job and to keep
9 these facilities in the ready state of
10 usage that they are. And it would be a
11 travesty to see other types of new
12 construction initiatives taken where after
13 these facilities are upgraded or
14 reconstructed that the maintenance aspect
15 is farmed out as in lines of a
16 design-build-operate-maintain-type of a
17 situation that happens in certain
18 facilities.

19 So I would just like to remind you
20 that we're here and we're proud to be
21 members of the Port Authority team and
22 employees and allow us to do our jobs and
23 to keep these facilities the world class
24 facilities that they are. Thank you very
25 much.

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MR. FARBIARZ: A reminder to people if they'd like to speak, please sign in outside and then I'll call you forward. I don't have any people on my list right now so we'll have a recess now until there are any other people. And the commissioners will be either here or in the nearby vicinity to hear further comments. Thank you.

(Short recess taken.)

MR. FARBIARZ: Stilianos Vitetzakus, please.

MR. VITETZAKUS: I'm here to discuss about the \$4 that we just heard about it. And we want to know why -- where we standing, what are we doing driving taxi collecting money for the city, for the state, for your salary? Where we getting the money from? Why we take the responsibility. It doesn't make any sense. It does not make any sense, really. You look at the taxi driver like we gofers, do this, do that, do that, collect the money for us to, collect the money for this guy,

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2 for that guy. And you know, we just keep
3 getting the slaps left and right, left and
4 right, we don't say anything. And this
5 time I heard \$4, otherwise you cannot work.
6 If somebody was to give you \$3, \$4 tip on
7 top of the \$4, you talking about \$60, 70,
8 \$80 fare and part of that have to give it
9 to you. Right now, the way with the
10 congestion fee, I'm paying weekly over
11 hundred dollars out of my -- collect money
12 for who? Why? Do you pay me for that? Do
13 you pay me to collect the money for you?
14 That does not make any sense. I don't
15 know. As far as I'm concerned, we just
16 feel like we've been used. We've been
17 used. And it's not much else I can say.
18 But it's just enough. It's not fair.
19 That's all I can say. Thank you very much.
20 And do the best you can.

21 MR. FARBIARZ: We'll again go into
22 recess pending people coming up and signing
23 in and coming forward. Thank you.

24 (Short recess taken.)

25 MR. FARBIARZ: Just a reminder for

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everyone here, we have one further public hearing in September that will take place in Staten Island. And of course, if there is anyone that would like to make written in comments, that can be done through September 13th on the Port Authority's website, PANYNJ.gov.

Seeing that there's one else who signed up to speak and we're at the end of our allotted time, we'll adjourn tonight's public hearing. Thank you all.

(Time noted: 9:00 p.m.)

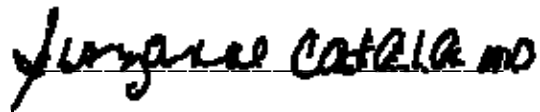
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, SUZANNE CATALANO, a shorthand reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of New York, do hereby certify:

That the within hearing is a true and accurate record of the stenographic notes taken by me.

I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.



SUZANNE CATALANO

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