

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES
& ELECTIONS

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Monday, May 8, 2023

Start: 1:38 P.M.

Recess: 3:38 P.M.

HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - COMMITTEE ROOM,
14TH FLOOR

B E F O R E: HON. KEITH POWERS, CHAIRPERSON

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Speaker Adrienne E. Adams
Joseph C. Borelli
Justin L. Brannan
Gale Brewer
Selvena Brooks-Powers
Crystal Hudson
Rafael Salamanca
Pierina Ana Sanchez

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Rita Joseph
Mercedes Narcisse

COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES & ELECTIONS

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Paul Bader
Candidate for New York City Taxi and Limousine
Commission

Thomas Sorrentino
Candidate for New York City Taxi and Limousine
Commission

Sarah Kaufman
Candidate for New York City Taxi and Limousine
Commission

Kenneth Y. K. Chan
Nominee New York City Taxi and Limousine
Commission

Christopher Leon Johnson
Representing Self

Raul Rivera
Representing NYC Drivers Unite

COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES & ELECTIONS

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1 COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES & ELECTIONS 4

2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Good evening and
3 welcome to the New York City Council Hybrid Hearing
4 on The Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections.
5 At this time, please place all electronic devices to
6 vibrate or silent mode.

7 Chair we are ready to begin.

8 CHAIRPERSON POWERS:

9 [GAVEL SOUND] [GAVELING IN]

10 Good afternoon, and welcome, everyone to the
11 meeting of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and
12 Elections. I am Council Member Keith Powers, Chair
13 of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections.

14 Before we begin, I would like to introduce the
15 other members of the committee who are present.

16 We are currently joined by Speaker Adrienne E.
17 Adams, and I believe we will be joined by other
18 colleagues shortly.

19 I would like to acknowledge the counsel of this
20 committee, Jeffrey Campagna, and the committee staff
21 who worked on the appointments that we are hearing
22 today: Pearl Moore, Ethics Counsel; Francesca
23 DellaVecchia, Director of The Public Integrity
24 Division; and Alycia Vasell, Deputy Director.

25

2 By letters dated April 28, 2023, Mayor Eric Adams
3 requested the advice and consent of the Council
4 regarding the appointments of Kenneth Y. K. Chan,
5 Sarah Kaufman, Paul Bader, and Thomas Sorrentino to
6 the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission.

7 Pursuant to Section 2301 of the City Charter,
8 Paul Bader was recommended for the appointment by the
9 Queens Delegation to The City Council and Thomas
10 Sorrentino was recommended by the Brooklyn Delegation
11 to The City Council.

12 Today, The City Council will consider whether to
13 give these candidates our advice and consent.

14 Before we start, I want to recognize Speaker
15 Adrienne Adams to offer opening remarks.

16 SPEAKER ADAMS: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

17 I would like to thank all of the committee staff
18 for their work on today's hearing and our colleagues
19 who are on the way.

20 The four candidates before us today have been
21 nominated to be members of the Taxi and Limousine
22 Commission (TLC), a body that has the power to
23 establish rates for Yellow and Green Cabs, and has
24 the power to establish and enforce public policy with
25 respect to For-Hire Vehicles (FHVs), all of which are

2 an essential part of the City's transportation. The
3 Charter provides for the Commission to have nine
4 members, but due to recent resignations, the
5 Commission has been practically nonfunctional as its
6 membership has dwindled down to just three members.

7 If the four nominees are approved by the
8 Committee, and the full Council, the Commission will
9 once again be able to conduct its vital business for
10 the City.

11 The Taxi and For-Hire Vehicle industry has
12 undergone revolutionary changes in the last ten
13 years. Just as the City established the Green Taxi
14 system to expand the availability of street-hailed
15 cars outside of Manhattan, and mandated the switch to
16 be accessible taxi of tomorrow, ride-hailed
17 technology became ubiquitous, making it possible to
18 summon cars virtually --anywhere-- without competing
19 with fellow pedestrians.

20 Companies like Uber and Lyft has assumed a
21 significant share of business that used to go to
22 Yellow Cab, making it particularly difficult, if not
23 impossible, for medallion owners to make their loan
24 payments. However, unlike street-hailed cars, which
25 are subject to a uniform rate setting by TLC, ride

2 hail apps use surge pricing to exploit changes in
3 demand during rush hours, rain storms, and other
4 events. Surge pricing calculates what the market
5 will bear at any given moment. The proliferation of
6 ride-hailed technology appears to be unstoppable.
7 But questions remain about whether the ride-hail apps
8 and their market share are promoting the
9 transportation policy goals that have been the
10 underpinning of the Taxi industry over the last 50
11 years. And, thus, whether TLC's policies need to be
12 adjusted to bring the use of these technologies into
13 alignment with those goals or whether the goals
14 themselves need to change.

15 I look forward to hearing from the candidates
16 nominated to the TLC who will have to consider these
17 issues and many others in the year ahead.

18 Kenneth Chan worked as an Intellectual Property
19 Attorney at companies like United Technologies,
20 Avaya, Corning, and Assess+RE from 1994 to 2020.
21 Since 2015, he has been the managing director of
22 Navistone, LLC, a real estate development company.
23 He has been recommended by Kevin Kim, The
24 Commissioner of the New York City Department of Small
25 Business Services.

2 Sarah Kaufman has served in various roles at
3 NYU's Rudin Center for Transportation Policy and
4 Management since 2011. And as of July 2022, she has
5 served as the center's Interim Executive Director.

6 From 2007 to 2011, Ms. Kaufman was a project
7 coordinator for Emerging Leaders in Transportation
8 Systems at the MTA (The Metropolitan Transportation
9 Authority). She has published extensively on
10 transportation policy and has served on a number of
11 boards including Transportation Alternatives, and
12 TLC's Black Car & Livery Task Force.

13 Thomas Sorrentino has been serving on the TLC
14 since he was appointed by Mayor de Blasio in 2017.
15 The Brooklyn Delegation of the Council recently
16 recommended him to reappointment for a new term.

17 Mr. Sorrentino was accountant with the firm
18 O'Connor Davies.

19 Paul Bader has held varied positions in the
20 public and private sectors for over 50 years. From
21 1970 to 1980, Mr. Bader drove a taxi cab for a fleet
22 based in Long Island, in my native Queens.

23 He has owned two printing companies, City Imprint
24 from 1984 to 2002 and Nyprints, LLC in Long Island
25 City from 2013 to the present.

2 Mr. Bader has served two stints in the New York
3 City Comptroller's Office 2002 to 2005 and from
4 January to December of 2001. He also served in the
5 Council as a Special Assistant to Christine Quinn.

6 Thank you all for your commitment to public
7 service. I congratulate you on your nominations and
8 look forward to hearing your testimony.

9 Mr. Chair?

10 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Thank you.

11 And just a little bit of background before we
12 begin. The New York City Taxi and Limousine
13 Commission, known as the TLC, was created pursuant to
14 Local Law 12 of 1971. Chapter 65 of the New York
15 City Charter established the TLC with the purpose of
16 the continuance, development, and improvement of taxi
17 and limousine service in New York City.

18 It is the purpose of the Commission to establish
19 an overall public transportation policy governing
20 taxi, coach, limousine, wheelchair accessible van
21 services, and commuter van services as it relates to
22 the overall public transportation network of the
23 City.

24 The Commission for establishes certain rates,
25 standards, service, insurance and minimum coverage,

2 and criteria for the for the licensing of vehicles,
3 drivers, chauffeurs, owners, and operators engaged in
4 such services.

5 The Commission also has the power to establish
6 fines and penalties for violations of its rules.

7 The TLC consists of nine members appointed by
8 the Mayor, all subject to the advice and consent of
9 the City Council. Five of said members must be a
10 resident from each of the five boroughs of the City,
11 and are recommended for appointment by a majority
12 vote of the Council Members from the respective
13 borough delegation.

14 TLC members are appointed for seven year terms,
15 and can serve until the appointment and qualification
16 of a successor.

17 The Mayor designates one TLC member to act as the
18 Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer. The
19 Chairperson has the authority to employ, assign, and
20 oversee the officers and employees of the
21 organization.

22 Pursuant to the Charter, the Chair's position is
23 fulltime and the Mayor establishes compensation.

24 Members other than the Chair serve without
25 compensation.

2 We have already done introductions of everyone,
3 so I'm going to punt.

4 I also want to note that we are joined by
5 Transportation Chair, Council Member Selvena Brooks-
6 Powers and we are joined by Council Member Rita
7 Joseph, and Council Member Mercedes Narcisse.

8 I want to thank everyone for being here today,
9 and I will now ask our counsel to administer the
10 affirmation.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Please raise your right hands,
12 state your names, and state whether you affirm to
13 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
14 truth, before this committee, and to respond honestly
15 to council member questions?

16 PAUL BADER: Paul Bader, I do.

17 THOMAS SORRENTINO: Tom Sorrentino, I affirm that
18 I will tell the truth.

19 SARAH KAUFMAN: Sarah Kaufman, I affirm that I
20 will tell the truth.

21 KENNETH CHAN: Kenneth Chan, I affirm that I will
22 tell the truth.

23 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Thank you, and thank you all
24 for being here today. Congratulations on your
25 nominations, or my condolences, depending on how you

2 want to look at it. Uhm, I'm just kidding, thank you
3 guys for being here with us today.

4 We are now going to offer you an opportunity to
5 give opening statements. We can start with Mr.
6 Bader, and we make our way over to Mr. Chan, thanks
7 so much.

8 PAUL BADER: Thank you, and I indicated before, my
9 name is Paul Bader. Speaker Adams, Chair Powers, and
10 members of The Rules Committee, I would like to
11 express my gratitude and appreciation to the Queens
12 County Delegation, many of whom I have known for
13 years, for selecting me as the Queens representative
14 for Taxi and Limousine Commission. This selection
15 represents the recognition of my many years of
16 community service working to maintain and improve our
17 wonderful city, and of my work experience in various
18 jobs related to the Taxi industry, and the movement
19 of vehicles along our roads and streets.

20 Madam Speaker, let me also express my
21 appreciation and my shared concern relative to the
22 industry and how it has changed -- as you indicated -
23 - from when I drove a taxi, which is many, many years
24 ago. The world changes and we must adapt to it.

2 I've been involved in transportation issues in
3 New York City much of my life, including membership
4 on The Transportation Committees of Community Boards
5 in both Manhattan -- where I was the Chair -- and
6 Brooklyn.

7 Increasingly, the For Hire Vehicle (FHV) industry
8 is a larger part of our transportation system, and
9 this is a way of being involved in creating a better
10 transportation structure.

11 Professionally, I have been a taxi driver --
12 yellow medallion for a fleet, a truck driver, and a
13 driving instructor in the City, where I have lived my
14 whole life. Additionally, having worked in city
15 government and a variety of positions dealing with
16 its communities and neighborhoods, I am extremely
17 knowledgeable regarding the streets and byways and
18 most importantly, the flow and rhythm of how people
19 move around the City.

20 I am aware of some of the many initiatives that
21 the Taxi and Limousine Commission is working on to
22 protect and assist the drivers -- as well as ensuring
23 that they are receiving their fair share of the fare
24 -- while improving the riding experience the
25 customers -- and I look forward to working with them

2 on these and other issues affecting the FHB industry
3 in our city. Supporting the livelihood of our
4 drivers is a crucial and vital part of promoting
5 health and welfare of our drivers across the
6 spectrum.

7 Thank you

8 THOMAS SORRENTINO: Good afternoon.

9 My name is Thomas Sorrentino and I would like to
10 thank you all for the opportunity to be here today to
11 speak with you.

12 I currently serve as a commissioner on The Taxi
13 And Limousine Commission, having previously been
14 appointed by Mayor Bill de Blasio in August 2017.

15 I have served our City in this capacity over the
16 past six years with commitment and devotedness, and
17 have tried my best to address the issues at hand with
18 care, objectivity, and thoughtfulness.

19 I would very much like to continue being of
20 service to our City by using my experience and
21 background to work and collaborate with the members
22 of the Commission, TLC staff, and colleague
23 commissioners -- as well various stakeholders -- in
24 order to address the challenges and the issues facing
25 the industry, and to formulate policies and

2 regulations that take into account the concerns and
3 considerations of the parties who provide such an
4 important part of our City's transportation system,
5 as well as ensuring that the riding public is well
6 served, throughout all parts of our City, in a safe,
7 accessible, and economical way.

8 I'm enthusiastic and humbled to be considered for
9 reappointment to a full term on the Commission.
10 During the time that I have served on the Commission,
11 I've had the privilege of having worked with several
12 TLC chairs and acting chairs, along with the talented
13 members of the TLC staff, to help address the many
14 issues, challenges, and the changing landscape that
15 the industry has faced over these many years.

16 Over the past years, I have sat through many TLC
17 public hearings, and I have listened first-hand to
18 the testimony of many individuals including drivers,
19 medallion owners, FHV licensees, coalition groups,
20 elected officials, TLC policy makers, industry
21 experts, and members of the riding public. And I've
22 heard their views and opinions on a variety of topics
23 and issues relating to accessibility: diminished
24 medallion values; medallion owner loan and debt
25 concerns; FHV licensing policies; driver pay, safety

2 and well-being considerations; economic and
3 environmental impact concerns, as well as matters
4 that impact the riding public in providing safe and
5 reliable transportation.

6 I'm proud to have worked and dialogued with the
7 professional staff members of the TLC, and with
8 colleague commissioners to help formulate policy and
9 the pass rules and regulations to address the many
10 issues that have challenged the industry, and have
11 tried to make things better for everyone.

12 Some of the positive achievements and results
13 that I have seen and have been a part of include
14 passing broader accessibility regulations; placing
15 limits and caps on FHV licenses, considering the
16 oversaturation of such licenses at the time; the
17 medallion relief program; and driver pay
18 enhancements.

19 I believe that the time that I have spent serving
20 on the Commission, the experience garnered therefrom,
21 my professional background, and my ability to work
22 and collaborate with colleagues, policymakers, and
23 industry participants are attributes that will allow
24 me to continue to provide service that is meaningful,
25 and that has value to the Commission as it leads the

2 charge in regulating the industry and ensuring that
3 all of the stakeholders are well served.

4 One of the focal points that we must be always
5 keep in mind is the health and well-being of the
6 drivers. This must always be paramount consideration
7 when setting policy. The drivers are essential in
8 making the entire system work, and they are the
9 backbone in providing transportation to the riding
10 public. To ensure their well-being, it is important
11 for us all to be mindful of both quality of life and
12 economic considerations, including both driver pay
13 and expenses. These considerations should be
14 factored in while setting overall policy to ensure a
15 proper balance for the drivers and all industry
16 stakeholders.

17 Lastly, as a lifelong New York City resident, I
18 have the desire to continue to serve our City, and I
19 am committed to dedicating the time and energy needed
20 to fulfill the responsibilities of the position, and
21 to perform the work that needs to be done, as you
22 move toward as a city, and work through the
23 challenges that lie ahead. I want you to know that I
24 have taken the responsibility of being a member of
25

2 the Commission seriously and dutifully, and have not
3 missed a Commission hearing about during my tenure.

4 I thank you for this time.

5 SARAH KAUFMAN: Good afternoon, Speaker Adams,
6 Chair Powers, and members of The Committee On Rules,
7 Privileges and Elections. My name is Sarah Kaufman,
8 and I come before you today seeking your confirmation
9 and consent to serve as a member of the Taxi and
10 Limousine Commission. Thank you in advance for your
11 consideration, and for the opportunity to tell you
12 about myself and why I wish to serve on the TLC.

13 I currently serve as the Interim Director of the
14 Rudin Center for Transportation at NYU Wagner School
15 of Public service. In that role, I conduct research
16 and hold gatherings to discuss policy and planning
17 issues around mobility.

18 I'm presently working on two research projects:
19 first, assessing the city of Buffalo's response to
20 the blizzard in December 2022, which I hope will be
21 instructive for all cities responses to extreme
22 weather, as it is inevitable everywhere. Secondly, I
23 am working on a project applying urbanism principles
24 to the future introduction of autonomous vehicles in
25 American cities. I also host panel discussions and

2 keynote lectures on topics like flooding and
3 transportation; new technologies and accessibility;
4 and the future of micro mobility in New York City.

5 I've worked at the Rudin Center since December
6 2011, and have, throughout that time, worked as a
7 great deal to lift up the voices of women and other
8 underrepresented communities in transportation
9 leadership. I have a long-standing interest in gender
10 based travel and how cities can improve women's
11 safety and caregiving needs. I've developed research
12 and workshops around women's challenges in
13 transportation. The concept under the term, "Pink Tax
14 on Transportation" is that women in New York City
15 and other cities tend to pay a premium for the
16 personal safety, when possible, by turning down off
17 hours employment and opting for more expensive
18 transportation modes such as choosing taxis or
19 rideshare over public transportation in the name of
20 safety.

21 I have also tried to bring light to other
22 challenges for New Yorkers. This year, I worked with
23 a graduate student to develop a project around
24 language access in the subways -- offering
25 suggestions to improve mobility for New York's 1.8

2 million residents who are considered having limited
3 English proficiency.

4 And In the Emerging Leaders Program that I have
5 run for eight years, I train early career
6 transportation professionals to apply innovative
7 projects and processes to their workplaces. I have
8 designed the program to prioritize admission to
9 individuals who would not otherwise have such an
10 opportunity.

11 Before working at the Rudin Center, I worked at
12 MTA New York City Transit for nearly 5 years. I
13 worked in the Strategic Improvements and Best
14 Practices Group, where we looked at comparable
15 transit systems abroad and considered lessons
16 learned. Primarily, I am a proudest of two
17 accomplishments during that tenure: first, I launched
18 the MTA's Open Data Program, which supplied subway
19 data to the backend of apps, and organized the
20 developer feedback forum. Secondly, I created a
21 social media plan for New York City Transit, getting
22 information like subway delays and weekend
23 construction changes out to the public. I am proud of
24 developing such useful tools for New Yorkers.

2 Prior to the MTA, I worked at DoITT between 2006
3 and 2007. There I worked on the NCWiN network -- the
4 private emergency responder wireless network that
5 would ensure communications between first responders
6 during a crisis.

7 I had taken that job right after graduate school
8 at NYU, where I got my graduate degree in Urban
9 Planning in 2005. During that time, I interned at
10 both The Economic Development Corporation and DoITT,
11 and I worked on campus with Mitchell Moss at the Taub
12 Urban Research Center.

13 I am a native of New Rochelle, New York and I
14 attended college in Saint Louis Missouri at
15 Washington University. I've lived in New York City
16 since August 2001, and I have lived in seven
17 different apartments in Manhattan and Brooklyn. I am
18 now settled in East Harlem with my family -- my
19 husband, who is in his 22nd year of teaching middle
20 school English, and my two children who are both in
21 middle school.

22 Growing up in the suburbs, I always yearned for
23 the city, the vibrancy, the way everyone fits in
24 somewhere, and the chaotic order of things. I've
25 always felt that the City just worked. I learned

1 throughout my career, some things are not as orderly
2 as they seem. I have constantly worked to improve the
3 city I love through both low hanging fruit and
4 ambitious goals. I have called upon my background in
5 technology to solve some of those issues.
6

7 This effort has often included collaborating with
8 the Taxi And Limousine Commission, where helping to
9 solve the organization's challenges has been a
10 throughline in the last ten years.

11 Together with a previous Commissioner Meera
12 Joshi, I hosted a hackathon around taxi driver shift
13 changes where we looked into how to better organize
14 the 4:00 PM turnovers for more taxi availability in
15 Manhattan and more localized drivers transfers.

16 I have served in the Data Committee assessing
17 what information should be required from ride hail
18 providers, and how to protect drivers' and riders'
19 identities. In addition, Commissioner Joshi and I
20 convened a public forum about accessibility and for-
21 hire vehicles in the fall of 2019, especially
22 concerning the timeline of regulating wheelchair
23 accessible vehicles.

24 Finally, under Commissioner Joshi, the TLC staff
25 provided input on my work "Bringing Innovation to

2 Paratransit" encouraging the use of taxis and for-
3 hire vehicles to augment Access-A-Ride services.

4 With previous commissioner a Aloysee Heredia
5 Jarmoszuk, I served in the Black Car and Livery Task
6 Force, working to get more drivers back on the
7 streets. Throughout 2020, I assisted on the TLC-led
8 Surface Transportation Recovery Committee.

9 I believe that this work has had a at least a
10 somewhat positive impact on New Yorkers' lives and
11 the economic opportunities of drivers.

12 Still, while it has been rewarding to help the
13 Taxi Limousine Commission think through pressing
14 problems on the sidelines, I'm eager to have a
15 stronger voice on policy. I believe I can be helpful
16 by putting ideas into practice when grappling with
17 the TLC's most pressing challenges. I am eager to
18 learn from my colleagues on the Commission and work
19 closely with the TLC staff. It will be an honor to
20 serve on this Commission and to help to usher the
21 organization through the next few years.

22 Mostly, though, I want to help the greatest city
23 in the world move its people more efficiently,
24 comfortably, equitably, and sustainably. I hope
25 you'll see my candidacy as a valuable to the TLC, and

2 I look forward to answering your questions. Thank you
3 for your time and consideration.

4 KENNETH CHAN: Good afternoon, Chair Powers,
5 Speaker Adams, Council Members.

6 My name is Kenneth Chan, and I come before you
7 today seeking your confirmation and consent to serve
8 as a member of the Taxi and Limousine Commission.
9 Thank you in advance for your consideration and for
10 the opportunity to for me to tell you about myself
11 and why I wish to serve on the Commission.

12 I am a resident of Brooklyn. Having arrived in
13 New York City as an eight-year-old immigrant, I am a
14 proud product of New York City's public educational
15 system. After graduating from The Bronx High School
16 of Science, I attended Cornell University as a
17 chemistry major, and then Syracuse University College
18 of Law for my jurist doctorate degree.

19 New York City has been great to me and my family.
20 While we experienced firsthand the challenges of
21 being immigrants with modest means, through
22 perseverance and entrepreneurship we were able to get
23 by and later achieve a comfortable living.

24

25

2 I have three children. The older two kids are
3 graduating college this month, and our youngest is a
4 junior in high school.

5 Currently, I am the owner of a small business
6 called Navistone, LLC. Its primary business
7 activities are property management and development. I
8 have successfully developed and managed under-used
9 and under-invested properties and transformed them
10 into high-functioning facilities, which have housed
11 business operations such as manufacturing, commercial
12 kitchens, logistics, art studios, and soundstages.

13 Prior to Navistone, I worked at three large US
14 high tech companies. I served as Asia Regional
15 Intellectual Property Counsel and then as Director of
16 Intellectual Property Strategy for Corning
17 Incorporated. As Regional Counsel, my primary duties
18 were to support the company's growth in Asia, build a
19 group to provide sustained intellectual property
20 support for the companies innovations, and helped to
21 resolve disputes over the company's intellectual
22 property rights. In doing so, I have helped conclude
23 significant corporate development projects and
24 several high-tech manufacturing investments in Asia.
25 I also led company efforts to analyze new policies

2 and regulations in the region to identify potential
3 impacts on the company and develop plans to address
4 these potential impacts. While in Asia, I engaged
5 actively with other MNCs as well as NGOs to nurture
6 relationships, share knowledge, and advance advocacy
7 efforts. I also interacted regularly with US
8 government agencies such as the US Patent Trademark
9 Office, US Trade Representative's Office, and US
10 Consulate Offices to share observations and ideas.

11 As Director of Intellectual Property Strategy at
12 Corning, my primary focus there was to help revamp
13 and improve communication and processes among groups
14 in research, intellectual property protection, and
15 technology commercialization, and doing so among the
16 different product divisions. This effort required
17 that I work with multiple functional groups within
18 multiple product divisions in order to strengthen a
19 company's intellectual property rights, protect its
20 innovations, and enhance the commercial potential of
21 research results.

22 Before joining Corning, I served as Intellectual
23 Property Counsel and Director of Trademark and
24 Copyright at Avaya Inc. Avaya was is a spin of Lucent
25 Technologies Inc. that focused on telecommunication

2 applications and devices. As a member of this newly
3 formed in entity I helped to shape the company's
4 intellectual property focus and practices, and I
5 collaborated with product managers to develop
6 business models for many of the company's
7 innovations. At Avaya, I supported research and
8 development efforts as well as led successfully and
9 concluded numerous technology M&A transactions as
10 well as strategic agreements with telecommunication
11 service providers and other key business partners.

12 Prior to Avaya, I served as corporate counsel at
13 the Pratt & Whitney Division of United Technologies
14 Corporation. Pratt & Whitney is an aircraft engine
15 manufacturer for both commercial aircraft and
16 military aircraft.

17 At Pratt & Whitney, I gained extensive experience
18 in supply management, commercial transactions, and
19 technology development and implementation. In
20 addition to leading the first of its kind corporate
21 wide supply management initiatives, including the
22 first B-2-B e-commerce initiatives, I also helped
23 ensure compliance with applicable regulations such as
24 FCPA, OFAC, US Export Control, and ITAR.

2 Working at these three large companies has given
3 me insight into complex organizations and structures
4 including working within complex regulatory
5 frameworks. It has also helped me to develop
6 collaboration skills to work with multiple
7 stakeholders in order to complete projects.

8 As I stated earlier, New York City has been great
9 to me and my family. As a passionate and committed
10 lifelong resident, I'm eager to give back to the
11 community that has provided me with countless
12 opportunities. It is this desire to contribute that
13 has drawn me to the opportunity to serve as a
14 commissioner for the Taxi and Limousine Commission.
15 I'm also passionate about serving on the TLC, because
16 I believe, in conjunction with fellow commissioners,
17 that we can create a positive impact on the lives of
18 New Yorkers by guaranteeing access to safe, reliable,
19 and affordable transportation options.

20 I hope to help usher in a new era of innovations
21 in a way that protects and uplifts drivers and
22 consumers. If confirmed as Commissioner, I hope to
23 lean on my professional, small business, and personal
24 work experience to work collaboratively with fellow
25

2 commissioners to continuously improve transportation
3 for all New Yorkers.

4 Thank you for your consideration of my nomination
5 to the Taxi and Limousine Commission. I look forward
6 to answering your questions, thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Thank you, and thank you all
8 for your testimony.

9 We are now going to move into asking some
10 questions. I will first recognize Speaker Adrienne
11 Adams for questions that she may have.

12 SPEAKER ADAMS: Thank you very much, Chair Powers.

13 Welcome once again, uh, the three of you have
14 such intriguing backgrounds, and I have something in
15 common with all of you. I will just put that out
16 there.

17 I am going to start with my fellow baysider, Paul
18 Bader. You are actually the only person nominated
19 who has actually driven a taxi. When you would a
20 driver in the 70's, you didn't own you medallion,
21 correct?

22 PAUL BADER: That is correct. I drove for a
23 fleet, Crescent and 41st Avenue, Main Operating, I
24 still remember the name. For those of you who don't
25 remember, basically there were two kinds of

2 medallions at that time, and they have different
3 price structures: One was a fleet medallion that was
4 owned by a fleet, and, then, there were individual
5 medallions that were owned by individual people.
6 Those of us who drove for fleets also were members of
7 a union at that time -- Taxi Drivers' Union. And
8 there was a schedule, a rate schedule that you
9 started at and you went to, and it was based on a
10 percentage of the meter that you go. You started, if
11 I remember correctly, this was a couple of years ago,
12 I think we started at about 40 percent and went up to
13 50 percent. And it was based on a variety of
14 parameters that made you go up. But, for most people
15 they went up pretty quickly to the 50 percent.

16 SPEAKER ADAMS: Yes, yes. Some of us do remember
17 those days. If you had your druthers these days,
18 would you choose to stay in fleet driving or would
19 you drive for Uber or Lyft or one of those guys? It's
20 a tough question.

21 PAUL BADER: No, it's not, because the individual
22 driver in those days was had more recognition and
23 respect than I think many of them have today. It was
24 a profession that both fleet drivers as well as
25

2 individual owners did, and it was a middle class
3 jobholder

4 SPEAKER ADAMS: That's right.

5 PAUL BADER: And it enabled you to have a middle
6 class income.

7 SPEAKER ADAMS: Mm-hmm.

8 PAUL BADER: We have certainly seen over the more
9 recent years, uh, I mean, the incredible economic
10 hardships that drivers at different levels have gone
11 through particularly, and some of it has even
12 resulted, unfortunately in suicide as we all know.

13 And, so, I would, uhm, certainly, if fleets even
14 existed in the same way, and the structure was the
15 same, it would not be a difficult situation, I would
16 once again... (CROSS-TALK)

17 SPEAKER ADAMS: No question.

18 PAUL BADER: drive for a fleet.

19 SPEAKER ADAMS: No question. Yes, I am
20 particularly sensitive around medallion drivers, taxi
21 drivers. In my area, in Southeast Queens, we have a
22 tremendous number of drivers, uh, particularly in
23 Richmond Hill and other areas in Queens. So..

24 PAUL BADER: So, I will also augment my answer by
25 saying this, also at that time, there were what we

2 used to call Black Cars. And they were... The
3 largest one was a company out of Brooklyn called
4 Black Pearl...

5 SPEAKER ADAMS: Mm-hmm

6 PAUL BADER: uh, that also went into Queens at the
7 time. And I knew why they existed, because I was a
8 fleet driver who drove in all five boroughs. I was
9 unique in that. There were not that many drivers who
10 would drive all throughout the different five
11 boroughs, particularly in certain neighborhoods of
12 Brooklyn and Queens. I learned, and I knew these
13 neighborhoods, I learned; however, that, like
14 anything else, if you are willing to drive and you
15 understand that, there is a lot of money to be made.
16 And there was no place that I turned over fares
17 faster, as we used to call it -- turn them over -- as
18 certain neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Queens. I knew
19 the neighborhoods. I was comfortable driving there.
20 And, I drove nights most of the time, and I served...
21 it was underserved communities by the medallion
22 owners at that time.

23 SPEAKER ADAMS: Yeah, yeah.

24 And thinking about your questions in your
25 questionnaire, we asked you the questions about your

2 views about TLC policies and the for-hire vehicle
3 industry when we sent our pre-hearing with questions.
4 But, most of your replies consisted of needing more
5 information. Do you come into this role having any
6 views about what the policies of the TLC should be
7 with respect to street-hails and pricing even in
8 terms of normative values?

9 PAUL BADER: Yes. I tend to want to do as much
10 research and get as much background information as I
11 can before making definitive conclusions, but...

12 SPEAKER ADAMS: Mm-hmm

13 PAUL BADER: clearly there should be a direct
14 correlation between the increase that an app is
15 charging a consumer and that percentage of that
16 increase, which is going to go to the driver. What
17 that is, I don't have an... Hopefully we will get to
18 that point where we will be able to have more of a
19 definitive. But, yes, clearly, it should be in a
20 situation whereby if the app is charging more, the
21 driver should get their fair share of whatever that
22 increase is going to be. It doesn't make sense
23 sometimes to have a dynamic where the price is going
24 up, and the driver doesn't benefit from the price
25 going up. I don't want to see that happen, so I want

2 to see what it is that we can do to make that
3 equitable to do that.

4 I also understand that it is... You have... One
5 of the good things about the old fleet system was,
6 there was a shared benefit. The fleet wanted you to
7 do better. The more money that you booked, the more
8 money they made, and the more money the driver made.
9 With the driving apps now, that no longer exists,
10 because they don't really care on each individual
11 car, because they're not having any investment in
12 each individual car. How much they get for that
13 individual car -- they just care about how much
14 they're going to get overall. So, which is totally
15 the opposite view of an individual driver who wants
16 to optimize and maximize the return they are going to
17 get and the income that they will get from the amount
18 of time spent sitting behind the wheel. It is...
19 For those of you who have not done it, it is not an
20 easy thing to sit behind the wheel of any kind of
21 vehicle for eight, ten, twelve hours at a time.
22 Okay? And I have done it, as you can see a variety
23 of times. I know what it is like, especially when
24 you have to sit in traffic. And the drivers must get

2 their fair share of whatever the fare is that is
3 being charged.

4 SPEAKER ADAMS: I don't disagree with that at all.
5 I am going to ask one more question, then, I am going
6 to move onto Mr. Sorrentino.

7 Speaking along the lines of equitability and
8 equity, what is your view of surge pricing?

9 PAUL BADER: Some of it is ironic. Some makes
10 sense, and some of it is ironic. What is ironic is
11 that you get... They have surge pricing that is
12 going to go in at later... at certain times of the
13 day. Well, the irony is that if you pick up a fare
14 at 12 at midnight, it is going to take you less time
15 to get to where you have to go then if you had that
16 same fare at 6 o'clock. So, the idea that one has to
17 pay a lot more for a ride that is shorter, does not
18 necessarily... doesn't really make sense to me.
19 But, they can get away with it. And what happens
20 therefore also is that the... the disproportionate
21 amount of that is going to the... to that app as
22 opposed to the going to the driver, because if there
23 is any additional aggravation that is going to be
24 caused, it is going to be the driver working at
25 night, not the app, because the app is electronic.

2 And they don't know the difference between the sun
3 coming up and the sun going down. But, for the
4 driver driving, they are the one who has to
5 understand if there is any difference and what that
6 is going to be.

7 SPEAKER ADAMS: Thank you very much, Mr. Bader.

8 Mr. Sorrentino, you have served as a member of
9 the TLC as the industry has been adjusting to the
10 changes that I discussed in my remarks. And you have
11 heard a tremendous amount of feedback from
12 stakeholders about these changes. Based on this
13 experience, what importance do you place on these
14 policies?

15 The first one is ensuring that that street hails
16 are always possible. And the second one is ensuring
17 there are always standard fares for people who cannot
18 afford dynamic pricing.

19 THOMAS SORRENTINO: Thank you.

20 One of the things that I have learned over the
21 years of being on the Commission is a lot of
22 different issues, there are a lot of different
23 variables that go into play, and one of the things
24 that I have gone garnered from all of the testimony
25 that I have heard, all of the polices that we've

2 tried to pass and analyzing them, is that there is a
3 balance. There always has to be a balance, because
4 there are so many stakeholders now. As Mr. Bader
5 was saying, when he drove in the yellow medallions
6 basically, now with the advent of the for hire
7 vehicles, as we know the industry went upside down
8 basically. And with all of the cars that were on the
9 road, certain caps had to be put in, and that
10 impacted driver pay. It impacted value of
11 medallions. There are a lot of interactive pieces
12 that come into play. So, one of the things that I
13 believe is that ,you know, in terms of analyzing any
14 issue, you have to look at all of the factors. You
15 cannot look into a vacuum. So, with regards to the
16 question you're asking about with fares, I mean fares
17 with for hire vehicles, they do surge, and that puts
18 a burden on most New Yorkers when that happens, it is
19 hard to manage and transportation when you cannot
20 rely in reliable and economic transportation. So, I
21 think setting polices in fares is something that
22 needs to be looked at very closely and monitored.
23 And I think you have to be flexible and monitoring.

24 And think the TLC over the years have dealt with
25 many, many issues. And I think ,you know, from what

2 I am seeing firsthand is that the heart of the TLC,
3 the professionals who work there is the right place.
4 And I think getting information is key. With the
5 advent of technology, I think you need to analyze
6 that in a quicker and more comprehensive way and
7 change with the times. And moving into a sustainable
8 situation with electric vehicles, uh, is also
9 something that is going to be the next wave that we
10 will have to deal with.

11 SPEAKER ADAMS: I agree.

12 So, Mr. Sorrentino, you are looking for
13 reappointment, you are a commissioner; you are
14 sitting with three individuals who could possible
15 become your colleagues over the next few weeks or so.
16 So, what have you learned from being a TLC
17 commissioner that has been surprising to you that you
18 can share with three individuals that could
19 potentially be your colleagues?

20 THOMAS SORRENTINO: Well, one of the things I
21 have learned, and I have the utmost respect for is
22 the TLC staff. One of the things that, coming in as
23 a novice, as I was six years ago, the question is,
24 how do you get your hands around all of the issues
25 and all of the information? And one of the things

2 that I have learned, and I have worked with various
3 commissioners, I have worked with Meera Joshi when I
4 first came on, who is now one of the deputy mayors.
5 I have worked with Bill Heinzen as an acting chair; I
6 have worked with Roy Montenegro, who is currently, he
7 was acting chair as well before Commissioner Do came
8 in, and the predecessor, Aloysee, who just left
9 recently. And one of the things that I have learned,
10 no matter who the chair is on the acting chair is,
11 the staff is so professional. They provide you with
12 information on a continuous basis, they prepare you,
13 they have briefings, so you are able to have a
14 dialogue and ask questions to make sure you have a
15 full understanding. And not just to vote, because
16 that is the way ,you know, that the group is going,
17 you have the right to ask questions.

18 So, I think one of the things I would share with
19 this panel, is that you should be afraid to engage
20 with the TLC staff. I think engagement and
21 collaboration is very important. And that is really
22 the biggest takeaway that I would share with them if
23 they are going to come and embark on this. Because,
24 none of us know it all. And I think you all have to
25 keep an open mind and be objective. I would say

2 being objective and keeping a fair mind is key. And,
3 also, listening to the folks in the industry, I mean,
4 I have sat through numerous hearings, and I could
5 tell you that some of them are heartbreaking. And
6 some of the folks who are here today, I have seen on
7 numerous occasions, and you have to listen to
8 everybody. You have balance. So, that is what I
9 think would be the biggest takeaway that I would
10 share with them.

11 SPEAKER ADAMS: Thank you. And thank you for your
12 service as a commissioner.

13 THOMAS SORRENTINO: Thank you.

14 SPEAKER ADAMS: Thank you very much. And thank you
15 for the shoutout for the staff as well.

16 Ms. Kaufman, I going to come to you for a couple
17 of questions, because there is no question that you
18 are an expert in transportation policy and that the
19 TLC has relied on your wisdom in the past. However,
20 some member of the taxi industry have expressed
21 concerns about consulting that you have done for the
22 rideshare company Revel.

23 So, could you share with us what Revel is exactly
24 and the nature of the work you did for them?

2 SARAH KAUFMAN: Sure, thank you. So, Revel is a
3 rideshare company, but before they became a rideshare
4 company they were a shared... they, and they
5 continue to be, a shared moped company. And the work
6 I did for them was consulting for the moped company
7 Revel. Which predates... The work I did with them
8 predates any work before they became a rideshare
9 company. I looked at safety statics from 2019 and
10 2020. I looked at how their safety changes after
11 they had some tragic incidents on mopeds. I looked
12 at how the safety changes that they implemented, like
13 requiring selfies with a helmet and detecting the
14 locations of riders, more specifically, and also
15 being more specific about who was qualified to be a
16 customer for the service, uh, if they had done
17 something irresponsible or reckless, and how much
18 safer the service became after that -- and the
19 answer is remarkably safer. I did not do any work
20 with them on their rideshare services, and have... I
21 don't work with them at all.

22 SPEAKER ADAMS: Okay, okay. Along those lines,
23 what role do you believe that rideshare apps should
24 have when it comes to shaping policy for the taxi
25 industry if any?

2 SARAH KAUFMAN: I don't think that they should
3 have a role in shaping policy; although, I do think
4 that for many New Yorkers, that is an important mode
5 of transportation, especially New Yorkers underserved
6 by public transportation who need some other way to
7 get around, and perhaps live in an area where they
8 don't have immediate access to street-hail taxis.

9 So, while I don't see these companies as shaping
10 policy, I do think that there is a balance of voices
11 that need to go into the outcomes.

12 SPEAKER ADAMS: Okay. Uh, I just have one more
13 question for you. In your question, in your
14 prehearing questionnaire, you wrote that you are open
15 to the implementation of dynamic pricing. While that
16 benefits individual drivers, is it good
17 transportation policy to allow people with more money
18 to get a ride in the rain than people with less
19 money?

20 SARAH KAUFMAN: That is a very good point. This
21 is something that ,you know, remaining open to it. I
22 obviously have more to learn from the Commission and
23 from the experiences of individuals on the ground. I
24 appreciate that context.

2 SPEAKER ADAMS: It is going to be an interesting
3 balancing act. Just ask the Commissioner there.
4 Thank you very much.

5 SARAH KAUFMAN: Thank you.

6 All Right, Mr. Chan, I have got a couple of
7 questions for you. And I said, you have got some
8 things in common with me. You were in the
9 telecommunications business. I come from the world
10 of MCI, Winstar, and InfoHighway, all rolled into one
11 back in the day. So, I have a little bit of
12 knowledge about Avaya, who we worked with, and
13 Lucent, of course, who we worked with, and office
14 phones and t-spans and hot cuts (sp?), and PBX's and
15 all of that great stuff. So, I just wanted to throw
16 that out there also.

17 You have almost thirty years of experience as an
18 Intellectual Property Attorney. What in your
19 experience, though, has informed your understanding
20 of what constitutes good transportation planning?
21 And based on that understanding, what should the
22 policy goals of regulating the for hire industry be?

23 KENNETH CHAN: So, let me say that I almost worked
24 for MCI... (CROSS-TALK)

2 SPEAKER ADAMS: (LAUGHING) Did you really? It was
3 a great company.... until they laid me off.

4 KENNETH CHAN: Right, right.

5 So, uhm, I... Corning, Avaya, and United
6 Technologies are huge complex companies. And they
7 also work within very complex regulatory frameworks.
8 So, TLC essentially is a regulatory commission. So,
9 I think my experience operating within regulatory
10 frameworks will help me to better navigate issues
11 that will come up working within the boundaries of,
12 making sure that we comply and understanding the
13 landscape that we have to operate within.

14 I think particularly United Technologies and
15 Corning, these are companies with multiple divisions,
16 dozens and dozens of product lines, and the ability
17 to work with people to get things done to understand
18 issues, to understand where stakeholders are with
19 respect to challenges to the issues that we face, I
20 think the ability to collaborate and really filter
21 through the issues and matrix of considerations, that
22 is something that I hope would be helpful if
23 confirmed as a commissioner. In hearing from... and
24 reading about the issues that TLC faces, these are

2 complex issues. And I hope that my background can
3 lend itself to help solve some of those issues.

4 SPEAKER ADAMS: Okay. I am just going to ask a
5 couple of questions just to dig a little bit deeper
6 into your answers to our prehearing questions.

7 You suggested that bodegas should be allowed to
8 charge a fee in exchange for giving members of the
9 public the ability to hail a taxi. Do you believe
10 New Yorkers would actually support a policy that
11 would require them to pay money for a service they
12 can currently obtain by standing on the corner and
13 raising their hands?

14 KENNETH CHAN: So, the... The context of that
15 question is that, in a scenario where getting a ride
16 is all done electronically, what if we don't have a
17 smart phone? Someone doesn't have a smart phone to
18 be able to call for a ride. So, the... Some of the
19 options that I describe are in included perhaps,
20 enabling LinkNYC kiosks to have a function for
21 consumers to walk up to it and get a ride.

22 The second option, idea really, is to add a
23 similar function to bus stops, which are way more
24 plentiful than LinkNYC kiosks.

2 Thinking about a situation where, in a place
3 where this may be a little far from a bus stop, other
4 alternatives and ideas. And what I thought could be
5 looked into is, well ,you know, there is always a
6 corner store. Right? And maybe could we come up
7 with a partnership with those businesses for them to
8 help neighbors call for a ride.

9 SPEAKER ADAMS: Mm-hmm?

10 KENNETH CHAN: Now, the fee does not have to be
11 extravagant, because if I am going to corner store to
12 call for a ride, there is a decent chance that I will
13 buy a cup of coffee, too. So, there is increased
14 foot traffic that also benefits [BACKGROUND NOISE]
15 [INAUDIBLE] businesses. And what the fee should be,
16 I don't have an opinion on that...

17 SPEAKER ADAMS: Mm-hmm?

18 KENNETH CHAN: But it is an idea that we could
19 look into.

20 SPEAKER ADAMS: Okay, let's stick with LinkNYC for
21 a minute and my final questions. I am glad that you
22 brought it up.

23 In speaking about LinkNYC, uhm, the capability of
24 LinkNYC, uhm, once again, in your prehearing
25 questions, you suggested that you would be in favor

2 of allowing all taxis to rely upon ride hail apps,
3 and for that for people without phones, you would
4 provide access to such apps by expanding access to
5 LinkNYC by increasing the number of kiosks and
6 expanding LinkNYC to bus stops.

7 Your answer, though, seems to indicate that you
8 would support repealing all regulations that require
9 yellow and green taxis to pick up street hails.
10 Would that be your position?

11 KENNETH CHAN: Uh, no, I don't favor repealing
12 regulations that require taxis to accept street
13 hails.

14 SPEAKER ADAMS: Okay, my final is... (CROSS-TALK)

15 KENNETH CHAN: And... And, sorry... (CROSS-TALK)

16 SPEAKER ADAMS: Uh-uh? Go ahead...

17 KENNETH CHAN: Speaker...

18 SPEAKER ADAMS: Mm-hmm?

19 KENNETH CHAN: The idea is not to add LinkNYC
20 kiosks to bus stops, but to add the functionality to
21 bus stops for residents to call for a ride.

22 SPEAKER ADAMS: Got it. Okay, thank you for the
23 clarification, very much.

24 My final question, once again around the area of
25 LinkNYC, because it has come up so often in my

2 district right now, and we are in discussions around
3 the construction of the towers across the city.

4 The LinkNYC kiosks that have been constructed are
5 enormous. They are 30-foot towers, which residents
6 in many neighborhoods including my own, have raised a
7 lot of objections. Where would you expand them, and
8 how would you address community opposition?

9 KENNETH CHAN: With respect to form factor of
10 LinkNYC kiosks, I know that you know, having worked
11 in telecommunications industry, they don't need to be
12 that big. They don't need to be that tall...

13 (CROSS-TALK)

14 SPEAKER ADAMS: That's right!

15 KENNETH CHAN: They cannot be too small, but they
16 don't need to be that big.

17 SPEAKER ADAMS: Mm-hmm.

18 KENNETH CHAN: In terms of, uh, community
19 oppositions to LinkNYC kiosks, I would have to
20 understand what those oppositions are and what those
21 concerns are...

22 SPEAKER ADAMS: I can share them with you.

23 KENNETH CHAN: Yes, yes, absolutely. And, uh, but
24 LinkNYC kiosks, from my understanding of its
25 functions, they do provide some utility to residents.

2 SPEAKER ADAMS: Okay.

3 Some of the oppositions, just to share, then I
4 will close and give it back over to the Chair.

5 Some of the opposition, in my district
6 particularly, and maybe in my colleagues' districts
7 as well. Of course it's size. That is number one.
8 Number two would be the lack of appropriate
9 advisement that they were going to be constructed in
10 the neighborhoods. So, that is lack of notice to the
11 community -- to the community boards -- it's causing
12 concern. The amount of whatever may be impacting the
13 airwaves, the air, or whatever. Most of it boils
14 down to one consistent issues, and that is the lack
15 of communication across the board. And
16 communication, you and I take that different ways
17 given our backgrounds, but it is ,you know, the lack
18 of ,you know, connection and communicating.

19 KENNETH CHAN: Absolutely. And that is vital. It
20 is disappointing to hear that the construction of
21 LinkNYC kiosks may not have been properly
22 communicated to local residents and keeping the
23 public informed. That is something that I cannot
24 really speak... (CROSS-TALK)

2 SPEAKER ADAMS: Understood, understood. Thank you
3 very much. Thank you all for your testimony.

4 Mr. Chair?

5 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Thank you, and I want to
6 repeat my opposition also to the massive towers as
7 well.

8 We have also been joined by Council Member
9 Sanchez and we have Council Member Borrelli here on
10 remote as well.

11 I just want to jump into a few sort of more
12 general questions. This has been an industry in
13 turbulence for the last decade or two with the advent
14 of... even predating the sort of rise of the apps.
15 A lot of debates about the green taxis versus black
16 car industry, versus the livery industry versus the
17 traditional yellow industry and there has been lots
18 of division within the entirety of the TLC. You
19 bring in the apps, now you have an entirely new fight
20 and debate. And it feels like it has stabilized a
21 little bit these days, but I still would be
22 interested to hear from each of you, what so you see
23 as the most pressing issue right now facing the TLC?

24 PAUL BADER: I think you are 100 percent right.
25 It has been in turmoil. And I think that the

2 challenge has been to kind of take a global view and
3 try to get all of the pieces and all the information
4 that you can together at one time, so you really can
5 figure out how best to address... to figure out what
6 is the role that this industry should play in the new
7 economy, in the new transportation dynamics that we
8 have in urban areas. And once you can... And try
9 to, it always changing, but you want to, as best as
10 you can, try to figure... try to wrap your arms
11 around it and then figure out what is the best
12 structured system that is going to work for the
13 priorities that you establish. And to me, the two
14 priorities are the passengers, which are the clients,
15 and the drivers -- many of which they share. And as
16 long as we can do that, that I think is the way to
17 make it work best. This is a congested city, and it
18 is only getting much, much more congested, it is
19 much, much more congested. There is an interesting
20 statistic that says that there are fewer linear miles
21 of roadway in the city of New York today than there
22 were in 1960. So, that we have more vehicles and a
23 higher percentage of those vehicles are for hire
24 vehicles. So, they play a larger and larger role.
25 They move more and more people. And we must figure

2 out the best most comprehensive way to have this
3 industry serve the people who need them and the
4 people who provide the services which are the
5 drivers. And it must be done in an economically,
6 equitable way so that the people are compensated and
7 the people are not paying too much for the fares.

8 What are all of the answers? I don't have all
9 the answers. As this gentleman said, none of us have
10 all the answers. [INAUDIBLE]... (CROSS-TALK)

11 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: I understand that, but soon
12 enough you're going to have to confront some hard
13 questions about this... (CROSS-TALK)

14 PAUL BADER: [INAUDIBLE]... (CROSS-TALK)

15 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: So, how do you balance pay
16 versus pay from the... How do you balance good pay
17 against the consumer paying too much inside the
18 vehicle?

19 PAUL BADER: Our job is to... We have to find a
20 way to regulate that, which we have the power to do.
21 And we have the right to structure this... We must
22 find a way to structure the division of the fare such
23 that the drivers get the fair, equitable part of that
24 fare that they need to do without putting it on the
25 backs of the riding public. What does that mean? It

2 means in the end that the app, the riding app and the
3 people that... Look the City does this all the time.
4 You want to do business in this city, because we have
5 this, and this, and this, and this, and this --
6 people want to do business here. Well, You know
7 what? You want to do business here as a private
8 company, you have to pay for that. So, I think that
9 that the ride apps are the ones that are going to
10 have to make the adjustments. And they are going to
11 be force to make the adjustments so that the other
12 two entities have more fair equitable... (CROSS-
13 TALK)

14 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Okay, thank you.

15 Mr. Sorrentino? You're... You're there already,
16 but what do you see right now as the biggest
17 challenge at the TLC?

18 THOMAS SORRENTINO: Well, as I said earlier, I
19 think the biggest challenge is a balance --
20 establishing a balance on all levels, okay? It is
21 not just one issue as we know. And I think ,you
22 know, right now dealing with congestion is obviously
23 a priority. Secondly, I think driver pay and having
24 a certain amount cars on the road is part of that.
25 And making sure that the outer boroughs are all

2 served as well. I think ,you know, one of the things
3 the boroughs, the outer boroughs seem to be the
4 forgotten child. The green cabs are an attempt to try
5 to help that. A pilot we just recently put out for
6 street hailed liveries to try to get some other cars
7 out there. I think all of those types of ideas have
8 to be thought about. And I think ,you know, the key
9 is to try to get a balance in keeping the amount of
10 cars within a certain range. I know we have a cap in
11 place for our for hire vehicles. That is being
12 monitored every six months, which I think we need to
13 continue doing that.

14 So, it is just really a matter... I think all of
15 the issues have been identified, and it is a matter
16 of just monitoring them, and making sure that we are
17 making the right choices and pivoting when we have
18 to.

19 SARAH KAUFMAN: Thank you. I agree what they have
20 both said. I will add on the topic of conversion to
21 electric vehicles, which I think will be an
22 interesting challenge in terms of deploying enough
23 charging stations around the city and distributing
24 them effectively and equitably. As well as being
25 able to identify workforce that can maintain a new

2 type of vehicle that requires different mechanical
3 skills.

4 KENNETH CHAN: We just heard some very good
5 suggestions. I think one of the issues we need to
6 look at is to find ways to increase vehicle
7 utilization, and; therefore, revenue for medallion
8 taxis. But, the comments about electric vehicles and
9 others are... those are clearly very important as
10 well.

11 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Could you give us ideas and
12 recommendations for how you would increase
13 utilization of the yellow taxi?

14 KENNETH CHAN: The recent pilot program where Uber
15 can dispatch [INAUDIBLE] to taxis, that has the
16 potential of increasing utilization of medallion
17 taxis. It is obviously too early to tell. But we
18 should not stop thinking of ideas to help the
19 medallion taxis.

20 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Okay.

21 I want to go back just to -- you mentioned
22 electric vehicles. And there is this discussion
23 about the cap that the City put in... The City
24 Council put in place, I forget how many years ago
25 now, to limit the amount of vehicles that are for

2 hire vehicles on the street and to increase
3 utilization as well. And obviously I represent the
4 congested core of midtown. We have all talked about
5 congestion, and that was an aim to try to reduce the
6 amount of idling of for hire vehicles on the street.
7 There is a discussion and there has just been... I
8 think some announcements around whether the use of
9 electric vehicles should be in that cap or should be
10 outside of that cap in effort to promote more
11 electric vehicles -- for hire vehicles. And, so I
12 would just be curious about your take on that.
13 Should the cap stay inclusive of all vehicles, or
14 should there be exemptions made for electric
15 vehicles?

16 SARAH KAUFMAN: I think that, uhm, I think, once
17 again, as we are talking about a balance, I think
18 that the balance needs to be found, which is
19 something I would look forward to exploring. I do
20 think it is intelligent of TLC to be rolling out the
21 green licenses slowly so that there is kind of a
22 turnover to these new electric vehicles, uh, because
23 we are facing that 2030 deadline. So, but, I still
24 think, uh, I would need to explore it further before
25

2 I give a full answer on that question... (CROSS-
3 TALK)

4 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Could... Could... Could be
5 a vote that comes to you early on as a commissioner.
6 So, if presented to you as an opportunity to expand
7 electric vehicles allowing a cushion in the cap for
8 those or to keep a hard cap how would you vote?

9 SARAH KAUFMAN: I would vote to have any vehicle
10 type as long as it is a small operator with kind of
11 six licenses or fewer.

12 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: To be able to allow to...
13 The... Okay.

14 Uhm, I want to talk to Mr. Bader and Mr.
15 Sorrentino, you guys mentioned congestion, we've
16 heard talk about with the cap as well, the city and
17 the state are going to be implementing congestion
18 pricing soon; there is a big question, I think,
19 before the panel, those in the state, about how to
20 handle for hire vehicles and taxis. Should they be
21 charged per trip, which would be quite expensive for
22 the, I think should they maybe just charge a one-time
23 fee? Can you guys... It... It comes to the TLC
24 asking for an opinion on how vehicles should be

2 handled in the congestion pricing scheme, what do you
3 guys recommend?

4 THOMAS SORRENTINO: Well, as a we know, there are
5 also charges in place already that the, uh,
6 transportation sector pays. So, I think anything
7 that is put on top that needs to be really thought
8 about and analyzed. So, it is hard to come up with a
9 real hard and quick answer, but I think we have to
10 keep in mind that they have already contributed to
11 many, many dollars over many years, and anything that
12 would go on top of that, we need to be mindful of.
13 And this is also going to affect our riding public.
14 You know? They're going to have to pay. How will
15 that affect ,you know, utilization of transportation
16 as well? So, I think it needs to be thought about
17 and analyzed.

18 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Thanks.

19 PAUL BADER: So, I come from Queens, and I have
20 lived in Brooklyn, so I have never been a fan to some
21 extent of some of [INAUDIBLE]... (CROSS-TALK)

22 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: I won't hold either of those
23 things against you...

24 PAUL BADER: [INAUDIBLE] thank you, I appreciate
25 it. I have also lived in Manhattan.

2 My belief in this issue and a lot of other issues
3 and has always been that, if you are representing an
4 industry, I want to be proactive and not reactive.
5 So, as I have indicated before, I think that we
6 representing the taxi the industry -- the for hire
7 vehicle industry -- need to figure out what is in the
8 best interest of the people who we represent, both
9 the drivers and the riding public, and that should be
10 part of our input relative to how this industry is
11 dealt with in congestion pricing.

12 However, so, I want to... I think should be
13 studied, and we want to make our presentation to
14 whomever we are going to have to make it to -- the
15 state level -- the city level -- to enable that.
16 But, I do not believe that a ride from one place over
17 to one street or a ride to another same distance to
18 two streets further should have, uhm, should... that
19 there should be a surcharge for that. None.

20 I also think that New York City was developed in
21 a way that put a predominance of certain services on
22 the island of Manhattan. However, the great majority
23 of the people who partake of those services no longer
24 are just people who live in Manhattan, but they live
25 in Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx, and some live in

2 Staten Island. And, so, to charge these people more
3 money to partake of those services than other people,
4 goes back to my big concern about equity and
5 fairness. So, if you have to go to one of the many,
6 many hospitals in Manhattan, and there are... most
7 of them are in your district...

8 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Outside of the congestion
9 pricing zone [INAUDIBLE].

10 PAUL BADER: Many of them are, but not all of
11 them. So, that... NYU is in the... is in the
12 district as we know... So, and these intuitions just
13 keep getting bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger,
14 and they draw from further and further. So, my
15 concern is for these people... that... to pay more
16 for that, I don't really think is equitable.

17 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Okay.

18 I want to hand it over to our Transportation
19 Chair, Council Member Brooks-Powers. And then we
20 will hear from Council Member Sanchez.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you so much,
22 Chair.

23 A couple of questions for you all. First of all,
24 thank you for your comments and presentations. It

2 was a pleasure speaking with you, Ms. Kaufman, in
3 terms of your experience.

4 And, of course, the Queens selection, uh, we
5 appreciate the information you give us... insight
6 that you give as a driver, and I know that there has
7 been a push to make sure that on the TLC Commission,
8 that we have representation for drivers to make sure
9 that we are centering what is happening in the
10 industry right now as we try to navigate the crisis
11 that has been existing for the last couple of years.

12 I would like to know for each of you, what is
13 your opinion on whether we should allow commuter vans
14 to accept street hails?

15 KENNETH CHAN: The problem with going last is
16 that you run out of things to say.

17 Thank you for the question. As we know, commuter
18 vans play an integral part of providing
19 transportation access to the outer boroughs. The...
20 We should, first of all, continue the work that TLC
21 has done to help commuter vans extend their reach to
22 places where there has traditionally been underserved
23 by mass transit. We should also support state level
24 [BACKGROUND NOISE] efforts to regulate commuter vans

2 and work with industries to establish safe and
3 economical operation of these vans.

4 In so far as allowing commuter vans to, uhm, to
5 function as street hailed vehicles, that is something
6 that probably needs a little more study: How it
7 works in relationship to medallion taxis; whether
8 they work on routes or whether they drive until the
9 van is full before they depart. So, I think there
10 are a lot of issues that need to be studied before
11 adjustments can be made... A decision can be made on
12 that question.

13 SARAH KAUFMAN: Thank you.

14 I am well aware that, uh, commuter vans serve a
15 population that is often underserved by public
16 transportation, and that the ridership tends to be
17 taking commuter vans to centrally located subway
18 stations and sometimes more central bus stops, so I
19 know that they are an essential daily service for
20 outer borough commuters -- especially, uh, I do, like
21 Mr. Chan said, I do think that we should be working
22 closely with the state to ensure the state's
23 operation of these vehicles. And in terms of street
24 hails, I think that further analysis would be needed
25 in terms of how it interacts not just with street

2 hailed taxis, but also how it might intersect with
3 public transit service, for example, serving on fixed
4 routes that may overlap with MTA service and how
5 that... And how those two would intersect. So, it
6 is something that I am very interested obviously
7 helping to provide an essential service, and I hope
8 that it can be continued in a safe way.

9 THOMAS SORRENTINO: Hi, I believe that the
10 commuter vans play an important role. And I think
11 they provide a valuable service to the community
12 especially in the outer boroughs. I live in
13 Brooklyn; I lived in Kings Plaza, and we see a lot
14 of, unfortunately, a lot of illegal commuter vans,
15 which I believe is a risk to the riding public. And
16 I know that TLC's Enforcement Division,
17 unfortunately, is undermanned to handle... all of
18 the illegal commuter van activity in the City. But
19 that is the by-product of the commuter vans. And
20 there is a need for it. People want it whether they
21 are going to a central shopping location or they are
22 going to... or whether they are taking a van to the
23 subway. Where I live in the Mill Basin/Bergen Beach
24 area, there are no... there is no transportation to
25 a subway station. So, you need to take either an

2 Uber or you have to call a cab through an app and so
3 on. So, there is a need, and the people where I live
4 do utilize them. So, I think that is something that
5 we should continue with, we just need to make sure we
6 oversee it and monitor it properly.

7 PAUL BADER: Thank you. So, now it's my turn to
8 basically agree with what has been said before.

9 Certainly, I remember when they started, and they
10 fulfilled an incredible need for our underserved
11 communities, particularly and in parts in Queens.
12 And I would say that, in their favor, that they are
13 responsible, along with other newer and revised means
14 of transportation in the development and the growth
15 of certain communities where people were a little
16 questionable about living, because they were
17 concerned about how they were going to commute to
18 different places. So, they played a role in the
19 growth of New York, and they continue to be a part
20 of... a viable part of the transportation system.
21 They are now involved in a more complicated
22 transportation system indicated by the fact that we
23 now have ,you know, five vehicles that... and the
24 whole industry, and we have ,you know, uh, plug in
25 your... Revel now is ,you know, and, uh, rent, uh,

2 what was the other company that you could just? --
3 You know, there are all these different ways now in
4 which you can get around and rent a car or have
5 somebody drive you or get on a van. So, the key
6 again is to ensure that they are regulated in a safe
7 and viable way that fits into the rest of the for
8 hire vehicle transportation network that needs to go
9 into the City. But, clearly they have played a role,
10 they will continue to play a role, they should play
11 role, and we just have to make sure that it is done
12 in a safe and economically fair way.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you for the
14 responses.

15 This question, again, is for the entire panel.
16 How do you feel about the impact of congestion
17 pricing on the for hire vehicle industry? And should
18 taxis and for hire vehicles be exempt for the new
19 congestion charge?

20 PAUL BADER: [NOT MIC'D] I thought we already
21 answered that [INAUDIBLE]... (CROSS-TALK)

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: I'm sorry, I missed
23 it, I stepped out. So, if you could just let me
24 know.

2 PAUL BADER: [NOT MIC'D] Yeah, I mean, indicated
3 that I thought we should be proactive [INAUDIBLE]
4 whatever the [INAUDIBLE] decide what is the best role
5 and the best way [INAUDIBLE] that for hire vehicles
6 need to operate to the parameters that are set if we
7 do ever really get the congested prices, [INAUDIBLE]
8 but the challenge really is that it must be fair and
9 equitable, and many of what I have heard is how they
10 want to do surcharges on for hire vehicles, which as
11 Mr. Sorrentino said, sometimes that is on top of
12 another surcharge that people are paying just not
13 seem fair and equitable.

14 THOMAS SORRENTINO: I think I had mentioned this
15 earlier, as Paul indicated, we currently... There is
16 a charge already being paid by passengers, and the
17 for hire vehicle sector and the medallions have
18 contributed quite a few dollars over the past years
19 in to this fund for the MTA. So, I think anything
20 that comes down as new as congestion pricing come
21 down and get approved eventually, that needs to be
22 looked at, because we don't want to burden the
23 drivers or the passengers with additional costs. I
24 think that needs to be balanced. And I just read
25 over the weekend that the federal government just

2 came out and approved the environmental aspect of it.
3 So, it does look like it is going to move on to the
4 state now for their determination. So, I think at
5 that level it needs to be looked at where there can
6 be a balance, and I think that is the key, thank you.

7 SARAH KAUFMAN: I think the purpose of the
8 congestion pricing obviously is the fund for the MTA,
9 but also to reduce the amount of congestion in
10 Manhattan in the central business district. And to
11 that effect, uh, the idea is to incentivize people to
12 leave their private vehicles at home. And, so, I
13 think that taxis and for hire vehicles are an
14 essential ingredient in order to have people be able
15 to move around the city, door to door, if they are
16 not able to take public transit or another mode.
17 So, I do think that... So, I do hope that the state
18 takes that into account, that these door to door
19 trips are essential for reducing congestion on the
20 streets.

21 KENNETH CHAN: And, I would just add that, again,
22 the taxis and the for hire vehicles already pay a
23 surcharge into the congestion pricing. I would just
24 like to emphasize the impact on consumers. Depending
25 on what the toll is set at, you know, that makes the

2 ride potentially very expensive. So, the impact on
3 consumers needs to be considered.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

5 I wanted to ask just a few individual questions.
6 And I am going to start with your, Mr. Chan.

7 First, can you walk us through what experience
8 you have that is relevant to TLC? The Commission's
9 mandate includes licensing and regulating the City's
10 yellow cabs, for hire vehicles, commuter vans, and
11 paratransit vehicles, setting cab rates, and so on
12 and so forth. So, can you point specifically to any
13 work experience you have related to any of these
14 responsibilities?

15 KENNETH CHAN: I would say that the most relevant
16 experience applicable to TLC is that I have dealt
17 with very complex organizations and systems as well
18 as very complex regulatory frameworks. I think TLC
19 is similar in that sense, in that it operates within
20 the regulatory framework. It is a regulatory
21 condition. And I think my experience dealing with
22 regulations and operating within regulatory
23 frameworks can help me navigate many issues that TLC
24 faces.

2 Secondly, having worked at three high-tech -- US
3 high-tech companies, two of which still are very,
4 very large, You know, I had to navigate a lot of
5 issues working with different organizations,
6 divisions, product lines and a multitude of
7 stakeholders. I think the ability to collaborate
8 with a multitude of people and deal with complex
9 issues, should lend itself to help address issues and
10 challenges that TLC faces.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Now, when you say
12 navigate issues that TLC faces, because it is a lot
13 of nuisance issues especially when you talk about the
14 medallion dynamics, when you talk about the licensing
15 of these for hire vehicles, and all of those
16 dynamics, could you walk me through how you feel that
17 experience will help you navigate some of these
18 pressing issues that TLC is faced with today?

19 KENNETH CHAN: Uh, sure. So, for any of those
20 issues that you have just mentioned, there are
21 multiple stakeholders... (CROSS-TALK)

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Just pick one,
23 because I want you to walk me through.

24 KENNETH CHAN: Oh, okay, sure. Let's take EV,
25 right? You know, we have 2030 green initiative.

2 There is a pilot program for up to 1,000 EV licenses
3 could be issued. In implementing EV for taxis and
4 for hire vehicles, it is necessary to make electric
5 vehicles -- taxis and for hire vehicles --
6 financially attractive for that conversion to take
7 place. Moreover, we cannot run electric vehicle
8 taxis and for hire vehicles unless there is
9 sufficient fast charging stations that are accessible
10 and strategically located. So, the provider for that
11 infrastructure would involve at least an Edison
12 public/private partners. Uh, on the cost, on the
13 [BACKGROUND NOISE] [INAUDIBLE] costs of using
14 electrical vehicles for taxis and for hire vehicles,
15 ,you know, we need to -- or we should -- we could
16 consider working with federal government, state
17 government, and private foundations for rebates,
18 credits, and grants to make that transformation
19 possible.

20 So, my ability and my experience in working with
21 large groups of people with different interests and
22 needs, I think could lend itself to help address,
23 communicate, and to work with, uh, a multitude of
24 stakeholders.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: So, staying on the
3 line with the electric for hire vehicle, with...
4 Which you know The Mayor has committed to a 100
5 percent of the fleet by 2030. And I am going to ask
6 you and the rest of the panel, how can the City get
7 there?

8 KENNETH CHAN: There are obstacles no doubt.
9 First of all, we have to make sure that when
10 deploying EVs or taxis and for hire vehicles, that
11 the transition from an owner/driver standpoint as
12 well as company standpoints, that transition has to
13 be financially attractive.

14 The second obstacle is, again, the infrastructure
15 -- the charging infrastructure. So, the Commission -
16 - and this is part of the 'Charged Up!' roadmap that
17 the Commission has contemplated, is to, again, work
18 with these public and private partners to explore
19 what financial incentives can be brought the bear to
20 make EVs financially attractive. And, on the
21 infrastructure, again, we need to Con Edison to work,
22 we need to whether it is property owners or
23 properties that the City that are city owned, or
24 fleet tech quarters, we need lots of fast charging
25 stations to make this happen.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: And if the rest of
3 the panel can answer?

4 SARAH KAUFMAN: I agree with what Mr. Chan said.
5 I think that we will need fast charges distributed
6 throughout the City that are universal to all vehicle
7 types. And we will also need a workforce that knows
8 how to maintain the vehicles, which have a different
9 operating system than traditional gas powered
10 vehicles.

11 And, of course, TLC is slowly rolling out EV only
12 licenses, and, so, I believe that that will need to
13 be continued to incentivize and require the
14 transition to electric vehicles.

15 THOMAS SORRENTINO: Thank you. There is a mandate
16 and a commitment as you have noted to move in that
17 direction by 2030. I think obviously the
18 infrastructure is going to be part of that equation.
19 So, obviously that has to move in real time with the
20 rollout. What TLC has started doing with the, uh,
21 1,000 vehicles is the beginning of. And I think we
22 are going to continue to monitor that and expand it.
23 And I think it all has to be done hand and hand to
24 get a balance. Because, as we all know, we need to

2 make sure the economic considerations also are played
3 into that as well, thank you.

4 PAUL BADER: Like a lot of other things, you need
5 to have the will and the desire to make it happen.
6 We have plenty of time to do it. This is New York
7 City, we have some of the smartest people in the
8 world here who have a variety of experiences. And if
9 you put all of that together, and you get your heads
10 together, and you figure out how to solve the
11 problem. There is nothing that I have seen that this
12 city cannot do if it dedicates itself and commits
13 itself to doing. And this is not the rocket... This
14 is not the most complicated problem in the world by
15 far. And we have the resources across the board to
16 be able to make this happen. And, so, we just have
17 to commit, and we will make it happen. And this
18 commission and this staff, which it has been
19 indicated before it top notch, and the commissioners
20 are dedicated and committed will do what has to be
21 done, I think, to make it happen.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Okay, and I'm
23 sorry, I do have to run to another commitment. So,
24 my colleague is going to pick back up on that one.

2 Uhm, but I have one last question, and that is
3 what role can TLC play in improving paratransit in
4 New York City? And this question is for the whole
5 panel.

6 PAUL BADER: That is a little more complicated.
7 Uh, I think one of the challenges for government all
8 the time is that after they set regulations, the
9 follow through is not always there. And a policy or
10 a regulation in and of itself, doesn't solve the
11 problem. We have certainly seen that with other
12 issues in the City. So, the follow through and
13 making sure that... especially when a government
14 agency involves third parties that it contracts out
15 with, there must be supervision and oversight given
16 to those contracts to make sure that whoever is
17 contracted is doing the job the way it needs to be
18 done. We have an aging population across America.
19 We have an aging population in New York, so the need
20 for that is only increasing. And I think that we
21 have to address in a fair way and make sure that..
22 And, in an oversight way, to make sure that the
23 services are needed are done correctly, accurately,
24 and in a timely manner.

2 THOMAS SORRENTINO: I believe that this is an
3 important area as well, knowing that there is a need
4 for that transportation service. And I think one of
5 the attributes of the recent pilot program with the
6 street hails will allow carriers and livery services
7 to be able to serve that need. So, I believe that
8 this is something that we have identified, and that
9 we have to continue to put recourses into and to
10 monitor, thank you.

11 SARAH KAUFMAN: This is something that I see as
12 extremely important. I do understand that TLC is
13 increasing the number of... the percentage of
14 vehicles or will hope to increase the percentage of
15 vehicles to be more... to have more vehicles be
16 wheelchair accessible. I think we also need to be
17 thinking through other forms of disabilities, not
18 just mobility, but also vision impairments, hearing
19 impairments, as well as cognitive impairments. And
20 these are all disabilities that need to be addressed
21 through paratransit, which as you know is an unfunded
22 mandate. But, because the City subsidizes
23 paratransit along with the MTA, I think that it is in
24 the City's best interest to explore other ways to
25 provide services for people who rely on that service.

2 KENNETH CHAN: Yes, I think it is important that
3 all New Yorkers can get a ride whether they have
4 challenges or not. I think Mr. Bader's comment is
5 very insightful. I think the TLC should work with
6 ,you know, on increasing paratransit vehicles and
7 accessibility.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Thank you, we have also been
10 joined by Council Member Gale Brewer.

11 We will now hear from Council Member Sanchez
12 followed by Council Member Brewer.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Okay, thank you. Thank
14 you so much, Mr. Chair.

15 And just to immediately follow up on Council
16 Member Selvena Brooks-Powers' question about
17 electrification. Uhm, we love the enthusiasm. We
18 can do it. But, what are some of the specific ideas
19 or contours that you think we are going to have to
20 think about? Who are we going to have to engage
21 with? What are we going to have to do in order to
22 actually make it happen -- right? -- the City's
23 vehicle fleet, and then making electric access
24 available to the public?

2 PAUL BADER: I am a big believer in shared
3 services. I think that too many times we have public
4 facilities that are designated for only one use, when
5 there are other [INAUDIBLE] uses that could use and
6 opportunity. So, we are living in a world right now
7 where it is not just the taxi industry, the for hire
8 vehicle industry that is growing relative to electric
9 cars, but it is electric vehicles all across. And
10 there are incentives that are going to happen, and
11 they are going to continue happen. So, it is our
12 responsibility to work with similarly minded folks
13 and industries so that we can have shared services.
14 There are many garages; there are supermarkets; there
15 are shopping centers in different places that have
16 decided that it is in their economic interest to
17 provide charging services. So, as Ms. Kaufman said,
18 we want to make sure that it is a universal one. We
19 don't want to have different ones that are don't
20 match up. So, we have to look at what make sense,
21 what exists, and how we as the city of New York...
22 The great advantage that government has is that we
23 have long term view. So, we have to use that to our
24 advantage. So, we want to figure out who has a
25 likeminded interest and how we can work with them

2 together so that it benefits the needs of the City,
3 which is the for hire vehicles, as well as any other
4 whether it's private trucking or whether it is
5 delivery vans, or whether it is UPS, or whether it's
6 Fed-Ex, or any other thing, or whether it is just a
7 car dealership[, so that we can do it in the most
8 efficient and cost effective way.

9 THOMAS SORRENTINO: As one of the council members
10 had mentioned, is that the mayor had mandated that,
11 we are going to be moving to that... in that
12 direction. And, obviously, the mandate, the
13 commitment that the TLC has and the mandate to
14 navigate that to 2030, obviously there is a plan to
15 do that. And I think, as I mentioned earlier, the
16 infrastructure is a big part of that. We have to
17 make sure that the infrastructure build out
18 throughout the whole city allows for what we need for
19 the TLC to regulate properly as well as all of the
20 other pieces that go into that.

21 And the other part of it, I believe, we have to
22 make sure that it is economically beneficial for
23 everybody to want to do that -- that the drivers want
24 to invest in vehicles that allow them to do that.
25 Because, we have had so many issues, as we know, with

2 driver pay over the years and ,you know, we're just
3 trying to get to a point where maybe we are
4 getting... We were addressing those issues, we
5 cannot go backwards. So, I think that is an
6 important part of the equation.

7 SARAH KAUFMAN: I echo my co-panelists' sentiments
8 on having evenly distributed charging services that
9 are universal to every vehicle type and ensuring that
10 the licenses go out especially to electric vehicles.

11 In addition, we will have to work with the state
12 more fully to help ensure that the electric grid is
13 up to the task of charging so many vehicles at once.

14 KENNETH CHAN: As my co-panelists have mentioned,
15 and they have mentioned, and they have mentioned
16 numerous good ideas. So, along the lines of what the
17 [INAUDIBLE] Walmart, maybe not in New York City, and
18 Kroger supermarket, in fact have, uh, set up charging
19 stations. And it is really, I mean, not only do they
20 get the revenue for the charging, they also get
21 people to stop by and do some shopping as well. So,
22 I think the idea to share services is excellent. I
23 think that the employing these for taxis and for hire
24 vehicles is actually a very exciting transformation.
25 There's going to be less pollution, the vehicles

2 would be quieter. And, actually, I think some of the
3 standard safety features or safety features found in
4 EVs could [INAUDIBLE] taxis and for hire vehicles
5 would actually make it safer for drivers, passengers,
6 and the public. I think the limited licenses release
7 for EVs, up to a 1,000, I think it is a very good
8 entry into transition EVs for taxis and for hire
9 vehicle uses. I think that from that pilot program
10 we could potentially learn a lot about some of the
11 challenges that we may not now know. But, I do think
12 that TLC's 'Charged Up!' roadmap has a lot of these
13 suggestions.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so
15 much for your responses. Yeah, I mean, as a new
16 owner of an electric vehicle ,you know, whose home is
17 not able to the charge the car, it is very true,
18 there is going to be a lot infrastructure challenges
19 here.

20 So, I just have... Just have one more question.
21 I had the chance to speak the Mr. Chan, and Sarah, I
22 had a chance to speak you, too, but I would love to
23 ask you here on the record about ,you know,
24 protecting driver pay.

2 And, Commissioner, you were on the TLC during the
3 very controversial legislation that passed in 2019,
4 and there have been subsequent rule making processes
5 about how you protect driver pay and ensure a minimum
6 pay standard. So, what.. For me, that is one of the
7 biggest issues facing the industry. I represent
8 thousands of drivers that work Uber and Lyft and the
9 for hire vehicle app companies. And, so, my question
10 is, how do you... Firstly, how do you protect driver
11 pay? [BACKGROUND NOISE] What is next for the TLC in
12 protecting driver pay. And, secondly ,you know,
13 thinking about the cap on new vehicles on the road,
14 new for hire vehicles on the road, a lot of my
15 drivers... drivers in my district have talked about
16 the creation of a black market and of abuses that the
17 cap that has... was meant for, limiting congestion,
18 has actually created a black market and it is hurting
19 our folks on the ground. What are your thoughts how
20 we can address that and protect these individuals who
21 are the fabric of our communities?

22 THOMAS SORRENTINO: Thank you, and you hit the
23 nail on the head. Those are always issues and
24 challenges that are going to be continuous. We are
25 at a point now where we put regulations in place, and

2 I am to say I did vote for them, so my record stands
3 for itself. I have been on the Commission for the
4 last six and a half years, as I mentioned in my
5 opening statement. And I have heard a lot of
6 testimony over the years, from a lot of different
7 people, and a lot of sad stories. And we have done a
8 lot to try to address a lot of those things starting
9 with accessibility; the medallion values; driver pay
10 concerns. The last set of regulations that we passed
11 for driver pay, I thought were fair and mindful of
12 all of the pieces to the puzzle. Because, it is not
13 just one thing in a vacuum. Everything has an impact
14 to another part of the industry if you will. So, I
15 think ,you know, all of the things that the
16 commissioners, past and present, have put in place,
17 are things that have been thoughtful, analyzed, and I
18 think we need to be mindful going forward that we
19 don't go into a path that set us backwards. So, I
20 think ,you know, we just need to vigilant and be
21 mindful and thoughtful in our decisions, thank you.

22 PAUL BADER: Any time that you are working in an
23 industry that has government regulations, the only
24 entity that can ensure that the individual worker is
25 protected is going to be that government that entity.

2 And; therefore, because all know that the company, it
3 is not even at arm's length as they used to be,
4 they're living up in the mesosphere, doesn't care
5 about the individual driver. That driver is just
6 another code, just another number in their electronic
7 dashboard. So, when you have these situations, the
8 only protection, the only entity that can protect the
9 driver and ensure that they are going to be
10 represented is going to the government entity.
11 Therefore that is the responsibility of Taxi and
12 Limousine Commission in New York City -- to protect
13 and ensure that the workers are getting a fair shake
14 of the work... for the work that they do. It is
15 pretty simple.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Well, do you have any
17 specific thoughts on what the TLC could be doing?
18 What kind of polices can be pursued to protect these
19 workers?

20 PAUL BADER: They recently passed some
21 regulations, which I was supportive of and it was a
22 step in the right direction. And we have to continue
23 in that direction. We have to ensure that if there
24 are... We have to ensure that any time... It is
25 almost like we have to ,you know, we have to police

2 the apps. We have to... They are going to continue
3 to try to maximize their profit at the expense of the
4 rider and the driver. That is what their investors
5 want. That's what their executives want. That is
6 what motivates them. And, so, what we... The
7 only... So, we are on the other side. We have to
8 ensure to protect the other side. We have to protect
9 the riders and we have to protect the drivers. And,
10 so we are going to have to do any and all
11 regulations. But, you're asking me... One of the
12 reasons why I am answering this way is because, as we
13 are sitting here, they have their computer guys
14 trying to figure out how they can play with their
15 algorithms, so that they can get more for themselves
16 at the expense of the driver and the riding public.
17 So, we have to continually be vigilant in trying to
18 anticipate or plan, or even in my case, try to be
19 proactive so that we can offset that and that we
20 protect the drivers and the riding public. So, and
21 that is all that we have to do, and we have to
22 continue to do that... (CROSS-TALK)

23 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you.

24 KENNETH CHAN: So, as we all know, most drivers
25 are immigrants with modest means. They typically are

2 long... Well, as Mr. Bader shared, they work pretty
3 long and hard hours to ,you know, make ends meet.
4 So, it is important that we support drivers so that
5 they can make a decent living. I think the 2022 taxi
6 meter rate increase, and in 2023 driver pay increase
7 and changes in the calculation for the for hire
8 vehicle driver pay have had positive impacts on
9 driver pay. And those are areas that TLC should
10 continue to be vigilant about and keep supervision
11 on.

12 SARAH KAUFMAN: Thank you, and I appreciate that
13 this is a huge challenge, especially for residents of
14 your district.

15 So, uh, echoing the sentiments of my co-
16 panelists, uhm, I think that one area that I think
17 TLC is doing well handling this on is by prioritizing
18 kind of a low number of licenses -- about six or
19 fewer licenses, to distribute smaller numbers so that
20 there isn't this kind of hoarding problem.

21 I also think that there is a bit of optimism
22 through the Medallion Relief Program as well as
23 medallions kind of coming out of storage because of
24 the... both because of the Medallion Relief Program,
25 as well as the increase in demand for transportation

2 services as we somewhat emerge from the economic
3 impact of COVID. So, hopefully, it is looking up in
4 your district as well.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you.

6 I just want to talk about yellow cabs, because I
7 don't care about the other cabs. I'm from Manhattan.

8 And, so my question is, how... What are some
9 ideas you have for making sure that that industry is
10 whole, satisfied from driver to passenger? How
11 the... Some drivers hate Curb, hate Allure, and
12 then... A friend of mine the other day, she got
13 charged \$60.00 to go from one side of Central Park to
14 the other using Curb. So, there are issues with
15 that. And how would you address keeping the yellow
16 cab industry more whole? How would you address Curb
17 and Allure if they are successful? There are, I
18 believe, thousands of cars in the garages. How would
19 you get them on the streets? And do you think the
20 green cars, I guess, are disappearing, what is going
21 to happen as a result? Those are some issues, and I
22 have more, but I am all about the yellow cabs. I do
23 not care about those other ones...(CROSS-TALK)

24 THOMAS SORRENTINO: I'll start off first if you
25 don't mind.

2 PAUL BADER: No, sure, go ahead.

3 THOMAS SORRENTINO: You know, as I mentioned
4 earlier, being on the Commission for the last six and
5 a half years, and we have seen what has happened to
6 the yellow medallions, uh, and all of the sad
7 stories. You know, I think one of the things that
8 the TLC did in capping the for hire vehicle licenses
9 was a start. Obviously, it was a little too late,
10 unfortunately. But, it was a start with the right
11 goal to try to keep the balance somewhat back to
12 normal -- even though it is still way higher than it
13 should be as we know. So, I think that is something
14 that we need to continually monitor. I know every
15 six months that we check the results of the... of
16 how that is moving, and make adjustments if we need
17 to. So, that needs to be continued to be done. The
18 Medallion Relief Program that we passed for the
19 medallion owners with large debt was important and
20 vital. And I voted for that twice -- the enhanced
21 one as well, so I am proud of that. So, I believe
22 ,you know, we need to continue... It is iconic. The
23 yellow... I lived in New York my whole life, and I
24 plan on staying here for a long time. So, I don't
25 think anybody wants to see the yellow cabs go away.

2 So, think we need to do everything that makes them
3 stay and lets the driver earn a living that is fair
4 and economical, and wants them to invest in a
5 medallion. So, I think we need to try to keep the
6 value of the medallion within reason. It can't flush
7 up and down. We need to do things that don't make
8 that happen. So, I think a lot of the things that
9 are in place now are the right things. But, it is
10 like anything else, in order to keep that balance
11 with everything going on and the changes ahead, we
12 need to continually to monitor that. But, I think we
13 are starting to emerge in the right direction.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: You think they're out of
15 the garages? There are more cars out of the garages
16 now?

17 THOMAS SORRENTINO: Some are coming out, and I
18 think... I think the fact that, uh, there is more of
19 a desire to travel... And, I think ,you know, people
20 are coming out more. I mean, I work in Manhattan, my
21 first basically worked remotely for a long time. Now
22 we are back two or three days a week, and we are
23 trying to get people to come back more and more. And
24 I am in Manhattan two, three, four days a week

2 myself, and I see it getting busier [INAUDIBLE]...

3 (CROSS-TALK)

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I'm here seven days a
5 week.

6 THOMAS SORRENTINO: And, I... No, I believe it.
7 I live in Brooklyn, so I travel back and forth. But,
8 I see the change. And I think it's a good thing.
9 And I see... I personally try to use a cab when I am
10 in the central business district. And, you know, I
11 hail them, and I don't use the app for that. I
12 actually try to find one... (CROSS-TALK)

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I'd had to be dead before
14 I used an app... (CROSS-TALK)

15 THOMAS SORRENTINO: So, but I think that does give
16 them an opportunity for additional rides. So, I know
17 the pricing could be problematic, but I think it is
18 another way that they could hopefully have more rides
19 as well, thank you... (CROSS-TALK)

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. Any other
21 suggestions on yellow? And where we... And will the
22 green have any impact? And I hope you are all
23 against charging the yellows for congestion pricing.

24 SARAH KAUFMAN: Sure, so, thank you, Mr.
25 Sorrentino for covering much of this subject. I have

2 used the apps Curb and Arrow in the past, and I agree
3 that the user experience could use an update. And
4 that is one way to make the yellow taxis more
5 competitive. Another is to explore more of a formal
6 partnership with paratransit services... (CROSS-
7 TALK)

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes...

9 SARAH KAUFMAN: And another is to explore the
10 possibility of things like parcel or meal deliveries
11 offered by yellow taxis. Those are just some of the
12 ideas to explore.

13 In terms of congestion pricing, uhm, ,you know,
14 the goal, one of the two goals, other than
15 subsidizing the MTA, is to reduce congestion in the
16 central business district... (CROSS-TALK)

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I'm aware of the goal...

18 SARAH KAUFMAN: Okay. So, in order to reduce
19 private car usage in the central business district of
20 Manhattan, I think that taxis and for hire vehicles
21 are an essential ingredient of that service. And, so
22 think that when the state evaluates this possibility
23 of having a surcharge on these vehicles, I hope they
24 would take into account how necessary these vehicles
25 are for people to get from door to door.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And they already charge a
3 lot... (CROSS-TALK)

4 SARAH KAUFMAN: Yes.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Any other suggestions for
6 the yellow cabs? And what about my green cabs? I
7 love those green cabs.

8 KENNETH CHAN: So, lots of suggestions on yellow
9 cabs. I would just say combining that question with
10 the medallions in storage. I think we just
11 essentially need to increase vehicle utilization,
12 which in part is a function of the demand and economy
13 severely impacted by the pandemic of course, right?
14 But, as Mr. Sorrentino suggested, about 800
15 medallions were released in the past year. And the
16 ridership, the revenue all increased, so as the
17 pandemic has come to an end and ,you know, hopefully
18 we will see ridership increase for yellow cabs, which
19 would then ,you know, drive revenue and make that
20 section of the industry more viable.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And, Bader, [BACKGROUND
22 NOISE] go Bader.

23 PAUL BADER: Hello, Gale.

24 Having driven a yellow cab, I think that there
25 are things we can do. And one of the things that we

2 can do in recognition of the contribution that the
3 yellow cab industry has made and its historical
4 relevance in New York City, is that when possible,
5 they should be given priority. This is particularly
6 true at places like the airports where not only are
7 they not... We had this discussion earlier... Not
8 only are they not getting priority, they are given
9 second class citizenship someplace, because their
10 locations are less desirable than the... And, you're
11 not... And the for hire people who basically think
12 that there is no control over what they do, and so,
13 they tend to operate sometimes in ways that are out
14 of control.

15 So, where possible, the yellow cab should have
16 the priority, whether it is location or positions,
17 whether it is spots on the street, especially in
18 certain areas, that is the easiest way to deal with
19 it.

20 The idea of the green was an idea that was
21 probably was a little late in coming about. It would
22 have been much better to those green taxis 20, 30, 40
23 years ago. But, when they were rolled out, it was
24 almost overlapping with the ,you know, the private
25 for hire vehicle and the apps, and it kind of got

2 lost. And what ended up happening basically was the
3 apps, uh, the apps ended up serving a lot of those
4 communities that would need it that were underserved.
5 And the apps are the ones that ended up serving those
6 underserved communities in those areas where the
7 green taxis were designated to assist riders. So,
8 that was an unfortunate thing, and that is why some
9 of the new regulations have kind of adjusted that.
10 Because maybe we have to look at that and figure out,
11 okay, how do we take those drivers, and what is the
12 best use of an alternative kind of situation for
13 those communities. But, clearly, yes, the yellow
14 taxis should be number one, and they should be given
15 priority where feasible and where it makes sense to
16 use them.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I'm just saying uptown,
18 I'm in Harlem all of the time, and what will happen
19 when the green cars go, is that the app cars will
20 continue to be cash only. I always have cash on me,
21 because you can often get a yellow... I mean, a for
22 hire, for cash, because that's what is going to
23 happen. I have been doing illegal cabs my whole
24 life. I love illegal cabs. You pay less money, and
25 you get a nice ride. So, I am just letting you know,

2 that's what going to happen. When the green cars go,
3 at least in Manhattan, I don't know the other
4 boroughs. So, that will be the new way of getting
5 around. Just FYI.

6 And, just finally on electric cars, I mean, I am
7 all for them, obviously, but in Manhattan it's a
8 challenge. Wherever you have a street, uh, electric,
9 then people park in that spot, so you can't plug in.
10 It takes a long time, because it's slower than what
11 is in the garages. And we don't have... We have one
12 mall. I don't think it is going to work for plug-
13 ins. We have no malls. We have no space. We have
14 no parking. I don't know where you are going to find
15 this plug-in in the borough of Manhattan. So, I
16 just... When you keep talking about it, it is going
17 to have to have a whole different approach if we are
18 going to it here. Because, nobody has a house to
19 plug into.

20 And, then, finally, data, uh, thanks to Meera and
21 Bill, you have a lot data. So, my question, quickly,
22 is how would you use this data? Obviously you would
23 coordinate with other agencies, et cetera. But, how
24 would you use this immense data more than any other
25 agency, I think, in the whole city?

2 PAUL BADER: Data lady, she should go first, the
3 data lady.

4 SARAH KAUFMAN: Sure, so... (CROSS-TALK)

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I call it the Meera/Bill
6 data.

7 SARAH KAUFMAN: Okay, great... (CROSS-TALK)

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: With all due respect to
9 the new commissioner, they did it. Go ahead.

10 SARAH KAUFMAN: I am so glad to be able to see
11 the... to have access to this data. Uhm, I think
12 that ,you know, I don't want to dive into the data
13 without problem to solve. So, I think that it is
14 important to look into what the solutions are that we
15 are trying to develop. And maybe they are based on
16 service needs or more street hail or for hire vehicle
17 services in a certain location at a certain time.
18 Maybe they're not meeting the demand of different
19 services. Maybe it can be mapping out where the
20 chargers are or where drivers... where the shift
21 change happens or to be more useful of the time that
22 is allowed.

23 So, I think that there are a few different ways
24 data could be used, and I am excited to dive into it.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you.

2 SARAH KAUFMAN: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Thank you. I thank everyone
4 here for your testimony, and, once again, I
5 congratulate you all on your nominations, and we
6 appreciate your thoughtful feedback.

7 We are going to have some testimony from the
8 public. You guys are adjourned, thanks.

9 PANEL: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: We are now going to call up a
11 panel of individuals from the public. We will have
12 Christopher Leon Johnson and Raul Rivera.

13 Hi, guys, you have... We are going to give you
14 two minutes each, which we'll [INAUDIBLE] start the
15 clock.

16 You guys can begin... (CROSS-TALK)

17 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: All right, good
18 afternoon, Chair Powers, this is Christopher Leon
19 Johnson here.

20 So, I am here to speak in opposition to the
21 appointment of Sarah Kaufman. The reason I oppose
22 her appointment is because there is a big conflict of
23 interest that is going on. The Speaker disclosed
24 her, uhm, her affiliation to Transportation
25 Alternatives that get funded by you guys, The City

2 Council, \$77,500 including \$4,000 from Majority Whip
3 [Brooks]Powers. This looks more like a blackmail
4 appointment, because Transportation Alternatives has
5 a lot of power with elected officials where if you go
6 against them, they will primary you, they will fund
7 you opponent, and they will bury you in the media.
8 That is kind of like a career ender for you. You
9 could lose your job including you, Powers. I mean,
10 Chair Powers, you know, you have your thing with
11 Transportation Alternatives. Uhm, I want to say
12 this, I... I don't know what the law... I know
13 Committee Counsel, can you... If you can, you have
14 the time to explain this, Majority Whip Powers --
15 Brooks-Powers needs to abstain her vote, because she
16 funds Transportation Alternatives. Most likely she
17 won't abstain her vote, she will say, yes. The
18 majority of you guys will say, because you guys are
19 scared of them. But ,you know, uhm, this needs to go
20 to The Speaker, and if she gets appointed, if Sarah
21 Kaufman gets appointed... appointed to the... as a
22 commissioner, she needs to resign from the board of
23 The Transportation Alternative. She sits on the
24 board of Transportation Alternatives. She did not
25 disclose that in her statement. None of you guys

2 point that up to her and say, I understand she has a
3 thing with Revel, because the Transportation
4 Alternative, they fund trans... Oh, but she needs to
5 resign from the board of Transportation Alternatives
6 if she was be (sic), uhm, selected as a nominee,
7 like, to be appointed on the board of the Commission.

8 So, that's all I needed to say. You guys, I
9 can't say, you guys don't need to vote her. I say
10 you guys need not to nominate her. But, with Brooks-
11 Powers, she needs to abstain her vote, because
12 Speaker Adams [TIMER CHIMES] she needs to abstain her
13 vote. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Okay, thank you.

15 We will have counsel review any conflicts, but I
16 am not aware of any that are direct conflicts right
17 now that require [INAUDIBLE] abstain of a vote.
18 Thank you.

19 Mr. Rivera?

20 RAUL RIVERA: Good afternoon, my name is Raul
21 Rivera, I am a New York City TLC driver advocate. I
22 am the founder of NYC Drivers Unite, the only group
23 in New York City seeking the reform of the Taxi and
24 Limousine Commission. I am also a member of Families
25 for Safe Streets, and I am a crash survivor.

2 The TLC regulates over 100,000 for hire vehicles
3 and a 165,000 drivers. Their powers and duties;
4 although, sometimes not clearly defined or carried
5 out, are wide ranging. Their decisions will impact
6 New York City's transportation sector, these small
7 business owners for decades to come. When
8 considering an agency appointment it is incumbent
9 upon this considering government body to not only
10 uncover conflicts of interest on the part of a
11 nominee, but even the appearance there of. It is in
12 this regard that that I wish to testify against the
13 nomination of Sarah Kaufman for several causes: One,
14 it is well known that Transportation Alternatives on
15 whom Ms. Kaufman sits on (sic), funded by many ride
16 share companies including Uber, Lyft, Revel, just to
17 name a few. How can it be appropriate for a TLC
18 commissioner to sit on a board influenced by these
19 ride share companies to function objectively as a
20 commissioner? Two, Ms. Kaufman is the Interim
21 Executive Director of NYU Rudin Center for
22 Transportation Policy -- a powerful and influential
23 academic body who refuses to divulge who their donors
24 are. Do you see how this lack of disclosure is
25 problematic? Number three, Revel is the third

2 largest ride share enterprise in New York City.

3 Revel is directly regulated by the TLC. Ms. Kaufman

4 consulted for Revel, which casts doubt on Ms.

5 Kaufman's ability to be fair and without bias.

6 It is for these reasons that I demand Ms.

7 Kaufman's name to be withdrawn from consideration,

8 thank you.

9 Please feel free to ask us some questions. You
10 asked the other panel, please ask us some questions.

11 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Thank you, I... And, also,
12 we do have some... Currently, I believe that Ms.
13 Kaufman does not have any business dealings with the
14 TLC, and has sought the advice -- I am just reading
15 this -- sought the advice of the Conflicts of
16 Interest Board about her role right now... (CROSS-
17 TALK)

18 RAUL RIVERA: She [INAUDIBLE]... (CROSS-TALK)

19 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: I am reading, I'm not asking
20 questions.... And has been told to ,you know, like
21 other... all City employees are required to consult
22 with the Conflicts of Interest Board were there to be
23 a potential conflicts between her current position at
24 NYU versus while serving on the TLC.

25 Go ahead, thanks... (CROSS-TALK)

2 RAUL RIVERA: Can I... Can I clarify something?

3 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Thank you for... No, this
4 is... We gave you your two minutes to testify, so
5 that's... (CROSS-TALK)

6 RAUL RIVERA: You don't have any questions?

7 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: We have your testimony, thank
8 you... (CROSS-TALK)

9 RAUL RIVERA: I know, but I'm asking if you have
10 any questions? You don't have any questions?

11 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: I don't have any questions,
12 thank you.

13 RAUL RIVERA: You don't have any questions? You
14 know I'm a driver?

15 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Thank you...

16 RAUL RIVERA: You know I'm a native New Yorker?

17 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Okay, thank you.

18 RAUL RIVERA: You know we have a petition to
19 reform the Taxi and Limousine Commission... (CROSS-
20 TALK)

21 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Sir, thank you, you had your
22 two minutes to testify. We have your testimony...
23 thank you.

24 RAUL RIVERA: You're not even curious to ask any
25 questions?

2 CHAIRPERSON POWERS: Thank you, okay.

3 This hearing is adjourned, thanks.

4 [GAVELING OUT] [GAVEL SOUND]

5 RAUL RIVERA: There you have it, representation at
6 its best.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date May 24, 2023