

Attachment to Item D: Update On Taxicab Regulation Program

Received via Email  
2-21-08  
To: Deborah Creech  
From: North Bay Co-Op Taxi  
Subject: Taxicab Regulations

Hi Deborah,

Just a word to let you know that we are already losing prospective drivers due to the fees. We have shifts to fill, but people out of work looking for a job cannot afford them. Paying upwards of \$400 to start out working on an on call basis to part time is not something that happens in the real world.

All I can offer them as a consolation prize is to go to the competition: Novato employs drivers so pays some of the fees, and Radio is cheaper as their office is in Greenbrae so THEIR independent contractor drivers do not have to get a City of San Rafael business license (we were told it was \$40, but one driver went down and they asked for \$123!), even though Radio Cab drivers have twice as many cabs in San Rafael, and their calls here are far in excess of ours.

The unintended uneven handedness of this program is in effect already, much to our demise, should this trend continue. The predictors are that it will. This is sad, as we feel & I truly believe from the bottom of my heart that we have really done a superior job for our community as a taxicab company. We are actually a group of nice people, who treat people well out there. It is a company where I can honestly tell you that you can trust your beloved grandma or little child in our cabs. But, who cares?

As time goes on - the uneven playing field suggests that, with attrition, we could actually have to close our doors. But hey - what matters that? The streets will be filled with lots of "onesies and twosies cab companies" as is happening now. Or, possibly you will get the time-honored formula of an out of town mega-company coming into Marin - flooding the market, lowering the rates with people willing to work for nothing, put existing business OUT of business., and then they raise their rates and have a profit driven monopoly. But again - who cares?

We are just a cab company. We just transport grandmas & school children & the disabled community. We just try to do well while making a dollar. We are just a marginalized but actually vital part of the transportation. But there is no respect.

Being drug-tested and criminal background checked alone does not make a good driver or company. What is happening here, by Marin County allowing unlimited cab companies, is that Marin County is now actually EMPLOYING - HIRING taxi-cab drivers - with infinite positions available -step right up, table right no waiting - and you only have drug & criminal background checks. You are not going to be using the same kind of skills to screen out drivers that I do - you cannot by law! You HAVE to give anyone a License to Drive & operate a cab according to this mandate. Doesn't anybody other than us see how bad this is? It is

as if I had to "hire" each and every driver who walked through the door - as long as they can pass a couple of checks - otherwise they can be a borderline personality, or the cab - driver from hell. I can keep these people from driving for us - but YOU - the MGSA cannot stop them from getting on the road! Hey, do you think Ted Bundy could pass the checks and pay the insurance? ( I think that at one time he could have.)

Marin County is now just about the only place on the planet that does not treat the taxicab business as a sensitive industry. There are sound reasons why a Certificate of Convenience for Public Necessity is required everywhere else. The fine people who allowed this to happen do not understand the blowback that they are creating . There is nothing FREE about the Free Market - if that is what they were thinking. Look at any industry that has been de-regulated. It doesn't work so well.

This is so the wrong time of year to implement this. It is the worst for the service industry, coupled with tax season.

The complaints are these:

1. Unlimited cab companies in Marin without public notice/hearing required.
2. Uneven playing field penalizing our particular company & drivers.
3. Wrong time of year placing a burden on poor people.

Most sincerely disheartened,

Lucinda Daniel  
office manager with North Bay Cooperative Taxi  
415-258-2800

PS - I would greatly appreciate your passing this on to the members of the MGSA. I do not have their emails handy. I imagine that you do have them.