



The Micah Institute at The Interfaith Center of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: NYC FAITH LEADERS SUPPORT FOR-HIRE VEHICLE BILLS

August 3, 2018

The Honorable City Council Speaker Corey Johnson

City Hall Office, New York, NY 10007

Dear Speaker Johnson,

As New Yorkers of faith, we have watched with growing concern as corporate greed has pushed the people who drive our taxis and for-hire vehicles to the limit. The recent suicides of taxi drivers are a wake-up call that we must act. The time has come to support legislation in the City Council that will promote fair working conditions, environmental justice, relieve traffic congestion, and create hope.

In the absence of regulations, the for-hire car industry has pushed more than 80,000 vehicles into the streets since 2013. This growth is largely the result of additional cars from the four largest app-based services, Uber, Lyft, Via and Juno. The results are visible citywide: most taxi and for-hire vehicles are empty at least 40 percent of the time, reducing driver wages dramatically and making it impossible for drivers to earn a decent living; traffic in the Central Business District has slowed 21% since 2010; and our children cannot afford the added exhaust of even more cars in a city that already struggles with asthma.

The City Council has proposed a legislative package that aims to address these troubling trends.

[Taxi/Uber legislation proposals: Levin: [Proposed Int. No. 144-B - 8/1/18](#) Lander: [Proposed Int. No. 890-B - 8/1/18](#) Daiz: [Proposed Int. No. 838-C - 8/1/18](#) Diaz: [Proposed Int. No. 634-B - 8/1/18](#) Diaz: [Proposed Int. No. 958-A - 8/1/18](#)] After a temporary halt to any new cars on the streets, the City's Taxi and Limousine Commission will be able to control further growth in the number of new cars, create employment standards that will reduce the incentive to have empty vehicles in the street and ensure that drivers are paid \$15.00 per hour, plus expenses. This will relieve congestion, reduce emissions and lift up tens of thousands of hardworking families.

The Micah Table, The Labor-Religion Coalition of New York, and many other faith organizations and communities stood with fast food and airport workers in their struggle for dignity and economic justice. Now we join the City Council in its efforts to ensure that New Yorkers who drive cars for a living have the same shot at the American Dream.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Michael Feinberg,

Executive Director, The Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition

The Rev. Dr. Chloe Breyer,

Executive Director, The Interfaith Center of New York

The Rev. Joel Gibson,

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