

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 27 June 2019 9:54 PM
To: taxiinquiry
Subject: Inquiry into the Commercial Passenger Vehicle Industry Act 2017

Confidential – Please withhold my name and mobile number from the published version

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing on behalf of my husband who has been driving taxis for the last 8 years. He does not own his own licence but drives under a bailment agreement from an operator. My husband is a full-time day shift driver and works between 6am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday. Prior to the reforms and before rideshare was allowed to operate illegally he was averaging \$150 per day after expenses. Today that figure has dropped to \$70 per day after expenses. This income goes a very small way to support us and our two children.

A minimum wage is no longer an option since the reforms have taken place. A cake can be split only in so many parts, before the parts are meagre and paltry. This, I believe is the case with an unrestricted pool of driver licences. A letter I received dated 2 February, 2014 from the Hon Terry Mulder MP made mention of an excessive entry test. As far as I know, there is no excessive entry test and the catastrophic results are very easy to see.

The reforms have totally annihilated drivers' incomes. The streets are congested with a surplus of taxis and rideshare trying to pick up a fare. The ranks are overflowing and airport waiting times have stretched out to over 3 hours. The impact of pollution on the environment from so many vehicles sitting idle is also cause for concern. If the number of taxis and rideshare vehicles keeps increasing at the current rate, even more money needs to be spent on roads and level-crossing removals. The morale is at an all-time low. The cost of accreditation has increased 300% and the depot fees are still at the same rate they were prior to deregulation (even though drivers are struggling to make ends meet).

The Fels' recommendations and subsequent changes to legislation was supposed to have addressed 'long-standing and deep rooted' issues and recommend 'sweeping and enduring reforms' that would improve low levels of public confidence in taxi services, provide better security for drivers and safety for customers and ensure that drivers are properly trained and knowledgeable' (Source: Government response taxi industry inquiry final recommendations).

Can any member of the committee honestly say that this has turned out for the betterment of all?

In moving forward, further reforms need to be made as opening up a regulated industry was never going to work. It's not easy for government to admit that they got it wrong, however on this occasion they should. The Labor movement prides itself on a 'fair day's wage for a fair day's work' yet this is not relevant to taxi/rideshare drivers despite the fact that they play an important role in transporting passengers (often with special needs) safely and in a timely manner. They play an essential service in society and as such need to be recognised and protected. The wealth of capitalists should not be accumulated through the exploitation of workers and that's exactly what the Commercial Passenger Vehicle Act 2017 has allowed to happen.

Yours sincerely,

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