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23rd May 2019

The Secretary
Legislative Council
Economy and Infrastructure Committee
Parliament House Spring St
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

INQUIRY INTO THE COMMERCIAL PASSENGER VEHICLE INDUSTRY ACT 2017 REFORMS

YOU CAN USE MY DETAILS

I wish to submit this submission to the Parliamentary Taxi Inquiry following the cruel and devastated destruction caused by the Victorian Andrews Labor Government.

Our story is as follows –

- My wife and I owned 3 Perpetual Taxi Licences.
- We purchased our first one in 1990 for \$116K
- Our 2nd in 1993 for \$130K and
- Our 3rd in 2002 for \$300K

The purpose of investing in this Industry was from stability and regulated Industry back in the 90s especially when Jeff Kennett cleaned up and regulated the Industry to an excellent level. The Licences were also trading in the Bendigo Stock Exchange so of course, this was a secure and trusted investment for our retirement.

At this point I wish to highlight that when we bought our first licence, we borrowed for this and please note that we were paying 22% interest on this.... With the purchase of the proceeding 2 licenses again we borrowed against the licences for these as well.

The entire intention of purchasing these Licences were purely for our retirement, our superannuation as we never ever wanted to be a burden on the welfare system. This was instilled in our blood. Both my wife and I worked like dogs to pay off our loans but how sad it is today to know that we have been treated by DOGS by this Andrews Government.

I have been a Taxi Driver for the last 33 years and unfortunately have been forced to now return at the age of 72 to drive every Saturday in order to bring in some form of income. We are absolutely financially ruined.

As you may have heard on many occasions by many submission, in 2014 Daniel Andrews attended a Taxi Industry meeting at Huntingdale whereby he looked us all in the face and blatantly lied to us promising he would look after the Taxi & Hire Car Industry.

How can he look us straight in the eyes and then in August 2016 announce that he was about to destroy the entire Industry.

Daniel Andrews and Jacinta Allan are responsible for destroying our lives, our health, our future, our retirement.

We are now left with NIL income and NIL assets which were declared property by the High Court.

The Andrews Labor government paid disgraceful transition (not compensation) of \$100,000 per licence for the first licence and \$50,000 each per licence for three subsequent licences to a maximum of \$250,000 and a \$1 levy per trip was raised, to cover transition cost

How did the 1st Licence differ from the 2nd, 3rd and 4th and what happened to the rest....

Daniel Andrews Labor government has from their actions absolutely flooded the roads and the market with cheap licences. The roads are absolutely congested. From my understanding taxis and ride share are now over the 62,000 mark. How is this sustainable and smart. ITS NOT.

As a taxi driver today, it is dog eat dog. There is NO work, Ride Share vehicles do what they want. Too many Uber, Too many Taxis. Just far too many cars on the road. No one is making any money. This situation is unsustainable. The Industry needs to be re-regulated and the \$52.90 Licences that this Government is selling needs to STOP.

Now lets talk about The 'fairness fund' or as described the "UNFAIRNESS FUND" was established to support the many cases of severe hardship. What a joke and an absolute LIE.

We attended the information session that Marnie Williams and KPMG hosted. What an insult to wound and a joke that was. They could not answer any of our questions and all they kept saying was

"NO CRITERIA AND NO APPEAL"

I left confused and was not sure whether to apply or not. My wife was so upset and stressed and could see that our income was about to be taken away, so we applied. It cost me to have my Accountant prepare the relevant documentation only to be rejected with No apparent reason and of course, No appeal. The follow on from this caused myself and my wife severe health and mental issues.

This Government is responsible for our health deterioration.

What this has caused is my wife suffers severe depression. My wife and I are constantly arguing. I now suffer from diabetes which has been caused by the stress as well as high blood pressure.

I used to be a happy man with a happy family but now, my family are too scared to talk to me.

Jacinta Allan totally ruined our lives our health and our mental well being. She and Daniel Andrews are responsible for all this.

We are not asking for much just our money back. Andrews Government paid out property for the Fisheries and the houses at top market value for the East West Link, so why are we different. Some would refer this to DISCRIMINATION.

I am asking in fact, I am begging that you please help get our money back. This has not been fair.

Please do what you can to help us.

Vasilios & Stavroula Christopoulos.