



November 10, 2009

Urban Transportation Commission  
505 Barton Springs Road, Ste 800  
Austin, Texas 78704  
512-974-7092

Re: Application for Rate Change

Dear Commissioners:

Taxi drivers should be included in the process for setting meter rates, since it is their livelihoods that are most affected by any changes. Presently the drivers have no input.

Austin City Code #13-3-369 reads: "A majority of taxicab franchise holders operating in the city may submit a joint application for a rate change. An application for a rate change must be signed by a majority of taxicab franchise holders."

Since this procedure for consideration of rate increase applications constitutes a conflict of interest.

Franchise Holders (cab companies) submit a Joint Application for Rate Change, then in turn increase the lease rates of the drivers. Companies lease rates are allowed to change whenever the companies choose, while drivers are left to absorb the cost. The final result is a considerable raise for the cab companies.

The Taxi Drivers Association of Austin would like the City to recognize the rights of drivers to have direct input into any rate changes, and require their equitable consideration in the approval process.

This could be accomplished by recognizing an independent association of drivers, who could directly approach the City Council or the UTC about important taxicab matters instead of having cab companies acting as the middle-man.

Sincerely,

Taxi Drivers Association of Austin