

**Second Session – Forty-First Legislature**  
**of the**  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**Standing Committee**  
**on**  
**Social and Economic Development**

*Chairperson*  
*Mr. Dennis Smook*  
*Constituency of La Verendrye*

**Vol. LXX No. 8 - 6 p.m., Monday, October 23, 2017**

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-First Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
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ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**  
**THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Monday, October 23, 2017**

**TIME – 6 p.m.**

**LOCATION – Winnipeg, Manitoba**

**CHAIRPERSON – Mr. Dennis Smook  
(La Verendrye)**

**VICE-CHAIRPERSON – Mr. Len Isleifson  
(Brandon East)**

**ATTENDANCE – 11 QUORUM – 6**

*Members of the Committee present:*

*Hon. Ms. Clarke, Hon. Mr. Wharton*

*Mr. Ewasko, Ms. Fontaine, Messrs. Isleifson,  
Johnston, Ms. Klassen, Mr. Maloway,  
Ms. Marcelino, Mrs. Mayer, Mr. Smook*

**APPEARING:**

*Mr. Greg Nesbitt, MLA for Riding Mountain  
Mr. Ted Marcelino, MLA for Tyndall Park  
Mr. Mohinder Saran, MLA for The Maples  
Hon. Steven Fletcher, MLA for Assiniboia  
Mr. Wab Kinew, MLA for Fort Rouge*

**PUBLIC PRESENTERS:**

*Mr. Kevin Rebeck, Manitoba Federation of  
Labour  
Mr. Chris Schafer, Uber Canada  
Mr. Allen Mankewich, Independent Living  
Resource Centre  
Mr. Abiodun Akinola, private citizen  
Mr. Tarlochan Gill, private citizen  
Mr. Bhupinderted Mangat, private citizen  
Mr. Malkeet Makkar, private citizen  
Mr. Jaswant Singh Deol, private citizen  
Mr. Darshan Singh, private citizen  
Mr. Kuldip Toor, private citizen  
Mr. Gohar Aftab, private citizen  
Ms. Anandjot Dhillon, private citizen  
Mr. Iqbal Singh, private citizen  
Mr. Kulwinder Pandher, private citizen  
Mr. Balkar Brar, private citizen  
Mr. Vishav Sidhu, private citizen  
Mr. Gurmeet Singh, private citizen  
Mr. Iqbal Dhillon, private citizen  
Mr. Paul Moist, Canadian Centre for Policy  
Alternatives–Manitoba  
Mr. Rajinder Sharma, private citizen*

*Mr. Harjinder Dhillon, private citizen  
Mr. Gurcharan Dhaliwal, private citizen  
Mr. Baljinder Bedi, private citizen  
Mr. Manjinder Ghuman, private citizen  
Mr. Sukhwinder Khosa, private citizen  
Mr. Jastal Bedi, private citizen  
Mr. Kulwant Muhar, private citizen  
Mr. Kuldip Bhullar, private citizen*

**WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS:**

*Barry Rempel, Winnipeg Airports Authority*

**MATTERS UNDER CONSIDERATION:**

*Bill 30–The Local Vehicles for Hire Act*

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**Clerk Assistant (Mr. Andrea Signorelli):** Good evening. Will the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development please come to order.

Before the committee can proceed with the business before it, it must elect a new chairperson. Are there any nominations for this position?

**Mrs. Colleen Mayer (St. Vital):** I nominate Dennis Smook for Chair.

**Clerk Assistant:** Mr. Smook has been nominated. Are there any other nominations?

Hearing no other nominations, Mr. Smook will please take the Chair.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The next item of business is the election of a Vice-Chairperson.

Are there any nominations for this position?

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** I nominate Len Isleifson.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Len Isleifson has been nominated. Are there any other nominations?

Hearing no other nominations, Len Isleifson is elected Vice-Chairperson.

This meeting has been called to consider the following bill: Bill 30, The Local Vehicles for Hire Act.

**An Honourable Member:** Point of order.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** Can the Vice-Chair be elected technically even when they are not here?

**Mr. Chairperson:** There is no point of order, as the committee has elected a chair—a Vice-Chair.

The member cannot make reference to somebody who is not here.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chairperson:** I would like to inform all in attendance of the provisions in our rules regarding the hour of adjournment. A standing committee meeting to consider a bill must not sit past midnight to hear public presentations or to consider clause by clause of a bill, except by unanimous consent of the committee.

In addition, the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet again to consider Bill 30 tomorrow, October 24th, at 6 p.m., and, if necessary, Thursday, October 26th, at 6 p.m., and Friday, October 27th, at 10 a.m.

We have a number of presenters registered to speak tonight, as noted on the list of presenters before you. On the topic of determining the order of public presentations, I will note that we have some out-of-town presenters in attendance, marked with an 'asterick' on the list. With this in—with this consideration in mind, in what order does the committee wish to hear the presenters?

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** Mr. Chair, I'd suggest we hear from the out-of-town presenters first, and then I have my motion whenever you want to deal with that.

**Mr. Chairperson:** It has been suggested that we hear from the out-of-towner—out-of-town presenters first.

All in favour? *[Agreed]*

Then we'll hear from the list of out-of-town presenters first.

**Mr. Maloway:** I would like to present a motion to the committee.

I move, that for this committee, any presenters be permitted to have a person of their choice

translate their presentation into English, if the opportunity arises for them to have that happen.

**Mr. Chairperson:** It has been moved by the member for Elmwood—I move that for this committee only, presenters be permitted to have a person of their choice translate their presentation into English.

This motion is in order and the floor is open for questions.

Does anybody have any questions?

**An Honourable Member:** Question.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay. Is the committee ready for the question?

**An Honourable Member:** Question.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The question before the committee is as follows: I move that this committee—shall the motion pass?

**Some Honourable Members:** Pass.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The motion is accordingly passed.

One of the areas that we have in committee is that presenters are allowed 10 minutes to present, so with this motion that 10 minutes will still be in order, that people will have to present within that 10 minutes.

A written submission on Bill 30 from Barry Rempel, Winnipeg Airports Authority, has been received and distributed to committee members.

Does the committee agree to receive these documents and have them appear in Hansard transcript of this meeting? *[Agreed? [Agreed]]*

Before we 'proceed' with—proceed with presentations, we do have a number of other items and points of information to consider. First of all, if there is anyone else in the audience who'd like to make a presentation this evening, please register with staff at the entrance of the room.

Also, for the information of all presenters, while written versions of presentations are not required, if you are going to accompany your presentation with written materials, we ask that you provide 20 copies. If you need help with photocopying, please speak to our staff.

As well, in accordance with our rules, a time limit of 10 minutes has been allotted for presentations, with another five minutes allowed for questions from committee members.

If a presenter is not in attendance when their name is called, they will be dropped to the bottom of the list. If the presenter is not in attendance when their name is called a second time, they will be removed from the presenters' list.

Speaking in committee—prior to proceeding with public presentations, I would like to advise members of the public regarding the process for speaking in committee. The proceedings of our meetings are recorded in order to provide a verbatim transcript. Each time someone wishes to speak, whether it be an MLA or a presenter, I first have to say the person's name. This is a signal for Hansard recorders to turn on the mics on and off.

Thank you for your patience.

I would ask that all presenters, when they come forward, there are a lot of names in here that I will probably have a little bit of trouble pronouncing, so I would ask all presenters to—when they come up to the front, to please correct me in the proper pronunciation of their names.

We will now proceed with public presentations. The first on our list for out-of-town presenters is Kevin Rebeck, Manitoba Federation of Labour.

Mr. Rebeck, you can proceed with your presentation when you are ready

### **Bill 30—The Local Vehicles for Hire Act**

**Mr. Kevin Rebeck (Manitoba Federation of Labour):** Great, thank you.

The Manitoba Federation of Labour is Manitoba's central labour body. We represent the interests of more than 100,000 unionized workers. We oppose this government's decision to off-load the responsibility and costs for so-called ride-sharing services like Uber to the City of Winnipeg without ensuring strong safety and health protections for drivers and customers.

The MFL also believes in a level playing field when it comes to taxi and private transportation services in Manitoba. It's clear that so-called ride-sharing services like Uber want into the Winnipeg taxi market and some consumers looking for more taxi-like options are expressing an interest in these types of services.

While Uber has seen strong growth globally, a number of jurisdictions are starting to rethink their relationship with Uber due in part to concerns about rules meant to ensure safety.

London recently announced it would be revoking Uber's licence. According to Transport for London, the government body that oversees the city's transportation, the company is not fit and proper in its compliance with regulations.

Transport for London went on to say that Uber demonstrates a lack of corporate responsibility tied to its corporate behaviour. Concerns have also been raised about the thoroughness of Uber's background checks for drivers.

The requirement for a level playing field in the marketplace was also at the core of the decision made by London. In fact, London's mayor said that all companies in London must play by the rules and adhere to the high standard we expect, particularly when it comes to the safety of customers.

In Quebec, new requirements that Uber drivers must undergo the same training requirements as taxi drivers in the province, as well as criminal background checks on drivers and mechanical inspections on vehicles each year coming into effect this coming January.

We're not suggesting this government needs to reinvent the wheel in terms of regulating these types of services. In fact, Manitoba already has a number of rules in place for public safety in private transportation. These rules are meant to keep both customers and drivers safe and should be extended to so-called ride-sharing companies and drivers so that everyone's on a level playing field.

For example, in Manitoba, taxi vehicles must meet safety requirements to keep customers and drivers safe, like safety shields and in-car camera systems. Drivers are required to be trained in First Aid and are trained and screened to ensure public safety.

Another area that's overlooked by this bill is the insurance requirements that drivers would need to operate as drivers for Uber or similar companies. Manitoba Public Insurance does not currently offer policies that cover services such as Uber.

In contrast, regulated taxis have commercial carrier insurance which protects drivers and the public.

A report to the Manitoba Taxicab Board by Meyers Norris Penny, which engaged stakeholders and the public, recommends that any so-called ride-sharing companies and drivers should be licensed as a separate category from taxis but that they should

have to abide by the same vehicle safety standards and driver screening requirements as current taxicabs do.

The report also calls for rules to make sure so-called ride-share vehicles be covered under a similar type of insurance as regular taxis. This would be in the best interests of drivers and the public as it only makes sense that drivers be insured for the type of work they're doing.

We're also concerned about the potential cost impacts for consumers that Uber and other similar-type services would have. As we know, taxi fares in Manitoba are regulated and consistent. In contrast, Uber has a price surge policy that can change and raise fares by as much as five to seven times the usual rate during periods of high demand.

This type of price gouging is just not fair to consumers who already have well-regulated and consistent pricing for taxis.

There are valid concerns about the current taxicab system in Manitoba, including those raised by indigenous women about their experience with the taxi industry, including allegations of discrimination and sexual harassment. This speaks to the need to strengthen training and regulation for private transportation services in Manitoba, not weaken regulations.

The MNP report also details frustration felt by the public, including that Winnipeg has far fewer taxicabs per capita than similar Canadian cities. Winnipeggers are served by one cab for every 1,250 citizens compared to the Canadian average of one for every 860. The number of standard taxi licences has also been frozen at 410 standard taxis for years.

The report highlights that there are about 2,200 licensed taxi drivers in Winnipeg. Three quarters of these drivers work for wages, and according to the report, substandard wages. More than half the drivers report they earn less than the Statistics Canada low-income cut-off of \$24,409 annually.

But Uber and other similar companies represent the type of contract and precarious work that is becoming far too common in today's economy. These types of companies are based on a business model of deregulation where companies generate profits while they ship costs and risks onto self-employed, low-wage workers and their

customers. This, in turn, lowers wages and standards in the regulated economy.

This government should be working to make sure that private transportation companies all play by the same rules rather than downloading responsibility and costs onto municipalities.

It's also noteworthy that this government is cutting \$5 million from the budget for Winnipeg Transit this year by walking away from the long-standing funding agreement that ensured 50 per cent of operating costs for public transit came from the provincial government. This will mean service cuts to the transportation that thousands of Manitobans rely on every day. If this government's serious about providing more transportation options to Manitoba, it should start by keeping its share of transit costs at 50 per cent.

Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation.

Members of the committee have any questions for the presenter? Mr. Maloway? Sorry, Mr. Marcelino?

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Rebeck, on behalf of the MFL.

My question really relates to something that is at the meat of most of the minds, core to the issues in this attempt to deregulate the taxi industry. It is the compensation for the taxi industry's capital. There's a value to the franchises that each and every franchise holder of the taxis have. Is there anything that you could maybe add on to your presentation about why there's an attempt not to pay them anything?

**Mr. Rebeck:** Yes, thank you for the question. I think you raise yet another point that our taxi industry is well set up. There's certainly room for improvement, and I've articulated a number of them. But there's also been a cost and an investment made by those who are in the taxi industry, and just allowing an open market with no regulations to then compete with them isn't fair and isn't a reasonable thing to do without due consideration and finding a way to either compensate or collaborate with the existing industry and find a method that works and that makes sure that regulations are strengthened and are there and recover everyone to protect both drivers and passengers.

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** Mr. Rebeck, this is more of a statement than a question, but I

would just like to thank you for making the long trip into the city and giving us your presentation for this evening.

**Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook):** I just want to say thank you as well for coming in to present to us today.

**Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples):** Okay, thanks for your presentation, coming over here and give us some information about the taxi industry, but you must be aware—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Saran, sorry, your microphone is not working, so we'd like to get you recorded as to your comments.

**Mr. Saran:** Should I start all over again?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Yes, Mr. Saran, so if you could please start all over again.

**Mr. Saran:** Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks, Mr. Rebeck for coming over here and giving some information about the taxi industry. Taxi industry, you must be aware that at one point, it cost \$525,000 to have those licences, and those licences in large part of the taxi industry it gone under the watch of the taxi board and under the watch of the government. It was not only in the NDP government; also, it happened under the PC government during the Filmon time, even before. So every time—whenever they transfer the licence from one person to the other person and taxi board asked how much price that will—how much it cost. And they have to tell them how much it cost. That means it was the responsibility of the government, and they let it happen. Now, how that can be compensated to those people who's put that much money or maybe brought some money from the foreign countries, and it will be wiped out.

\* (18:20)

**Mr. Rebeck:** Yes, I don't have an answer for how to do that. It raises a very good concern. And again, concerns about the regulation and concerns about going down this road to introduce and let compete openly with the taxi industry a ride-sharing service creates a number of problems, regulatory, but also a number of problems on fairness of an existing system that people have invested in, put their savings in, have set up a business model on. And this takes that away from them, and that's not fair.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Time for questions has expired for this presenter. I understand if—Mr. Fletcher, if

your assistant could put their hand up—I apologize—*[interjection]*

Yes, I apologize, but the time is over, so we'll continue.

Thank you very much, Mr. Rebeck.

Our next presenter, and excuse me if I don't pronounce the name properly, but Harjit Sodhi, No. 120 on the list. And if you could please pronounce your name when you come up to the microphone for me so we get—Harjit Sodhi.

We will move speaker number one—presenter No. 120, Harjit Sodhi, to the bottom of the list, and we will call him once we have reached that.

Our next presenter from out of town is Chris Schafer. Chris Schafer? No. 129.

Do you have any written materials for distribution to the committee, Mr. Schafer?

You may proceed with your presentation when you are ready.

**Mr. Chris Schafer (Uber Canada):** Thank you, Chair, and members of committee for the opportunity to be here today. My name is Chris Schafer, and I'm a public policy manager with Uber Canada. I look forward to your questions. My presentation—I'll be brief. I won't be—I won't take all the 10 minutes.

Uber—I'm sure I don't have to go into too much detail. It's a app that you download that connects drivers looking to provide a ride with riders looking for a ride in a city. We operate in cities across Canada under municipal bylaw regulation in cities like Calgary and Edmonton, Ottawa, Toronto, London, Niagara region, Waterloo region, Oakville, Barrie, Mississauga, Montreal; the list goes on. A number of cities have already passed bylaws to regulate ride sharing to date in Canada.

Couple of items I'll cover briefly about Uber. This, as you know—I'll put it on record, obviously, that we're supportive of Bill 30, The Local Vehicles for Hire Act. I encourage the Legislature here to adopt and pass the Bill 30 as it exists currently and provide the opportunity for a city like Winnipeg, for the first time, to be able to regulate its own vehicles for hire, its own local vehicles-for-hire industry, be that taxi, limousine and perhaps ride sharing if that's the will of Winnipeg's City Council.

As you know, in most places across Canada, that is how vehicles for hire are regulated, is at the municipal level, so I give credit to the Legislature

here for bringing forth Bill 30, and I encourage you all to vote for it and adopt the bill as it exists currently.

The citizens of Winnipeg and Manitoba themselves, I think, have spoken clearly about their desire for change, their desire for ride sharing in Manitoba and Winnipeg. It wasn't too long ago that you saw the results of the Probe Research public opinion poll in Winnipeg, and that was 60 per cent, at the time, in 2015, wanted ride-sharing and Uber in Winnipeg. Upwards of 75 per cent of the 18- to 34-year-old demographic wanted ride-sharing in Winnipeg.

We have an online petition currently gathering signatures in Manitoba. In a very short period of time, that petition has surpassed 11,000 signatures of folks in this province and Winnipeg calling on the government, as I have here today, to pass Bill 30, and calling on the Winnipeg City Council to consider smart, progressive ride-sharing regulations when and if that time comes.

What Manitobans are saying—so I pulled a few quotes from the online petition, people left a few quotes on that petition: Move forward Winnipeg, this city needs Uber, Winnipeg needs Uber. I recently used Uber in Grand Forks, of all places, a city a fraction of the size of Winnipeg. Let's get this done.

I've taken Ubers all over the United States and I think it's about time it's brought to Manitoba. It could help with people with low-income jobs. I feel safer in an Uber. And just today, in the material I've sent around to committee members here, I shared with you a letter—a public letter that was signed by 20-plus local civic stakeholders in Winnipeg. Some of the names on the list you might recognize as well. By key stakeholders like the Aspers and others in Winnipeg that have signed their name to a public letter calling on the Province again to pass Bill 30, to give the City of Winnipeg, for the first time, its ability to regulate its own industry, much like other cities across Canada.

The last thing I'll say in wrapping up, because I did promise you I'd be brief, is that that opportunity that you would present to the City of Winnipeg is, frankly, I think, puts Winnipeg in an advantageous position. And why, might you ask? Winnipeg has the benefit, then, if this bill was to pass, of taking a look at the regulatory model that's developed in cities across Canada for regulating the ride-sharing industry. In many respects, Winnipeg can learn from cities that have already passed bylaws at the

municipal level, which this bill will give Winnipeg the authority and capability to do. That regulatory model's been passed in cities like Edmonton, Ottawa, Toronto, London and dozens more in Canada. And, if anything, Winnipeg now has the opportunity to learn. Learn how to ensure public safety and consumer protection. Learn how to recoup costs of licensing, and that's done at no cost to cities across Canada that are cost-neutral or revenue-neutral by recouping licensing costs from ride-sharing companies and their local taxi industry to make this cost effective for cities.

We've worked with provincial jurisdictions across Canada, principally Alberta, Ontario and Quebec, on a ride-sharing insurance regime, approved by the highest authorities in those provinces. Having, of course, similar conversations with MPI here about how we can adopt a similar insurance regulatory model for Manitoba here, so that we can ensure through MPI that the citizens, drivers and riders of Manitoba have the adequate insurance that MPI would ensure they have. So those conversations continue.

I'll wrap up by saying I look forward to your questions and, again, encourage the Legislature here to pass Bill 30. Thank you.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** I'd like to, at the outset, mention that you are probably aware that in Australia, most of the states of Australia have brought in somewhat similar bills in their legislature to regulate ride-sharing in the past year. And all of them offer some form of compensation, but, particularly the state of Victoria has a \$494-million fund and they are offering compensation of \$100,000 for the first licence and \$50,000 for up to three more cab licences. Now, the cab licences in Australia are on a par with what they are in Canada.

\* (18:30)

Now, this particular bill that we are here to deal with tonight and the next few days has a clause in it—has clause 10, which says, straight up, that the Province cannot be sued for compensation. You know, if the Province wants to build a road and they want to build it through your yard, they go to a—through a process of determining an appraisal—appraised value, and they compensate the homeowner or the landowner for that right of access.

These members sitting around this table, elected by the people only a year and a half ago, are going to pass a bill in the next number of days which wipes



out all the cab drivers' equity in their system. Now, do you think that that is fair?

**Mr. Schafer:** Through you, Mr. Chair, thank you for the question.

I'll say a few things. First of all, there is no jurisdiction in Canada, be it provincial or municipal, that has chosen to compensate for any loss of value, speculative as it might be, in Canada to date; that is a fact. There is a question, I think valid, about whether any new entrant should have to compensate an incumbent. Taxi licences, again, are a permission to operate a business; is not to be a protected asset. Taxi compensation, again, I think, would discourage innovation. It would be essentially an incumbent tax on innovators and what message that might send to a city like Winnipeg, to a province like Manitoba, that's in fact trying to attract new business such as the Amazon proposal. What kind of message does that send to innovative technology companies going forward?

And the last thing I'd point out is, again, that licence holders over the decades have reaped monopoly rents in terms of the return, the windfall gain and return on those licences for a period of time. In cities in which we operate across Canada, the most recent data I've seen is the Mississauga where, in fact, the taxi business during our presence grew 6.8 per cent, and I think that's a reflection of the change in the nature in which citizens are engaging with ground transportation, be it ride share, car share, bike share, and what have you.

So there is a continuing, ongoing market for taxi street hails, for taxi stand trips and taxi phone dispatch trips. And in bylaws in municipalities, they carved that out to the exclusive jurisdiction of taxi. That markets, and those markets continue to exist to the benefit of the taxi industry going forward.

Thank you.

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** The exchange that we just heard is really between the member for Maloway and Uber is about regulatory risk. Every business has regulatory risk and if the regulations change, that's one of the risks. However, as much as I am in favour of Uber-like industries, and so on, there are some concerns which I think need to be addressed.

First, the red tape, bureaucratic structure that is required to implement the plan seems very onerous. Manitoba is not like every other—any other jurisdiction in North America, because we have a

no-fault system on both tin and glass and personal injury, it would be quite easy to envision ways that Uber drivers or a ride-sharing program could skew the personal injury-protection side of the equation and reduce their insurance costs, giving them an unfair advantage. It is also conceivable that people may not be very forthright about where their trips begin and where they end, or how many trips they are providing.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Time on this question has expired. I will allow Mr. Schafer to answer to the point, whatever.

**Mr. Schafer:** Through you, Mr. Chair, thank you for the questions. They're all very good questions. I'll go briefly through them as I recall the order.

So, as I mentioned, we're having ongoing conversations with MPI. Again, it's up to—and the beauty of what's being proposed here, in terms of enabling Winnipeg to pass, potentially, if they decide to do that, to pass the bylaw to regulate ride-sharing is the municipality would be relying, much like in Ontario or in Alberta or Quebec, the municipality—there isn't this debate about insurance; for example, in Ontario, the Financial Services Commission of Ontario, the highest provincial authority for insurance, has created the product that we buy through Intact. They have given its blessing.

So what I say to Winnipeg City Council, or what I might say, if they choose to pursue regulation around ride-sharing is let's look to MPI. If they give a blessing for a specific, unique ride-sharing insurance product that MPI has signed off on and is okay with, that guarantees all the assurances that MPI needs to make available a product, then the municipality—the beauty of this legislation is the municipality has an easy decision to make. MPI has decided the insurance is adequate for the product that they deem appropriate in a marketplace that Uber would make available and purchase on behalf of drivers.

The second question was—you mentioned accessibility. I can't recall what the other item was. Sorry, you're going to—*[interjection]* Oh, of course. Thank you.

So, yes, again, the beauty of this particular legislation is it gives the City of Winnipeg that authority to take a look at regulatory models across Canada, learn from example, implement best practices that have been adopted elsewhere. I'm not suggesting to Winnipeg City Council—I know this

is the Legislature but I would not suggest to any city council, Winnipeg or otherwise, that they are inventing the wheel. The wheel's been invented, so to speak—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Sorry, Mr. Schafer, but we're well into eight minutes now and I—we have a lot of presenters. My apologies, but we thank you very much for your presentation.

**An Honourable Member:** Point of order.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Chairperson:** On a point of order, Mr. Saran.

**Mr. Saran:** Yes, I think we have a good chance to ask more question from Uber and can we have leave to ask more questions?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is there leave from the committee to ask more questions of Uber?

**An Honourable Member:** Agreed.

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Leave has been denied. Leave has been denied.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chairperson:** No. 161 on the presenters list, Sukwinder Dhaliwal. No. 161—my apologies if I'm not pronouncing the name quite right.

**Ms. Klassen:** Well, can we get another list for—

**Mr. Chairperson:** No. 161, Mr. Dhaliwal, will now be put to the bottom of our list.

We will now move back to presenter—this concludes all of our out-of-town presenters.

We will now move to No. 1 on the presenters list, Allen Mankewich, Independent Living Resource Centre.

**Mr. Allen Mankewich (Independent Living Resource Centre):** Will this mic pick up my—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Do you have any written materials for the committee?

**Mr. Mankewich:** No, sir.

**Mr. Chairperson:** You may proceed with your presentation when you are ready.

**Mr. Mankewich:** Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

My name is Allen Mankewich and I'm here from the Independent Living Resource Centre and I'm here to speak about Bill 30.

With Bill 30, there are several things I would like our legislators to consider when finalizing the legislation and its regulations. The Independent Living Resource Centre has made major contributions to ensuring disability awareness among transportation service providers in Winnipeg. Currently, we deliver a disability awareness seminar to all drivers wishing to obtain or maintain a taxicab licence. To date, we have a lot of—we have had a lot of positive feedback from drivers who said their experience in our training has been very eye-opening, including many of the drivers that are here tonight.

People with disabilities have also reported that they've noticed an improvement in the service they are receiving. We feel it's critical to place similar requirements on drivers of ride-sharing services. While ride-sharing companies may have their own internal training, it usually just consists of watching a few videos.

\*(18:40)

The training we offer to taxi drivers is comprised of seven hours of classroom and hands-on training. The quality of our training far exceeds any training that any ride-sharing companies are currently doing. Our training is also designed and delivered by people with disabilities, which gives our training a unique perspective.

If you look at some very recent incidents that have been in the media, the public perception of the taxicab industry has taken a bit of a beating. There are people who are afraid to use taxis for safety reasons. People with disabilities share many of these same concerns. Bolstered by The Accessibility for Manitobans Act, the Taxicab Board recognized these issues and engaged the disability community to fix them. ILRC, which is our organization, has been part of that solution.

Our program—our training program was developed with the Taxicab Board and the disability community, and, to date, we have trained over 1,500 drivers. The response, as I mentioned, has been overwhelmingly positive from both drivers and taxi users.

Bill 30 must take into consideration the need for ongoing training and engagement of persons with disabilities. This is what the public wants. Manitobans value, respect safety and equity in our public and private services, including transportation.

If you look at The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, which is the counterpart to The Accessibility for Manitobans Act, it contains several passages that outlined obligations for taxi drivers and taxi companies. While this requirement only applies to taxicabs in Ontario, we implore the legislators here in Manitoba to consider adding provisions to this bill that will encourage municipalities to enhance transportation options that are equitable for people with disabilities.

I'll speak a little bit about access to services in other jurisdictions. The level of service provided by ride-sharing services in other jurisdictions remains a concern to people with disabilities. If we look at what happened in Toronto, city council introduced reforms to the taxi industry in 2014. The reforms would've mandated that the city's entire taxicab fleet be made accessible by 2024. When Toronto city council voted to officially allow Uber in 2016, it killed these reforms under pressure from ride-sharing companies so they would no longer have an accessible taxicab fleet by 2024, and there's no legislated requirements for ride-sharing companies to provide accessible transportation options.

The United States is seeing similar concerns. Uber is currently being sued by a disability rights organization in Illinois for not adequately serving people with disabilities after it was found that Uber gave just 14 rides to motorized wheelchair users over a four-year period starting in 2011.

Though Uber claims to offer accessible services through things like uberWAV and uberASSIST, there are documented examples where there are no accessible vehicles on the road in many large cities, including San Francisco and Boston.

I've highlighted a couple issues with ride sharing, but there may be also opportunities we can explore. One intriguing idea may be to consider using ride-sharing platforms to supplement para-transit services such as Handi-Transit.

The government needs to bring stakeholders and—including taxi cab companies, ride-sharing companies and the disability community together to ensure that any new legislative framework protects accessible transportation options for Manitobans with disabilities.

By 2026, it is anticipated that over 250,000 Manitobans will have a disability. With our rapidly aging population, it is anticipated there will be an increased need for accessible transportation.

Although municipalities will develop their own rules, the Province of Manitoba has a unique opportunity now to insert explicit provisions into Bill 30 that will compel municipalities across Manitoba to take accessibility into account when developing their own rules around local vehicles for hire. This would be a positive step in helping the province and municipalities meet their obligations under The Accessibility for Manitobans Act.

Without accessible transportation options, people with disabilities will continue to struggle with accessing employment, medical appointments, shopping trips, social gatherings and other opportunities that many in our community take for granted.

Thank you for your time, and I welcome any questions.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation.

**Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Municipal Relations):** Thank you so much, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Mr. Mankewich, for your presentation tonight.

Really appreciate it, and took note, of course, of your concerns and absolutely assure you that the City of Winnipeg will definitely look into the disability training and services that will be considered during the development of the—of their bylaw going forward. So you have that assurance, sir.

And, again, thank you so much for your presentation.

**Mr. Fletcher:** Thank you for your presentation.

I wonder what you think about that assurance I was just given, as the City of Winnipeg is just one of many municipalities. And I have a federal member provide—or a provincial member provide assurances on behalf of the City is in—always an interesting outcome.

I happen to not live in the city. And what is your thoughts about people who don't live in the city when it's the city, apparently, that's going to be responsible for accessible transportation? I also wonder if you could comment on the differential between the accessible cabs, the capital cost of an accessible cab, which is about twice as much as the vehicle itself.

And who is going to be doing the policing? Where does that fall? Where—someone has to pay for it. And who pays for it? It's the ratepayer and there's only one ratepayer; it's the user. And, when rates go up, it affects the people most vulnerable, people with

disabilities. And Uber, and ride-sharing programs, would undermine the economics. Winnipeg, actually, is far ahead of most jurisdictions across North America, and I've been to many of those places.

**Mr. Mankewich:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll try to address some of your questions to the best of my ability.

In terms of the vehicles, you mention there is the added cost. Currently, the Manitoba Taxicab Board offsets that by offering accessible plates for a very nominal fee. I believe it's \$100 you can get a plate for an accessible vehicle, versus buying a standard taxicab licence on the private market for several hundred thousand dollars.

**An Honourable Member:** How about the capital costs of the cab?

**Mr. Mankewich:** Yes, well, factor in the—that you're not—you're paying less for the—for the plate. You know, it allows the operators to spend some of that money instead on changes to the vehicle.

**Mr. Chairperson:** I'd like to remind everybody here, before you can be recognized, you can't have two-way conversations going. So, in order to recognize them, otherwise it doesn't get recorded, so it doesn't matter what anybody says. And I'd also like to remind all the people asking questions, we have a huge pile of people sitting at the table here, we have a lot of people in attendance tonight. I'd like people to limit their questions to probably about 45 seconds as to what their questions would be, so that we can continue on. So everybody would have an opportunity to ask questions.

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Chair, and through you I'd say, thank you for the presentation. I think you brought some important issues forward for us to consider.

You did come down to this provincial hearing and I know you did mention The Accessibility for Manitobans Act, which is a provincial piece of legislation, so I'm just wondering if you think that would be appropriate for the provincial piece of legislation to be amended to reflect some of the concerns. And if so, do you have any ideas, in terms of what the legislation might reflect to, I guess, meet some of the issues that you've raised? *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Mankewich. Sorry, I had the mic off. Sorry.

**Mr. Mankewich:** No problem.

So, in terms of some of the concerns, Mr. Fletcher had a comment about, you know, what happens in municipality—or out—if you live outside a municipality that's not—that won't be creating a board to sort of oversee this type of thing. That's why provincial legislators have a unique opportunity to do right now, to insert provisions into the bill that will encourage municipalities and people who live outside—or people who happen to fall outside those municipalities, the opportunity for equitable transportation options, no matter where they live in Manitoba.

\* (18:50)

**Mr. Marcelino:** Mr. Mankewich, would you agree that if you were charged extra for riding a handicap accessible vehicle, it would be too onerous for those who are currently using other modes of coping.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Mankewich, we have run out of time, but we'll let you answer quickly.

**Mr. Mankewich:** Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for your question. In terms of the cost, you know, there shouldn't be additional cost placed riders who have disabilities. It's explicitly forbidden in The Taxicab Act, and I think some of those provisions should carry over into Bill 30 as well.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Mankewich.

We will now move on to presenter No. 2 on the list, Megan Linton. Megan Linton, are you present? Megan Linton, presenter No. 2 on the list. Ms. Linton's name will be dropped to the bottom of the list.

I will now call on presenter No. 3, Abio—Akinola. No.3. Presenter No. 3, if you could just tell us your name so I don't butcher it again.

**Mr. Abiodun Akinola (Private Citizen):** I will tell you.

Good evening. My name is Abiodun Akinola—just the way it is spelled.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Akinola. Okay. Go ahead, Mr. Akinola, with your presentation.

**Mr. Akinola:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Please proceed with your presentation.

**Mr. Akinola:** Before I go into the body of my presentation, let me remind everybody here, this is a very great House and I will tell you why, because of

the father of this province, Louis Riel, who was a father of the Confederation. And, at the same time, I will take you back to Elijah Harper. May his soul rest in peace. It was during the Meech Lake Accord, he stood up and he said no. He did not allow to be muzzled, he did not allow to be dictated to, he went with his conscience—and he believed in fairness, justice and equity, because of that Meech Lake was killed. Not only that, Clyde Wells of Newfoundland followed; he rescinded what he had given assent to.

Now, let me go back a little bit. It was in the same House here that [*inaudible*] killed the government of a former premier, by my right-hand side. So I do not emulate you here tonight; you have big shoes to fill. I hope you are here with your consciences; fear of God, justice and equity. I hope you are here to do what is right. If you look behind me, you see people in here that are different from you.

Now, let's go to my body. An urgent call to good use of common sense and sensitivity to human conscience just before our world is turned into a jungle where the mighty and the powerful bury the weak and the vulnerable alive. Issued by Mr. Abiodun Akinola, Unicity Taxi. Please, it's not Wednesday; it's Monday, I'm ahead of my time. Monday, please, not Wednesday.

Now, historical background: Whereas the municipal government, City of Winnipeg, ceded the oversight of the taxi business to the provincial government, Province of Manitoba, in 1945, on the basis that it was too overwhelming to run for the municipal government—1945. At that time, Manitoba was only 300,000 people. The city could not even handle it.

(2) Whereas this decision was known to be an exception rather than the rule, as the province of Manitoba became the only jurisdiction in North America where the provincial government controlled the city taxi business. Up to today, we are the only one in North America where the province is controlling the taxi business. There must be a reason for that.

(3) Whereas the total population of Winnipeg at that time was around 300,000 people, yet the municipal government decided to call on the provincial government to take it over.

(4) Whereas the total population of Winnipeg in 2017 is around 800,000—I think I stand corrected for that; it's more than 800,000 now—yet the provincial

government is now giving us the impression that the municipal government should deal with the mess after it must have decapitated the industry.

(5) Whereas the municipal government saw the taxi industry as overwhelming when the city population was 300,000, so what magic should any reasonable person expect the municipal government to perform? To deal with a size that is almost three times the size of the earlier size it found to be overwhelming.

These are the questions I'm putting to all of you. And I hope I'm talking to people here that are free, that are into the justice, that believe in equity. Not only that; remember, history is going to judge us. As I mentioned before, [*inaudible*] is still known to—all over the world.

(7)—I hope I'm on (7), right? Whereas provincial government gave out 400 taxi licence plates to the 20 soldiers from World War II as a form of job creation in 1945 is how we come to fund the taxis in Winnipeg, in 1945. It was due to our coming back from the war. There was no job for them, and in order to create employment for them, they gave them all these licences.

Whereas the said 400 licence plates were retained and standardized 'til today.

Whereas the provincial government formed Unicity Taxi in 1971 by honourable—the Premier of 1971. It was an NDP premier who was—[*interjection*] Governor General Schreyer. Thank you very much. Honourable Mr. Schreyer was one of those that formed Unicity Taxi. At that time, they brought three companies together: Moore's, Yellow and Grosvenor.

Whereas the provincial government formed Unicity—okay, nine.

Whereas each plate was subsequently sold to each driver in 1971 at the total cost of \$7,600, in 1971. With a payment plan of \$100 per driver per month. It was Manitoba government who arranged for the loan.

(10) Whereas these drivers were considerably expected to finish the payment by 1976.

(11) Whereas this arrangement provided jobs that prevented welfare system from being overwhelmed and even restored self-respect and dignity to the drivers.

(12) Whereas this arrangement prevented a social and economic calamity that could have created problems for the justice system with dire consequences on the economy.

(13) Whereas between 1976 and today, 2017, the value of these licences continue to increase, due to the hard work of owner-operators.

(14) Whereas these owner-operators were and continue to be subjected to rigorous medical, physical and emotional tests to guarantee safety for commuters.

(15) Whereas these owner-operators are subjected to continued training to ensure protection of cab users.

\* (19:00)

(16) Whereas these owner-operators participate in various ambassador training and interpersonal training to ensure that tourists return after their first visit to the city.

(17) Whereas these owner-operators were and continue to be subjected to serious vehicular checks every month to guarantee safety.

(18) Whereas the kind of registration paid to Manitoba Public Insurance today is so overbearing compared to the cost of insurance in 1976 or 1945.

Let me wait a little bit here—what is Uber bringing here? Uber is not spending a penny. It is going to use people from this province to buy the cars, whereby they take the profits. They're not from here. They're not bringing anything here.

If it's competition you want, we didn't create the monopoly; the government created the monopoly. Bring them in. Let's compete, but don't kill us. Let's compete, then. The market is there for us. Let the market decide.

(19) Whereas the provincial government runs a big bureaucracy with accompanying financial outlay from the owner-operators to oversee the industry, while a driver must work for 12 hours to take home less than a minimum wage.

(20) Whereas the Manitoba government attempted to increase the number of licence plates in 1991, possibly as an attempt to shoot down the rising value of each licence plate due to the hard work of driver-owner-operators.

Yes, in 1991, the government of that day wanted to bring conservative government again.

It's conservative government all the time that believe in no change.

Let me give you the analogy of conservative people. They believe in the change, but they believe the change must be gradual. That is their philosophy. There is nothing wrong with it, when you're in a democracy. If people buy it, they vote for them. If they don't, they don't vote for them.

But the problem with democracy is that when they have a majority, the members are told—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Akinola, your 10 minutes has come and gone.

We would like to thank you for your presentation. *[interjection]* And I—we do have it on—

**Mr. Akinola:** Mr. Chairman, I stand corrected that when I came in here, you did not tell me I have 10 minutes.

I've been in this business since 1978. I don't think 10 minutes is enough for me, for my life and my family. I was not told that I will be using 10 minutes.

**Mr. Chairperson:** At the beginning of this committee, I read out every—to everybody that there's 10 minutes for reports and for committee presentations and five minutes for questions. Everybody is well aware of that, I believe. Anybody in this room was—done, so now we will proceed to the question period. And I believe Mr. Kinew—*[interjection]* No pictures in here, sir.

Mr. Kinew has the floor now.

**Mr. Kinew:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Mr. Akinola for, you know, the work you put into preparing this.

I look ahead to page 3, and you have points 16 and 17 there. Just to summarize briefly, you say that you've worked in the industry since 1978 and your lifelong investments are in the equity of your licence. And then you say that you use this income and equity to pay off student loan, mortgage, personal loans to provide for your children and grandchildren, aged parents, et cetera.

So I'm just wondering if you could tell us, because, you know, you didn't get a chance to get to this in your presentation, if you could just talk to us about the personal investment that you have made and potentially what is the impact of this bill passing on that personal financial situation.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Akinola. You can speak now.

**Mr. Akinola:** Thank you for the question. Unfortunately, I didn't get to where I am going to, but I will answer your question for you.

When I got into this industry, there is an act that governs us. That act did not tell me that in 19–in 2017, that the act is going to be killed. If I'd have been told, I would have maximized my resources so that I would not be in this calamity. I have children that are going to university. I have students that are going to St. Mary's Academy that I have to pay for. Now, I don't know what to do. This is the condition I'm in.

Does that answer your question? Or you want me to elaborate?

**Mr. Saran:** Thank you for your presentation. Thanks of the Chair.

My question is that: Would you be happy if Uber also have to buy the licence on ongoing price and then will be fair, or not?

**Mr. Akinola:** Thank you, Mr. Saran.

When I joined this industry in 1978, there was a line to be toed. It is a monopoly. You can only buy somebody before you get in. That is the name of the game.

I went to the bank and borrowed money. I toed the party—I toed the line. Why, then, all of a sudden, you are catering for multinational, somebody who's got billions of dollars? Why can't he toe the line, too? This is democracy, see.

You don't do to the engineering department. You don't do to the doctors. You don't change anything. The—before you become a doctor, you have to go to school. After you go to school, you join the—you have to join the doctors—what do you call it again? They have a body.

Then why are you killing us? Why don't you let them toe the line too? Let them come in. There's the act that governs us in Manitoba. Let them come into the act. Let them do what they are supposed to do. Then everything will be fine.

But now what if a—I studied economics. Profit market will dictate who is going to remain in that market. Don't let human being dictate to that market. Leave market alone. They say—and in the market that will judge everybody. This is what I'm asking for.

**Mr. Marcelino:** Yes, thank you for your presentation, Mr. Akinola.

How much money, all together, will you potentially lose if you were to give up this fight?

**Mr. Akinola:** Thank you. I still have a mortgage of 150,000. I just bought a brand new car—\$32,000—two weeks ago. I changed my car: hybrid—Prius. Not only that, my kids—two of my kids are going to academy and I have two of them at the University of Manitoba that I'm responsible for. Not only that, I have parents back home that I'm sending money to.

This is what I'm going to—and this is industry I'm making the money from. After going to school, and this society cannot provide me a job, I came and bought my own job. I bought it. The government is supposed to provide jobs for its people. I'm—I don't mind that. They don't provide the job. Now I bought my job. Now, you are going to keep the job from me? Is this fairness? Is this justice? I leave it to your consciences.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank you for your presentation, Mr. Akinola.

I would ask the audience to keep their applauding—that's something that should not happen in committee here. And also to keep your voices down so—it gets difficult to hear up here or at the back if people are talking. If you want to talk, maybe just move out to the back outside. Thank you.

We will now move on to the next presenter. Presenter No. 5, Tarlochan Gill, private citizen.

Mr. Gill, if I mispronounced your name, if you could please let us know the proper pronunciation is.

**Mr. Tarlochan Gill (Private Citizen):** My name is Tarlochan Gill. Good evening.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay, Mr. Gill. Do you have any written—*[interjection]* Yes, you do. Okay, as soon that—you're free to start your presentation.

**Mr. Gill:** Good evening to all respected members. My name is Tarlochan Gill. I am pleased to speak today on behalf of Unicity Taxi. Our company's the largest dispatch company in Winnipeg and has been in business since 1971. I want to stress one thing that the people often do not realize—Unicity Taxi is actually a company of local independent shareholders and operators. We are your neighbours, your family and your friends.

\* (19:10)

In the city of Winnipeg, many people work very hard, but, honestly, I believe that our industry—one of the hardest working.

We provide service throughout the city 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We operate when it's plus 35, when it's -35. At Unicity, we serve the airport-to-downtown business district, but we also serve every community in a broader community of Winnipeg.

I want to express today our frustration about what's happening with the taxi regulations in this province. You're bringing in—the—you're bringing in Bill 30 that wipes out the existing licence structure and paves the way for a multinational corporation that has broken laws and regulations around the world and set a new low standard in the taxi standard that has put back taxi service decades around the world.

What is very frustrating is the provincial government did not have the courtesy to consult the taxi industry before it was brought in. But to add to that, I want to point out that the city is working on taxi regulation without any meaningful consultation with the industry. In its rush to push through changes to the taxi industry, it has not even waited for the Province to pass the legislate. The city has been developing regulations without input from the people.

We know the industry. Our drivers, our owners, our company should be heard. We want to put—we want to input, we want to be heard, we want justice. I want to say to you: We will be heard loudly.

It starts with recognizing what is at stake. People in the taxi industry have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in their licence, their vehicles and much more. They follow the rules. They are taxpayers in our community. But what you are doing is threatening to wipe out their licence and wipe out their livelihood. That's shameful.

What is particularly frustrating to the industry in the degrees to which this is happening through one of the worst violations of property rights and legal rights. We have seen in the province, in many years, the Province is taking away our legal rights with Bill 30, taking away our property rights. Do I put in place a section in this bill that prevents us from going to court because you know that if you do take legal action, the court may actually rule in our favour? You are rigging this to benefit Uber at our expense.

I want to put forward what Unicity's position is. First of all, safety must be the key. Taxi driving is one of the most dangerous occupations in Canada. In Winnipeg, we now have one of the safest industries because of shields, cameras and training. We cannot, and we must not, go back to the days when taxi drivers were murdered in the city in a regular basis. This is what will happen if you water down the safety protection for drivers.

I also want to stress what we do in terms of passenger service and safety. Our drivers have to go through a 'regous' training program. We support this because it means they are better trained for customer service and for their own safety, as well as their passengers' safety. Our driver has to pass an English-language proficiency test. That makes sense, but we know that the [inaudible] suggested doing away with that.

We also believe that there needs to be fairness. We serve the entire city; Uber cherry-picks passengers and does not serve all areas in the city and, in particular, has bitterly ignored the needs of the disabled. We believe that there should be the same requirement for service for all vehicles for hire.

Insurance is an issue. We pay more than \$10,000 a year for insurance. You cannot allow another vehicle-for-hire operation to come in and not have the same insurance requirement. We have a regulated price; it does not matter if it's in the middle of summer or New Year's Eve. When you get in a Winnipeg taxi, you know the rates you will be charged in standard. Uber uses model of surge pricing that can result in dramatically higher prices during certain periods.

I often hear people talking about Uber having an app. We have an app, too, and it's proving to be a big success here in Winnipeg. I'll add here the same thing—the same Uber app is having we are almost having the same. The phone numbers, the driver's name and even with a credit card you can add it too, it tells the amount, how much it costs from one destination to another destination.

In the fact, we have made real efforts to modernize our taxi service. We are very proud of the fact that virtually all of our fleet uses environmentally friendly hybrid vehicles. We are doing our best to fight climate change. We believe what the city is doing is not modernized the industry. It is going to put us back in times, the time before the top level of safety standards we have today, before the kinds of regulations and—that provide service to all



areas and all the people in the city, before we had rigorous training to ensure passenger's and driver's safety our responsibility.

We want to say to you we oppose what's happening right now. We have not been consulted. We didn't—we did you not pass his legislation. Let's take the time to consult. Let's take the time to get it right. Safety, fairness, community, that is what the Unicity Taxi is all about. That is what our fight is all about.

And, to end, I will add our inspector, Saran, he put in one question about the licences. It's passed by the taxi board, over \$500,000. All these families standing behind us, they all are here because, since the bill is announced, the price went \$250,000. They all these families they are from Winnipeggers. They are having lots of loans on their houses, they have mortgages on the houses and loans on their cabs. By regulating and passing this bill, please, all respected members, think 100 times. These all families will get bankrupted. They will be homeless. So our request is there. Please, before passing, think about all these situations.

Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Gill.

**Mr. Maloway:** Thank you, Mr. Gill, for your presentation. I just wanted to ask you a question and also let you know that in 1971 when Autopac was set up in Manitoba, the NDP government of the day under Mr. Schreyer had a compensation fund of I think \$2.5 million, which in today's dollars would be \$15 million. And transitional—if agents—insurance agents didn't want an Autopac licence, and a number of them did not so they took the compensation. That's how the Manitoba—a past Manitoba government dealt with a situation like this. Also, in the Canada-European free trade agreement, CETA, the Quebec dairy farmers have been dealt with with compensation over a 10-year period.

So now you have 40 members of the Conservative party elected in the last election, all sitting across from me here, in the next number of days are going to vote by this bill. They put in a section 10 to say no compensation is payable. Why did they put that in there? Because they know that if they didn't and you went to court you would get compensation. Okay?

**Floor Comment:** Yes, even Australia—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Gill, please don't answer until he's finished and I'll recognize you.

**Mr. Gill:** Even you recommended before that in Australia it was compensated. I think right now that's why we are bringing our concerns. The government should think 100 times to pass—before passing this bill they should think about these families, about their kids. Everybody's kids are going in the school. How they can handle?

\* (19:20)

The prices went up to four, five—four to five thousand dollars. We have drivers. They pay some amount so we can handle our mortgages and loans. If the ride-sharing is coming, if those drivers are gone by driving ride-sharing or somewhere, it's really hard to work with that kind of expenses on the road with these cabs.

**Mr. Marcelino:** Mr. Gill, thank you for your presentation.

And there's one personal anecdote that I got involved in regarding a taxi driver. And the taxi driver gave a ride to my niece, whose drink was spiked at the bar. And because my niece left her bag and money at the bar, the taxi driver did not charge her anything and she was brought safely home. And up to now, I am still looking for that Unicity taxicab driver. And I appreciate that the business that you're in is about our community.

So what can you comment about that type of incident? Is it something that's unique or exceptional? Or is that something that you train your drivers to do?

**Mr. Gill:** The thing is in our company, if—there are lost and founds. If anything—forgets in our cars, they drop it in our office. If the customer says return it, we send our own cabs to return their stuff.

There are lots of companies out here, individual cars that are here. We get lots of problems in Christmas time. When individual cars, they have no phone numbers or nothing. People lost their luggage; people lost their stuff. It's very hard to find—or, hard to chase those things. Even if the ride-sharing is coming, there are no numbers. We are taxi that are having numbers on three sides—rear and both sides. When our customer go from where-to-where destination, car goes—we can track the cars. If a dispatch is really easy, if the person tells you what time he picked up from there, it—still, we can track those cars and easy to find the stuff.

But then—I think before doing all these things, government should do the study on all these things instead of facing all these consequences later.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank you for your presentation, Mr. Gill.

We will now move on to the next presenter. Presenter No. 6, Bhupinder [*phonetic*] Mangat. Presenter No. 6.

Do you have—yes, you're presenting your written materials? Thank you. You may proceed when you're ready, Mr. Mangat.

**Mr. Bhupinderted Mangat (Private Citizen):** Good afternoon, every—good evening, everybody. My name is Bhupinderted Mangat. I'm just talking about—regarding Bill 30 on behalf of Unicity Taxi.

I am proud to be part of a taxi industry in Manitoba, and I am here tonight to tell you the Bill 30 is not a good bill for us. Let me tell you, now. It works in our industry, you cannot become a driver overnight. You have to meet the licence requirements. You have to go through a criminal record check. You have to go through a child abuse registry check. You have to go through an interview. You have to pass English language 'profency' text—test. You have to go through a training program.

And let me tell you, one of the first things you do this—you find out what the rules are, become—because if you don't follow the rules, you will get into trouble. Over the last few years—months, many of us have been learning about polity—politics in Manitoba. It's not we aren't involved. Many of us are very active political, but the lesson we are learning is just how people making the decision that are affecting is—often don't even know what is really going on, clearly have not their work—homework.

I start with what I heard from the Legislature. The minister said that there has not been an increase in the number of licence—taxi licences in recent years. While that may be the case, the standard taxi licence—he did not mention that fact there has been significant increase in other taxi licences. I don't know if the minister read the report, but I will read the MNP said: While standard taxicab numbers have remained flat at 410, total annual supply has increased by 9 per cent, reflecting a 52 per cent increase in the number of accessible taxicabs and handicab vans. A significant increase in the number of seasonal taxis in 2015 providing an overall fleet increase is 15 per cent in November to March compared to 2008.

So there are a lot more taxis. The report did talk about increasing the number of licences for the next few years, maintain the current ratio, but to suggest there's been no increase in licences is very misleading.

I also want to point out there are more licences to serve the disabled. In our industry, we know that's important. Many of our medical and other needs that we attend to, I can tell every day of the week, taxis are picking people to go to hospitals, in many cases, in emergency situations. Accessible taxis are taking our seniors and others that are disabled on a daily basis.

Everywhere is it the—in the world Uber operates, this is the last thing they are concerning about. If they come into Winnipeg, may operate from the airport to downtown, you may see there certain areas of the city, but Uber is not a solution for everyone with a disability. They are a huge problem, and if you undercut your taxi system, you undercut your ability to serve the people in the most need.

I can tell you another thing about our customers too. Many have no other option for transportation. Many don't have credit cards. We are there for them; Uber won't be.

There is also the fact that we charge the same rate regardless of how busy we are. There is no such thing as surge price. Just go on the computer and google, Uber is surge price and you will be—thousands of stories about how people paid huge amounts of basic taxi service at peak times.

So please look at the current system. Changes have been made to serve Winnipeggers, whether it—the increased number of the disabled taxis, whether it be computer apps that both major companies use. We are keeping up with the times, but if you think Uber is about modernizing the taxi history, you are dead wrong. Uber would set us back in terms of the kind of service we can provide. It is not only that we leave 1,600 jobs, all for the supporting of our families, you will be replacing that with Uber jobs which are part-time, poorly paid and don't even provide the service all Manitobans deserve.

Maybe what you need to do: apply to taxi drivers, go through some of the things we have to go through. Maybe take the time to go around with one of our drivers to see what it's like.

We proud to serve with service we provide. Many of us have investing our life savings into this industry. We have brought significant money into

Winnipeg, to Canada, to invest. Some people are—even came as business immigrants. Many others have mortgages—their home to be able to have to—have a licence.

\* (19:30)

With one bill, you are wiping all of the—this out. You're even taking away our legal rights. That is wrong. That is not the way I thought things are run in Manitoba.

So we are learning a lot of lessons about politics and let me—clear; we will remember how you treat us the time of next election.

And we can add one thing: Even London is the big city in the world, they also banned the Uber there and Quebec is in Canada is Montreal, they also follow the rules and regulations.

We are agreed that we agree to competitions, but if they follow the every rules, we welcome, but right now our situation is do or die. Please help us. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Mangat.

**Mr. Maloway:** And I want to thank you for your presentation, and as I explained before, you know, in the CETA agreement, the Quebec dairy farmers are being compensated over 10 years. The Autopac agents were compensated in 1971 and we know that in Australia every single state in Australia has brought in legislation over the last year, and one of them, the best one so far, is Victoria, where they have introduced a \$494-million assistance package and they are offering \$100,000 for each licence and \$50,000 for second licence up to three, plus there is another fund here, a hardship fund, okay. And I know that even there it's not enough compensation to satisfy the need.

But, compare that to what the members on the other side of the table are offering you, and that is no compensation at all. Like, they put it in the bill. So I don't think, over the next couple of weeks, that you need to be talking to me necessarily, or people on our side of the table here, but your time would be well spent talking to the members opposite, because they can be reasonable people. I am sure that when you explain your situation to them they can do things like withdraw this bill. It's very easy for the government. The Premier (Mr. Pallister) can, tomorrow, pull this bill off the table and do some more consulting with

you and bring it in next year if he wants. It's very achievable.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Mangat.

**Mr. Kinew:** Thank you for the presentation. You raised in your talk service to the entire city and servicing to people who may not necessarily have credit cards and the fact that the taxi industry is there.

I know that, you know, we had a submission from the Richardson airport, but there's another airport in the city with a taxi stand, which is the Perimeter airport, and I was wondering if you could talk about your experience, like, you service that airport. Does that clientele typically pay with credit cards? Do you believe that that clientele at the Perimeter airport would be served by a ride-hailing app? *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Mangat, you have to wait 'til I recognize you. Go ahead.

**Mr. Mangat:** We follow the—everything like the new technology, advanced technology, credit card. We accepting debit, credit—everything now. And another thing, right now Ucity's just serving to the Winnipeg international airport and Duffy's serving to the Perimeter airline. We're different kind of industry.

But we are—right now is—our main industry that's issues. That's why, like, we follow, we have app, we have the new technologies, we have the clean cars, we have the good cars, hybrid cars and we follow the—all the rules and regulations. That's why we are agree if Uber is here but they follow same procedures.

**Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East):** Again, Mr. Mangat, thank you very much for your presentation and the information is excellent.

I don't live in Winnipeg. I represent an area outside of Winnipeg. Bill 30 has an effect throughout the province, not just in Winnipeg. There's a lot of concern and talk about Uber, which is part of the bill, but is not the entire bill.

So I'm trying to get a little bit more understanding of the taxi business in Winnipeg.

So can you talk about the difference—and maybe it's numbers, maybe it's situations—on owner-operators versus employees in the taxi industry here in Winnipeg?

**Mr. Mangat:** Right now, we have good connections with drivers and the owners, because if—like, right now the work is very good. People not talking the phone of our company, they're just using the app, and our driver is good right now; our owner is good right now. That's why we have the very good connections with customer, drivers, everything. Right now, we have the good situation, but right—another thing that because Winnipeg is not a big city right now; not big, not small. That's why our main thing, like, our office, if any 'complaining,' a customer has complained, that we have 24-hour service. Our office is open Monday to Friday. We are just a local business here. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Mangat. Before we continue on to the next presenter, I would just like to remind the members of the public who are observing the committee—committee meeting—to please not disturb the committee proceedings by applauding or commenting from the audience. A while ago, I had said, like, if you're going to talk—the background noise is getting a little up there—then you could just do that in the hallway. So please try to keep our committee rolling properly. Thank you.

Our next presenter, No. 7, Malkeet Makkar. Do you have any written materials for—Mr. Makkar, you may proceed with your presentation.

**Mr. Malkeet Makkar (Private Citizen):** Good evening, everyone. My name is Malkeet Makkar. I am pleased to be able to present to you today.

You will hear a lot of people in our industry talking about safety, fairness and community. I want to focus on community. How the current taxi system works. What is at stake. A lot of this is in some of the reports to be prepared, but I am going to read some of this on the record because I find a lot of people really have no idea what the current regulated system in all about.

Let's start with the fact the current system provides system—service to entire city. Taxis in regulated markets are generally required to provide service to an entire geographic area with the same fare rates. Dense markets with frequent short trips cross-subsidize low density areas; peak traffic cross-subsidizes off peak service. Without regulation, service to low density and off-peak trips may decline or not be available at the—all. Dempsey, 1966.

Deregulation is problematic. When implemented, the—in the taxi-stand/street-hail market, open entry has led an oversupply of taxis. Oversupply taxis has resulted in fare revenues too low per driver to support quality vehicles, acceptable driver incomes and industry accountability for service.

I want to talk about Uber. They don't need to be—have Bill 30 to function in Winnipeg. As MNP pointed to—pointed out, in Manitoba, The Taxicab Act and regulations without—would not prevent Uber itself from operating as a dispatch service. The act would require any Uber drivers in Winnipeg to have a taxi driver's licence and a taxi business licence.

The issue is the Uber does not want to meet the same standards for taxis, such as requirements for a taxicab business licence or taxicab driver licence; commercial driver's licence and insurance; training and background checks; in-car equipment—camera, meter; vehicle standards and inspections; and prescribed fares.

\* (19:40)

What bothers me is the people keep using the term ride-sharing for Uber. Ride-sharing is when you ask a friend or someone you know for ride share. Bill 30's called the vehicle for hire act. That is what Uber is: a vehicle for hire. In the other words, it is a taxi service. So why should not Uber have, follow same regulations and—regular taxi?

My message is that if you allow Uber or any company undercut the existing service, people will suffer. The disabled in particular. People in areas not served by Uber. What you also lose is the flat rate system. Because of—Uber is short of pricing.

*Mr. Vice-Chairperson in the Chair*

I want to be clear, taxi—the taxi system is not perfect, but we are always making improvements. Both companies now have apps which people really like. If you doesn't—destroy the existing industry to be—bring Uber—in Uber, we in the industry will lose. But we—so will Winnipeggers. In the industry, will—in the industry, we will do our best, but it will not be the same. Some of you will be driven out of business. Many people will not get the service they have. The only real winner will be Uber, a company that is not even from Canada.

There is still the time to do right—do the right thing. Delay this legislation. Consult and get it right. Support our campaign for safely, fairness and community. Thank you.

**Mr. Vice-Chairperson:** Thank you very much for your presentation. We'll open up to questions.

**Mr. Marcelino:** In listening to what you were saying—and I was trying to follow your presentation with this written. My question is: How many people do you support while working as a taxicab driver, and how many hours do you usually work per day?

**Mr. Makkar:** Working 12 hours every day.

**Mr. Marcelino:** How many people do you usually support when you work 12 hours a day?  
[interjection]

**Mr. Vice-Chairperson:** Mr. Makkar, you'll need to wait until I call you so we can turn your microphone on.

**Mr. Makkar:** Sorry.

**Mr. Vice-Chairperson:** Mr. Makkar, please go ahead.

**Mr. Makkar:** I support my whole family from my cab.

I drive 12 hours and seven days a week because I have a lot of loans. I buy last year's cab for half year \$200,000. Now price is right now down. So where I survive? When you pass this bill, where we survive? Who pay the bill? My mortgage? Who pay my loan?

I came in Canada because Canada is good country. They give a chance for better future here. Now they get everything bad. We are working very hard here.

**Mr. Saran:** Thank you, Mr. Makkar, to come over here.

And are you aware that some people under business class—under PNP—they came over here and they paid to buy that licence more than \$300,000? But Uber is getting a free ride. You think that's fair?

And also, on the other hand, what do you think if the taxi board can sell you the licence, are you going to buy the licence on the ongoing price? And don't you think it will stabilize the market? At the same time, it will be on the basis of supply and demand. What do you think?

**Mr. Makkar:** It's not fair. It's not fair because this is our assets. We work hard and pay everything for my mortgage, my insurance, my loans. If the City provides cabs everywhere, you—why, like a hundred bucks or two hundred bucks, it's not fair. Who pay

for the—my loans? Who pay—because if the City put more taxis on the road, it's business—it's messed.

**Mr. Saran:** Is it fair that a big guy like Uber, they can free—get a free ride licence at zero price, and you guys have to buy that—some people have \$500,000, people in the PNP program buying at \$300,000, and where government is lacking the understanding?

**Mr. Makkar:** I don't think so. Like, if they give free rides—no, I don't think anybody wants a free ride. They want safety first.

**Floor Comment:** Mr. Chair, can—for this question—he has English problems. Could you allow us—

**Mr. Vice-Chairperson:** Please approach the microphone.

**Floor Comment:** It's not—I'm answering the question from [inaudible] Saran. It's not fair. We are ready to face all challenges. For insurance, if the value, whatever we paid—if Uber rides are paying the same, we have no objection. But it's not fair. The people there giving the same taxi service in the private cars, and people have paid half a million dollars on their jobs. They didn't buy a business; they did buy a job. It's very hard to find jobs in Manitoba.

People have sold their own properties from back home and brought money here to buy these jobs. They're working for their families, hard. Now these families are ruined. They're ruined—they're ruined—from back home, they sold everything, they brought here to make a good life in Canada, but Bill 30 screwed these families. This guy had just buy a cab last year—and all loans. He has brought all his documents.

If government should go by each share, they can bring all those things. I think once you will read all those loans and mortgages, you will stop this bill. You will hear our things from our heart. People are not crying. They have nothing—they are everybody. They are working 12 hours, but they work under the stress since the bill came here.

Please, our request is there [inaudible] hundred times—to pause—you can delay; you can make more studies on this—

**Mr. Vice-Chairperson:** I'm going to thank you for your answer. The intent was to translate and to help him out, and I think you've kind of gone a little on the other side and started arguing an argument for him. So, if you don't mind, your time is up anyways, and so I thank you for the presentation.

**An Honourable Member:** I think people who have a second language—

**Mr. Vice-Chairperson:** Oh, sorry. Mr. Saran, go ahead.

**Mr. Saran:** I think people who have a second language, they have problems to explain it, and will it be possible to have a translator?

*Mr. Chairperson in the Chair*

**Mr. Chairperson:** The motion that was brought forward was to help people out in their presentation but not to answer the question on their behalf—like, to translate. So, if he would like to tell the person what he'd like to answer and that person answers that back, is what the motion was, but not to allow somebody else to answer the questions.

**Mr. Saran:** Yes, I know. I'm not asking about that somebody else should answer from somebody else's behalf. Simply, I want, if somebody is not able to explain it, somebody else come to translate it, whatever this or that person is saying. And he can say it in Punjabi; the other person can say it in English.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We had agreed on allowing people to help, and that's what the motion is, and we'll continue to do that.

We'll move on to our next presenter, presenter No. 8, Harvinder Bar.

**An Honourable Member:** Brar.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Brar? Harvinder Brar. Harvinder? Seeing that Mr. Brar is not here, he will be moved to the bottom of the list.

\* (19:50)

We will now move on to presenter No. 9, Jadtar Brar.

Jadtar Brar, presenter No. 9.

Seeing as Mr. Brar is not here, he will be moved to the bottom of the list.

We will now proceed to presenter No. 10, Harpal Bedi.

Harpal Bedi. Harpal Bedi.

Jadtar Brar is not here; we will—sorry—Harpal Bedi is not here. Presenter No. 10 is not here. We will move on to presenter 11, Rajinder Bansal.

Rajinder Bansal, presenter No. 11. Bansal?

Mr. Bansal is not here. He will be moved to the bottom of the list. We will move on to presenter No. 12, Jaswant Singh.

Jaswant Singh, presenter No. 12. Thank you, Mr. Singh. Do you have any written documents—for—

**Mr. Jaswant Singh Deol (Private Citizen):** That would be no.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay, then you may proceed with your presentation.

**Mr. Deol:** Yes, my name is Jaswant Singh Deol. I'm living here 23 years, and I'm 20 years in cab business. So we working hard every day, 12 hours, six days or seven days. So we have a lot of mortgages on our homes. My kids, they're going to university. So this bill is unfair for the taxi industry because we following a lot of rules. We go to criminal background check, child abuse. We have too many people working over 40 years, a lot of experienced people. So this is totally unfair this bill, making bigger company, billionaire company, to, like, five, six hundred people, small-business people, out of work.

This is injustice. So I just remind you, like, I heard in the news, 1960, the federal government didn't like indigenous people; now, they're paying \$800 million, compensate them. So I want all members to request not do same mistake. After a couple of years, you guys realize. So do same thing for—we are very hard-working people. We have too lot of mortgages. We are going a lot of medical stress, so we have to get a lot of people a heart problem. So I don't want to my fellow members to be sick all, because they're paying a lot of pension.

So I am working when it's very hard for me to keep working all the time, so I am thinking about this bill; it's totally not fair with all cab drivers, all people—because hard-working people—some people come by nominee. They sold their property back home. They put their money investment here. It's not their fault. It's government fault. They buy the licence. It's approved by the Taxicab Board. Now, government bringing the bill, to—prices go very down. So I'm asking you: Who will pay that lot of money?

I have documents. I have over \$150,000 mortgage on me. So how I can—my kids can go to the university? I can't pay my bills, my mortgages. So every day we're facing—Autopac used to, I—when I bought cab, \$3,300. Now, we're paying over \$10,000. Since 2008 we not get any raise, providing

cheaper service, we bought \$35,000, each cab. Three, four years, we're putting more and more money from our pocket.

Government's not doing anything for us. Now, they bring this bill and it's totally unfair. This is not good for that cab industry and they also—we have a lot of experienced people. Somebody just new, they can make bad accident, they don't have—there is in Winnipeg, Manitoba, always, like, bad weather. People have to go airport, medical appointments, we always know experience, we take shortcuts, we try to go fast as we can. But new people, they don't know nothing. The experience always counts.

So I'm please asking all of you guys, think too many times to do this bill. This is totally unfair. Lots of people get medical problems, so it's totally unfair. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Singh. We will now move on to questions.

**Mr. Marcelino:** You mentioned something about the PNP, meaning the Provincial Nominee Program. Is that something that's—like, make me understand it a little bit better. Some of the taxicab drivers own their cabs because they invested the money that they raised from, say, from the Punjab by selling their property. Is that something that's accurate? *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Singh, if you could wait to answer until I recognize you.

**Mr. Deol:** Sorry.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Singh.

**Mr. Deol:** Yes. It's not a PNP, it's like 'autopenote' program. Some people, like, they invest used to \$75,000 for us. Then they bought small business in Manitoba, so they put their money, \$150,000, I think now is the government, 150. Some people, they sold their property to bring that money in cab business. Yes.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Saran. Did you want—I—you wanted a question? Okay, Mr. Marcelino.

**Mr. Marcelino:** You're—the understanding that I have when you said that you work six days a week, 12 hours a day, how much do you actually take home? *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Singh.

**Mr. Deol:** Sorry, I forgot.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Go ahead, Mr. Singh.

**Mr. Deol:** Normally, it's \$100 and \$150 we make in 12 hours. Yes.

**Mr. Marcelino:** And what kind of economic or financial hardships will you suffer from if this bill becomes law? How will you describe your condition? How will you suffer? Can you tell us?

**Mr. Deol:** Yes, I'm going through lots of medical problems. I can show my documents. I'm going lots of stress tests because I have lots of mortgages. I have three kids so they're going to school, university, pay lots of mortgages, bills, you know. Every day, every day, hydro, water bill, everything, property tax, it goes high. You—it's very hard to make a living in Manitoba.

\* (20:00)

**Mr. Marcelino:** Now, just to clarify the personal impact of this bill on your life. Can you please tell us how much money will you lose if Uber were allowed to come in?

**Mr. Deol:** Maybe 40 per cent. I'm thinking 40 per cent of our income we will lose, because we're paying a lot of insurance, investing in new cars. Everything—if somebody just private car, no safety check, no criminal record check, we can't compete with him. It's very hard to keep our business running, so our—a lot of people can go bankrupt. I know—I live here 23 years. Our fellow community members, they always move to Alberta, BC, Ontario. I'm staying here. So I'm thinking if government—this bill passes, I'm thinking to move from this—Manitoba. It's not good for me or my kids to live here.

**Mr. Marcelino:** Be my last question: What would you recommend to this committee—or, to at least to the government to do regarding this bill?

**Mr. Deol:** I want all this committee to think too many times, because if they want—really want competition, they should be the same—level playing field. They do—should same safety check, same insurance. We don't mind. They can come. Why not keep this same—the Taxicab Board? We run and go—why we going 20 years following the same strict rules? Why somebody else comes the easy way? They should come the same way.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Singh, your time has expired. We thank you very much for your comments.

We will now move on on the list. Presenter No. 13 asked to have their name removed, so we will remove Jawinder Jaswa from—No. 13 from the list.

We will now move on to No. 14: Darsan [phonetic] Singh. No. 14. Darshan Singh.

Mr. Singh, you have no—okay, well, proceed with your presentation when you are ready.

**Mr. Darshan Singh (Private Citizen):** My name's Darshan Singh. I living here 30 years. I drive a cab like 28 years, now, so I have always worked out—seven days and 12 hours.

We have—can't make any money because of—I have to [inaudible] cab money. My [inaudible] they go to school, university. I have to hand to mouth. Just work, work, work—nothing less. No balance for bank balance and, tomorrow, if my job gone, I can't afford my loan. I still have a mortgage. I get—my taxi and I get credit line from Royal Bank. And still I have loan. If tomorrow I can't make any money, then I will be bankrupt.

And before think for Uber or any cab—before, think for twice. Otherwise, we can't afford living for this city.

And same thing before, like 50 years ago. I know for city of Winnipeg or provincial government, before—like Boeing Canada. They were moving to somewhere else. And the Province and the City of Winnipeg, they provide 10 million—I don't know how much millions—to like we—people, they gave to jobs, please don't move. And after, like [inaudible] they were moving. And I'm not sure if Winnipeg or provincial government. They gave to millionaires—please, stay here; give the jobs to people.

Now a taxi runs free. Thirty years—like, I drive a cab 27 years. Not any help from government. Always give to hard time, hard time, hard time. And am I to ever get to a loan?—we get our job. Now that government tried to kill our job, and tomorrow we can't afford it.

So by the [inaudible] industry, like, we don't have any unemployment. Any cab drivers get into unemployment?—no. Work 12 hours—that's why we have a loan. Otherwise, we have no loan. People can't get service. That's why I stay 12 hours or—[inaudible] business on the road or no. We have to provide this way—12 hours to make money this way—for [inaudible] our cabs to our family.

That's all I have.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Singh.

**Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan):** Thank you, Mr. Singh, for your presence here tonight. On behalf of my colleagues, I thank you and the rest of the members of—[interjection]—I thank you and the rest of the members of the taxicab industry for the contribution you have done for our economy in Manitoba, for your contribution to your community. You bought houses; you bought goods and services; you send your kids to school. Pretty soon these kids will also be taxpayers like you if they haven't been already taxpayers.

And we feel your pain because right now. Just like the other speaker says, they're in a lot of stress, so we commiserate with you and we hope our government, our present government, will consider the hardship you and the rest of the taxi industry folks will experience if this bill becomes a law.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Singh, the recorder doesn't record anything you say until I recognize you, so, if you wanted to comment to the questions, now you can do so, Mr. Singh.

**Mr. Darshan Singh:** Thank you again.

**Mr. Marcelino:** The question that I have runs along the same lines as before. How painful will it be for you and your family if Uber were given a pass in entering the market in, say, in Winnipeg. By not being on the same level playing field, how painful would it be for you and your family? What will you lose?

**Mr. Darshan Singh:** I lose house because of no job, I can't pay it. Have to go on welfare, or unemployment—whatever. So no job, can't pay, bankruptcy; that's going to do it.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Do any members have any questions? If not, thank you for your presentation, Mr. Singh.

We will now move on to the next presenter, presenter No. 15, Kuldip Toor.

Mr. Toor, do you have any written presentations, or are you just a verbal one?

**Mr. Kuldip Toor (Private Citizen):** Yes.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay. You may proceed with your presentation as soon as you're ready, Mr. Toor.



**Mr. Toor:** I would like to talk about safety. Many of the people who presented to you know what safety's all about. We deal with unsafe situations all the time. Racist and threatening comments, robbery, and attempted robbery. We even get assaulted. But it used to be a lot worse. We are very proud of the fact that we have one of the safest taxi industries in North America. This is an industry that is one of the most dangerous to work in.

We are very concerned that there is nothing in this bill to maintain what we have. The best safety protection just for our driver is also for passengers. I want you to know exactly how important this is. I'm going to read from some of the reports that outline what the situation is:

So how safe is Winnipeg for a taxi? I want to read what some of the reports say about safety reports like MNP reports like presentations from the taxi board. Winnipeg has the best safety equipment for taxicabs, such as in-camera-car cameras, panic buttons, rooftop strobe lights, and driver shields are mandated by the Taxicab Board. Winnipeg appears to have the most rigorous safety equipment requirements of all compared cities. Taxicab owners and drivers generally support in-car safety equipment.

\*(20:10)

Driving a safety—or a taxicab, is a risky occupation not fully made square by the current safety provisions. Stakeholders indicate that drivers face significant safety risks associated with violent or intoxicated passengers, discrimination and fare disputes. To protect the safety of passengers, the Taxicab Board required the drivers to undergo criminal record checks, mandatory training for driving safety and safe equipment handling for passengers as well as regular vehicle inspections.

Driving a cab is very dangerous. Driving a taxicab is an important public transportation service and one of the most dangerous occupations in North America. A taxicab driver is 60 times more likely to be murdered and—on the job that the average worker.

In Canada, there have been 150 taxicab drivers killed since 1970. In Manitoba, there have been 10 taxicab drivers killed while on duty since 1945. Taxicab drivers are at risk in terms of robbery, hijacking of the taxi, abuse and threatening behaviour, physical assault, track disputes and accidents, fare disputes and combinations of the above.

With the shields and cameras, there is a dramatic important in safety. After the murder of Pritam Deol, the taxicab safety issues report was released in October, 2001. It made 18 recommendations. One of the key recommendations was the development of a taxicab driver safety program to enhance driver skills to recognize and assess risks and how to defuse 'potential' hostile situations. The 'acrimminence' of cameras and shields is clear.

The Winnipeg Police Service indicated that for the calendar year 2002, there were 20 fewer reported taxicab robberies than in the previous year. This represented a reduction of 71 per cent in serious taxicab crimes since the in-cab cameras and shields are introduced. When 2003 is compared to 2001, the year before cameras and shields were introduced, taxicab robberies and other violent taxicab crimes have been reduced by 79 per cent. There was an increase of 10.5 per cent in crime rate overall in the city of Winnipeg over the same period. The arrest rate for crimes against taxi drivers was 35 per cent period to the introduction of cameras, and the rate increased to 50 per cent, 2002, and 66 per cent in 2003.

In Winnipeg, a requirement for all standard and accessible taxicabs has been in effect since July 1, 2002. To have an operational in-cab camera and the requirement to have a safety shield installed has been in effect since January 8, 2003. The safety 'antitritus' taken in Winnipeg include other measures such as mandatory first aid kits, effective July 1, 2002; improved taxicab driver training; and requirements that any taxi with GPS must have the system working at all times.

The Winnipeg Police Service data indicates that since the introduction of taxicab safety measures in 2002, robberies of taxicabs were reduced by 71 per cent. And the Winnipeg taxicab industry indicated that it is very pleased with the decrease in all crime involving taxicabs since the introduction of the safety measures. Drivers find that customers, while in the cab, will settle down, knowing that the camera is taking their picture. There are very few instances of hostile incidents in taxicabs. Crimes that do happen in taxicabs are solved quickly by the police, using the digital images to identify and find the suspects. In many cases, the perpetrator will admit to the crime, thus willing to accept. resulting to an incident.

So, when it comes to driver safety, we have taken an industry where you are 60 times more likely

to be murdered on the job than other jobs and turned it into an industry where there has not been a single murder since 2001 and a big decrease in assaults. Our concern is very clear: safety must come first. Bill 30, it's completely silent on safety. We are very concerned that this will lead to a watering down of safety standards and what, frankly, it does not really matter if we are talking about taxi services or if Uber comes here; Uber is basically a taxi service. It should not matter who you drive for in the vehicle-for-hire industry in Winnipeg. You should have the best safety protection. Please listen to us in terms of safety. Reject this bill if you are going to proceed with and protect the Winnipeg model that makes us the safest taxi industry in North America. Our vision for our industry, our vision for Manitobans: safety, fairness and community.

Thank you very much.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Toor.

**Mr. Maloway:** Want to thank you for your presentation, and I was very interested in what you had to say about the cameras and the shields. And, you know, this bill is so bad on many, many different levels; certainly, the compensation being a big one. But it's also pretty short-sighted.

I was told in recent times that Manitoba is the only jurisdiction that where cabs—the cab cars themselves have to be actually owned and they cannot be leased. So I was interested in that. I say, well, why is that? Well, evidently, in a number of other cities and jurisdictions, the drug dealers are people that are delivering drugs; they lease these cars and they conduct these drug businesses, so when they get caught, I guess, the car is seized and they don't own it, anyway. So that was just another advantage of the regulated system that we have here, that cab drivers have to invest in their cars; they can't lease the cars. They have to have the cameras and the shields, and for a government to simply come up and introduce a bill, you know, that basically takes all this away and then offers no compensation is just not right.

And, you know, I've been on both sides over the last 30 years, on the opposition and the government side. And I tell you, a lot of times, the government will bring in a bill like this just to see what the reaction is. And if you go to sleep on them and you walk away, they're going to get their way. But if you put up a fight, you will see it cost the Premier (Mr. Pallister) nothing to withdraw this bill

tomorrow morning. These are all members of the government. They all meet in caucus. Now when we're in session, every day they're meeting with the Premier at the head of the table; they're all there. And they're going to be reporting back tomorrow what they heard tonight. And believe me, they will have a big effect on the Premier. If they go—all go back to the Premier tomorrow and say, look, we've got to do something about this bill, let's withdraw it, let's rethink it, the Premier may listen to them.

He might ignore one or two of them, but he can't ignore the whole works of them.

\* (20:20)

**Mr. Toor:** Yes, we have it like a camera. But someone had a complaint about the driver or anything. Like, they can take a picture tomorrow; they can ring that safety bell in their car. They can get all the pictures, right? So—but the Uber, they have just 4,000, 5,000 cars. They have nothing in the car. Just driving and making money. So that's my concern for safety.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Mr. Toor, thank you very much for coming in and giving your presentation today. I know that you've spoken quite a bit about safety and those types of things.

I'm just going you a quick question: Do you know that Manitoba is the only province in Canada that regulates the taxicab industry for its capital city?  
*[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Toor, if you could wait 'til I recognize you before you answer, please.

Go ahead, Mr. Toor.

**Mr. Toor:** Yes. This is good until now. It's regulated. I like it. But I hope it will stay like this.

So—if Bill 30 comes, we don't know what's going after. So we all bring all that. Maybe Uber comes or it will be deregulated after that. Anything could. But we want to regulate it—stay regulated because Winnipeg is not a big city. It's not much business here. Summertime we are, like, just making not about hundred bucks all day, twelve hours. So—and wintertime, little bit busy. We are putting extra Christmas cars. That's good for the services. I like it. But we—the government needs to think about this city is not like metro city Toronto or other, bigger cities. Not yet.

**Mr. Saran:** Thank you, Mr. Toor.

My question is that, as my colleague said, all the other cities, they have a taxi jurisdiction, but only—in Manitoba and the city of Winnipeg, Manitoba government have jurisdiction.

Don't you think there's a difference between having licence in other cities who are maybe 5 per cent of the total population or 10 per cent of the total population. Winnipeg is about 60 per cent of the population. So that means—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Saran. Mr. Saran, your time is up, but I will allow the presenter to answer, briefly, your question.

**Mr. Toor:** Yes, I understand that. But, in Winnipeg, we all—like, depend on mostly that we are owner like—I don't know that we bought the taxi mostly \$300,000, \$400,000. We need to survive, like, families and our kids. And so I don't know what's going after, but I'm worrying about the Uber and the deregulated—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Toor.

**Mr. Kinew:** I was going to ask for leave from the committee if we could have presenter No. 150, Gohar Aftab, to be able to present next. The reason being that he explains to me that he is a student right now studying for a mid-term that he has to write tomorrow. And so—he is a driver, he wants to present on the issue. But, in recognition of the fact that he's also a student, asked whether he could present next.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Toor. We never got a chance to thank you before you walked away. But is it the will of the committee to allow presenter No. 150, Gohar Aftab, to present next? *[Agreed]*

We will now call on presenter No. 150, Gohar Aftab.

**Mr. Gohar Aftab (Private Citizen):** Thank you very much.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, could you—you don't have a written presentation, just a verbal one. So please go ahead when you're ready.

**Mr. Aftab:** Thank you very much, Mr. Wab Kinew, for the concern, and thank you very much.

This is the first time after 65 years that some legislation committee invite drivers. This is the first time I'm speaking in front of anyone, and I heard lots of things about, like, what they were saying, what opposition was saying. You didn't say anything.

So compensation: First of all, I talk about this; then I will talk about Bill 30.

Compensation: You are talking about millions and million dollars. What is the actual value of the licence right now? One thousand dollars. One thousand dollars. If the licence was \$500,000, why not as a royalty Taxicab Board collects some money? Government never decides what is the market. It is the private market, No. 1.

No. 2: They don't own the plate. They're owner-operators; they're stakeholders. Stakeholder doesn't mean owning the department.

No. 3: All of them are selfish people—410 selfish people who never think about 1,600 drivers. Only they are the ones who are paying mortgages? No, I am paying too. Are they the only one who is buying the new car? No, I have a new car too. But I'm not crying because I am living in the country of opportunity. One goes, second comes in. Manitoba government have lots of opportunities, lots of things, lots of offers, lots of business plans to offer them. But compensation is the answer? No. Did you guys have any plans for the drivers? No.

We are suffering, serving and suffering too; it's a very thin line between both words. Now serving, we are serving. A normal person in Canada is working 160 hours a month. I am working 360 hours a month, plus I am a full-time student too. I have, I just came back from the school and I am going back tomorrow morning at 8 o'clock; I have exam. But I am here.

You notice all of these are owner-operators. How come there is no drivers? Because they are hopeless. There's two reasons. No. 1, they are scared. If they're going to speak up, they're going to lose their jobs. Maybe I'm going to lose my job. But this committee have no concern if I lose my job because I have a EI option, right? But definitely, I will not do that; I'm not illiterate. I will do some other job. But now I am speak up because if I am not going to speak up now, then it's going to be too late.

I think Bill 30 is healthy. As a cab driver, if I think Bill 30 is healthy because all these people are Punjabi people and we are hard-working by our nations. We are one of those people if we put our hand in the sand, we grow the crops. We are farmers. And we came here and we developed this industry.

Yes, I am agree with them that there are lots of things which need to be concerned like safety; health and safety is the big issue, big issue. Cops never show up. I still have a picture of that guy, my

co-fellow, somebody chop his head. I have the pictures. And cops didn't show up out there. We were the ones who get there, grab him, take him to the hospital and he got 32 stitches across it.

You guys don't have any plan. I have no value. Do you know what is my value? I can tell you. If I am, for example, Mr. Counsellor is busy in his job and he tell, oh, can you please pick up my dog and drop it off at my home? I say, okay, sure. I am a cab driver. I will pick up and deliver. Suddenly, god forbid, an accident happens and I die and that dog died too. Dog got all insurance; I got zero money. I have a value less than a dog.

\* (20:30)

This is Canada? Why not we have a freedom of speech? I took the oath of citizenship where it says we are living in a land of freedom where freedom of speech is everything. Why, if I speak up in my company, I will get kicked out? It happens. Why not there is a union? What union ever do to you? I am pretty sure, like, you face lots of union issues too, but they never killed someone.

You know, you make the legislation accordingly, which work out for everyone. So, yes, I'm a civil engineering student because I cannot afford—who makes the 500,000? I am. I'm not stupid to put my 500,000 into the taxi industry where my kid have always fear that he—maybe he's going to lose his father tonight, you know.

And 500,000—I don't know who set up the market—I don't know. If you guys know who set up the market please let me know, and if you don't know, why didn't you know? If you don't know where the money's coming from, where is investing coming? You have no right to comment on it.

Yes, I can understand. I am an economics—I'm learning economics as well, so I know, Taxicab Board, if it finish, city or government will save money. I can understand that, millions of dollars, and I'm in that favour, that it should be gone because city can do better things.

But now, if I speak for these people, what kind of business is city offering them? No compensation. They want to work. They don't want your money. They want to work. They want to work 24-7 for you guys.

How many times you guys go in the bars leaving your cars home because, you know, there is one crazy group out there who's going to give us ride

home, right? I'm pretty sure all of you guys have those times. You should give them business. Tell them, show your confidence that, yes, don't worry; we are with you. We will give you the business. All the city department because we are taking over—our city is taking over for you, but we are going to give you the business.

Uber? Who's Uber? Uber is just a number. It's just—it's a new name of improvisation in taxi industry. That's it. Because improvisation is very, I think, so unique and it's very healthy for any industry.

For example, there used to be flip phones. Why not you use the flip phones? Why everyone have a Samsung Galaxy or iPhones? Because it's era of mobility; otherwise, you are going to create a generation gap.

So, if we are not bring the challenges or new business techniques, we are living in a Stone Age.

Thank you very much for your time.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Aftab.

**Hon. Eileen Clarke (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations):** Thank you for your presentation. I want to thank you for being open and honest and I think given the fact that you are a taxicab driver within the city that you show great leadership for the industry and I appreciate that.

As the previous minister of Municipal and Indigenous Relations that was responsible when this bill first came into the House, during that time, I had the pleasure of meeting with owners of both Duffy's and Unicity. And I have to say—and I expressed this to the gentlemen at that time—that we had a very respectful meeting. And I also acknowledge the fact that they had been called in during different times in this government process to make it look like government was going against them when in fact that was not the issue at all. And I acknowledged them at that time for the respect that they showed for government. They were always respectful, they were—there was never an issue in safety or security when there—when they were in our building. And we appreciated that. And we appreciate that tonight as well.

Clearly, being a business person, I started into business when I was 18 years old and I had many challenges as well. I know what it is like to have mortgage, I know what it is like to owe for a

business and to try and raise children. And I went through some very difficult times because Manitoba is a great province and I believe also it's a province of great opportunity, but I had to work hard and I know that these people have worked hard as well to build their businesses. But when you are in a business, especially a private-owned business, you can do really well and you can do very poorly and the market is a huge risk. It's always a risk. But you made a very good point here tonight that businesses, technology, everything evolves. Absolutely everything evolves. When I look back five years ago, 10 years ago, when I look back when I started my business, in the early '70s, this world is a totally different world. Since I came to Winnipeg—I live in a small rural area—I came to Winnipeg 18 months ago. This is a different world for me. It's a different culture. It's a learning process. But, you know what, I'm adapting because I want to be here, and I want to do the right thing for the people in Manitoba.

And I want to clarify, once again, which I've done many times within government—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Ms. Clarke, I don't want to cut you off, but we have been going for two and a half minutes, and we sort of agreed for 45 seconds.

Mr. Aftab, would you care to answer from that?

**Mr. Aftab:** No, I appreciate, actually, her sympathy. She is—no, I totally agree, because this is the first good words I ever heard, because I am living in one system, I think so. It's my request, if you are changing something today—you are one of those lucky people who writes the history, who writes the bills, who writes the—you know, 65 years ago, somebody was there I—when I was not there, write this Taxicab Act. Now, in 2017, you guys are doing it. Do it right.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Maloway—oh, sorry. Were you done? I thought you were done, no?

**Mr. Aftab:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay, continue on.

**Mr. Aftab:** So one more thing. We have to pay our EI and CPP with our own money. We have to buy our days off. We pay cash to get a day off out of seven days. Is it justice? If it is, then, that's fine.

**Mr. Maloway:** Sir, you know, the minister talked about her business, and I've talked to her in Estimates last year about her business, too. And I say to her, that's great, she's all for free enterprise.

But, if the town that she lived in decided to build a road right through her front veranda and wipe out her business, don't you think that she would deserve compensation from the municipality? Because they put her out of business.

**Mr. Aftab:** Sir, I am totally not agree with your comment because you are talking two different departments right now, I think, so you need to think about it that we are not talking about the roads, we are talking about the lives. Lives and roads, no—we knew. I gave a vote to the NDP, they never did anything to me, to be very honest. I'm very disappointed. Yes, what they gave me, human rights museum, which I never saw yet, \$1,200,000,000—nodding with me. My great-grandchildren are going to pay for that. So, sir, you should compensate me. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Time for questions from this presenter has expired. We will now—thank you very much for your presentation, Mr. Aftab. Thank you for coming out tonight.

We have a request on the floor from presenter No. 137. She is also a school student that's going to school tomorrow morning and wondering if she would be able to present next—137, Anandjot Dhillon. Would it be—was there a consensus to have—agreed? *[Agreed]*

So we will now move to presenter 137. And do you have any written materials to present?

**Ms. Anandjot Dhillon (Private Citizen):** Just verbal.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay, Anandjot, if you could please help me pronounce your name.

**Ms. Dhillon:** Anandjot Kaur Dhillon.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Go ahead with your presentation.

**Ms. Dhillon:** Good evening, everyone.

My name's Anandjot Kaur Dhillon. I'm a grade 10 student. I go to University of Winnipeg Collegiate.

If Uber comes to Winnipeg, my dad will lose his job, and because of that, my dad wouldn't be able to pay my school fee. And that wouldn't be a good result, because I do not want to drop out of the school that I'm in because I just love the school that I'm in and the kids are very nice.

Also, because the government is already increasing the tuition fee, that is another reason why

my dad wouldn't be able to pay my school fee. And, also, Winnipeg does not have enough jobs, full-time jobs, I must say, for my dad that he can do. And the only job, full-time job, that's available is to drive a taxi.

\* (20:40)

Ten years ago, my dad bought a taxi for around \$300,000, and it's still not paid off. I'm guessing the people standing right behind me that have taxis probably do not have taxis paid off, still. And, if Uber comes, they're probably going to have a hard time paying their taxis off.

My dad is the only resource of job that is available in my family, because my mom does not work—because I have two siblings, which are also lucky enough to go to the same high school as me, and they also do want to go to university.

My dad does want me to stay at the same school and also wants me to go to a college and also do I. But, if we do not have enough money, I wouldn't be able to achieve my goals.

Taxi drivers work hard and provide people with good service. They wash their cars every day so that people are not, you know, sitting in germs and they have clean cars that they can sit in. But washing the car is not for free; you have to pay money every single day, which is money.

What I would like to tell the government is that competition is always in industries, but if—what I want for taxi drivers is that if there is a fair decision made and fair play, then there isn't any reason why Uber is a bad choice. But, then, if there—it—there's negative reasons going against the taxi drivers that they—because Uber is kind of coming in for free, where the taxi drivers are paying for their vehicles and getting their licences, which is not for free. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation.

We will now proceed with questions.

**Mr. Wharton:** Thank you, Ms. Kaur Dhillon, for that very passionate, obviously, presentation about, you know, what your family does and, of course, how you feel the—of course, how it will affect your family. And I really do appreciate the time and, again, I wish you all the best success in your courses that you're taking as well. And, certainly, we are listening and I really appreciate the time you took for us tonight. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Did you want to respond to that, Ms. Kaur Dhillon?

**Ms. Dhillon:** Thank you very much.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** So miigwech for your presentation. I just want to say thank you for coming in, and you actually are the only female to come and make a presentation. And I just want to say that that takes a lot of courage and strength and, certainly, a lot of love for your dad and for your family. And so I just want to kind of lift you up and show appreciation for you coming to present.

Can I ask you: I guess, from a personal perspective, like, what would it—how would that make you feel and what would that do to your family in respect of whether or not if Uber were to come to the city?

**Ms. Dhillon:** Well, if Uber's coming and it's coming like for free, then it's obviously affecting my family and because it would give me a hard time going to school and paying for my school fees. But, if there's equal rules going on for both companies, then I think it could be an easy way and maybe a bit less stressful to pay my school fees and it would be less stressful for every taxi driver too. Thank you.

**Mr. Kinew:** Thank you, Ms. Dhillon, for your presentation. I used to help at the University of Winnipeg Collegiate, so I know it's a very excellent school and I actually graduated high school from there too. So I hope you will have an excellent graduation soon and go on to great success in your future studies.

I was wondering, you know, assuming that everything remains good for you and you are able to pursue your studies, can you just tell us what you have planned for your future?

**Ms. Dhillon:** My plan is to go into politics, and—but, in order to do that, I do need to go to school and that would make—the decision would be made off—see, like—the law. And, if it's right or not, but I do want to go into politics, for sure. Thank you.

**Ms. Clarke:** I would just like to take this opportunity and I also enjoy the fact that you're here tonight for sure. But I would like to tell you, personally, as well as other presenters here tonight, that Bill 30 is not a bill about Uber. The Bill 30 specifically only devolves the running and the ownership—I shouldn't say ownership—to the City of Winnipeg. This Province is not making a decision

about Uber, and I want you to be clear about that. That is not what this is about.

It's about Winnipeg having the same opportunity as all other municipalities in the province of Manitoba to run the taxicab business and to make the decisions for that.

So, you know, there needs to be a bit of a clarification there and these conversations, perhaps, need to happen, but they need to happen with the City of Winnipeg who will, with the passing of this bill, make those decisions. We are not making those decisions.

Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay, I was just going to recognize Ms. Kaur Dhillon first, but if she had no comment back to that, then we'll go to the honourable Mr. Saran.

Mr. Saran, you had a question?

**Mr. Saran:** Thank you for coming over here. There are two questions: No. 1, previous presenter said unlike-taxi owner don't care about the drivers. Don't you think they have a right to have an organization? They can be organized, they can have a union, but they have to be—they have to come forward to do that.

And No. 2, as my colleague said, like they are not doing anything. They are just transferring responsibility from our Province to City. But, on the other hand, they are not allowing the owners to go to the court so they can ask about compensation. It's up to the court whether they decide the compensation or not, but they should not take their right away. That's where government is wrong. What do you think?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Ms. Kaur Dhillon, your time has expired, but we will allow you some brief time to answer that question.

**Ms. Dhillon:** In my opinion, taxi owners-operators treat their drivers really nicely because they give them the time to drive their taxi so that the drivers also have a chance and they don't feel left out that they cannot drive a taxi because they don't have one. So I feel that there is some, you know, equal balance in between the taxi drivers and owner-operators. But just because owner-operators just have a taxi and to have loans and mortgages on their taxi, they do have to pay. So that's my comment.

Thank you very much.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Ms. Kaur Dhillon.

We will now move to presenter No. 16, which has requested that their name be removed from the list.

So then we will move to presenter No. 17, Iqbal Singh. Iqbal Singh, please.

Mr. Singh, do you have written presentation or just a verbal?

**Mr. Iqbal Singh (Private Citizen):** Just verbal.

**Mr. Chairperson:** You may proceed when you're ready.

**Mr. Iqbal Singh:** I'm ready.

Thank you very much for everyone who give us opportunity to speak here.

Actually, my day started today at 4 o'clock in the morning. Start working 'til 4, go home, rush to here. Why? I made a mistake to spend all my father's money from back home and whatever I make here in the taxi. If I didn't made that mistake, I won't be here. Maybe I'm sleeping by now.

Why we asking for the—not to allow Uber or stop the Bill 30? Nobody consult with the industry. Government just make up their decision in the office bring this Bill 30. We met with so many ministers, so many MLs with the PC Party. They always telling us it will be the fair game, but no, I don't see any fair game. What is a fair game? Give all that to City and then we are expecting them to play fair with us? Then we asking them, last seven, eight year, allow us do the bus lane, just bus lane in the rush hour even when we have customer in the car. What we get? Always say no. So what, we expect them to be fair with us?

When we met with the minister, they said okay, why you are paying the Autopac 10 grand and somebody else come from the sky with the app, okay, everything free for them.

I've been driving taxi for 17 years. Taxi board made their decision and then they said okay, they are going to send us a new program, it's called Lacot [*phonetic*] to be more professional with accessible people. We took that course. If somebody driving Uber without any training, without any courses—maybe I'm going to be old one day, what is my future here? I'm father of two young kids. One is—my daughter going with Anandjot to the same school. So what is their future? What is my future? I have

nothing back there. Whatever I have is here, now, now its zero. Just one decision made by the government: transfer taxi board from government on many to-what-to city.

\* (20:50)

Okay, everybody say all the other Canadian cities have their own—they control the taxicab board. Why the Province of Manitoba have that? Everybody knows. More than 60 per cent of Manitobans lives in Winnipeg. So that allow—that makes why the taxi board controls by the Manitoba government, not our city.

Okay, now we are talking about the safety. Since Mr. Deol got killed while he was working, and then they decided to call the camera. Camera had been working for seven years; it was fine. Then taxi board made the decision they're going to change the camera because this—some camera wasn't function properly. We spent another 2 grand for the camera. What—so, if any other ride-sharing company came, they are not going to spend any investment for the safety, for the driver and also the customer. This—I know there's some bad drivers there, but is the camera there for the safety of the customer too?

How many—I have spent all my money. I have set responsibilities: get out at 3 o'clock, get ready by 4, go to work. Even if storms or raining or whatever, I'm always out on the road on my shift. If somebody doing a lesson, me driving Uber, and I don't have no set responsibility, just my part-time job, one day maybe all the taxi drivers disappear, because if we are not making money, what we are going to do?—nothing. We are not sitting in the cab, making—not even make a living for my family. So maybe one day since no one is out there to serve the people, then who will going to take our elders to their appointments to the hospitals?—no one.

So another thing, in the—Bill 30 is wide open. The government says it could be set-up to the city of Winnipeg. They make a greater Winnipeg or the city of Winnipeg bylaw. What is this? We ask that every minister I met—I don't want to mention the name here—but they always say: It will be a fair game. Explain to us, please, how can be a fair game? When are—you guys are giving our hand to somebody else, how can you—how can the government say it will be a fair game?

So there's another recommend—so many recommendations made by MNP, but they never said share for the Taxicab Board to the city. I know it;

government has to put some money to run the Taxicab Board. We offered the government—there's always one factor going on. Maybe there's a lot of demand out there; that's why taxi licence fees is so high. No, that's not true.

I work on the Duffy's board. I've been on the board, like, three, four, five years, always have meetings with the Taxicab Board. Let's put it that way. Put some price there, fair market price. If there's a supply, people will buy it. If there's a demand, people will buy from the Taxicab Board. No, there's no demand.

Only thing, the people coming from India, they're farmer background. Farmer land was so high up expensive back there, in the last five, six years. They sell their property, they choose Winnipeg as their home, and I think they all think now they made a big mistake. They invest this money in the taxicab industry. Why? Because people who were here earlier, they're in the same vein as so they will get guidance from there. It's easier than somebody's out there helping in your same language, like how to get the licence and stuff. Even I will say, there's so many Indians—or from the doctor occupation, they couldn't even operate their courses here. And then they will start driving a taxi. Even Minister Saran, he's an MLA here. For—his life start from here as a taxi driver.

Okay, another thing our drivers like to talk about the safety. Now, we have Handi-Transit. They have a camera in there. Why? This is for the customer safety, not for the driver, because people who need help for assistance, it can't hurt that—so, if another company came here without safety instruments, so we can imagine what the customers are going to face. Now, City of Winnipeg thinking about putting the shield even in the city transit.

So I would like to request of—to all the respective members, like, please stop this bill, consult with industry. There's no rush. You can any time pass this bill. Consult with us. Even before you guys move this bill, I would like to get—ask the one opportunity for the industry. Give us an opportunity to develop ourselves. There's so many red tape; remove that. We will be beat the Uber—with all these rules and regulations.

And, if you guys—I know this—the answer, like, they are like you. Government only moving the taxi board. Uber does not issue here. But the mayor has already had a meeting with Uber. We are your people. We are in the city of Winnipeg. Nobody has



the time to meet with the industry, but they always have the time to meet with the big people.

Yes, so that's all I'd like to say.

Thank you very much.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Singh.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Thank you, Mr. Singh, for coming in tonight to the Legislature, and I know that you've had an early start to your day and you've rushed over here to bring your presentation. This is not only to you but also to many of the people behind you, the taxicab owners and that. The NDP party are very, very good at wedge issues, wedge politics and fear mongering. And what worries me in a situation along these lines, as the minister had mentioned, she had met with the owners of Unicity and Duffy's and they had very respectful conversations in regards to what is happening with Bill 30.

Now, when—if Bill 30 goes ahead and proceeds, everything that is happening today will continue to happen and you will have those conversations with the City of Winnipeg. Those jurisdictions would go to the City of Winnipeg and then other municipalities as well.

So what I'm hearing also through some of the questioning from Mr. Saran, and because he was once a member of the NDP party, to me it's almost sounding like they're wanting to create that wedge so that you go over and listen to what they have to say, and, eventually they will unionize your various ownership taxicabs.

And so I'd like to just get your response to that, as I know that, you know, the member from Elmwood as well, he's very good at dividing and that wedge politics. So I'd like to hear your comments to that.

**Mr. Iqbal Singh:** Sorry, what is the—actually on the question is it. Like, question was when the taxi board shifts to the city it will—all that happens is going to be the same, or is the question is, NDP politics or whatever is it, I'm not interested in there.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Thank you, Mr. Singh. And, just for clarification, so do you have any concerns in regards to something like what Mr. Saran had just mentioned earlier to the presenter before you, talking about the, you know, the safety and that of taxicabs, not only taxicab owners but to the drivers and potentially going with the unionized workforce?

**Mr. Iqbal Singh:** Okay, first thing I would like to clear about what's the difference between owner and driver; it's nothing. I was a driver for six years, now I am an owner. And I'm driving, so I'm driver. Actually, when is the MNP start this survey, they ask me what is the difference between a driver and owner? I said, drivers, they work all their shift and then go home and sleep. Owner, they don't sleep. They always there, but my car is on the road but something going wrong. It's a storm out there. My car got into the accident. So I don't see any difference between driver and owner. Maybe some people have, like, it's human nature. Like well relation with their driver but is very, very, you know, less percentage.

And one other thing, when you said all that happens is going to be same when we shift to the city, to Winnipeg. So why not government mention this into bill: all of their, plate we—current plate we have as well we stay the same, same status. So why don't say in this—why say this bill is—sound like they're for me? I'm not professional. For me sound like it.

And I talk to my other friends, some professionals, even if the City of Winnipeg wants, they can cancel our plates. What we are asking, that other guy raise the right point, what we are asking, we asking to let us work. We are hard-working people. I don't need money or anything, I need my job. Start at 4 o'clock, bring enough money to raise my family, raise my kid.

\* (21:00)

**Mr. Maloway:** I want to thank you for your presentation. And, you know, I have to smile when the government members are suggesting somehow that this is very innocent exercise, transferring the jurisdiction from the Province to the City, because it comes out in the bill.

They put a section 10 in the bill that says no compensation is available to any of the taxi drivers, and the only reason they put it in there is they know that if they don't put it in there, the taxi industry would retain lawyers and will beat them in court and will get compensation. They're—what they plan to do is save a half a million dollars, which is not a huge amount of money in their—with their kind of—their size of their budget, but they're saving a half a million by turning it over to the City. But they're getting out of compensation, which is a huge issue, as you know.

And in the state—in Australia, each of the states is not downloading it to the cities. They are dealing with legislative bills just like this. But unlike this government, what they are doing is they are providing compensation. Now, admittedly, it's not good in some of the states, but, in the state of Victoria, it's a hundred thousand per cab and \$50,000 for the next two. I mean, we can check it out—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Maloway, you're—I will allow a short—from Mr. Singh.

**Mr. Iqbal Singh:** Actually, I will—what would I like to say. Why we are in this situation when taxi board is running, from years, really successfully? And then I was in the meeting with the minister—and then industry is okay to share the price of whatever's the debt on the Taxicab Board. We are there to share the price. So why is all that happened—you guys are wasting your important time, and we are all hard-working. You guys are hard-working people, sitting here at the 8 o'clock—night this time when we should be in the house with our families. When everything is going successfully, why are we changing this?

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank you for your presentation, but we're way over time. Thank you very much, Mr. Singh.

We will now move on to presenter No. 18, Kulwinder Singh Pandher. *[interjection]*

Mr. Pandher, you have to wait before you start speaking until I recognize you, so you'd be on-recorded. You may proceed when you're ready, Mr. Pandher.

**Mr. Kulwinder Pandher (Private Citizen):** My name is Kulwinder Pandher. I came in this country in 1981. I was 18 years old, to come for a better future in this country. Like the previous, my colleague said he drove six years—I drove 10 years before I bought my own, and then bought the house. Now I have four grown children and one goes to university, two in high school, one in the junior high.

All we want is to do this government to play fair level field, like the Premier (Mr. Pallister) promised to us, and with this is not coming to his promise, not playing fair level field.

Okay, my second question what we're asking: safety, fairness, community. We oppose the bill. It's unfair the government did not consult with industry. The government should draw or delay bill to ensure full consultation.

(2) The bill needs to be amended. If the bill goes ahead, the government must ensure—amend it to make it fair.

(3) Driver safety at risk. Taxi driving is one of the most dangerous occupations in North America. Taxi drivers are 60 times more likely to be murdered on jobs than other work. Taxi drivers face racism, theft, threat, violence on a regular basis in Manitoba—is now one of the safest city driving in North America because of the shield, camera, training. There need to be amendments to ensure that all vehicles for hire have highest level of driver safety protection. We don't want to go back to the days when driver was seriously assaulted, even murdered on a regular basis.

(4) Passenger safety at risk. The current system's strong protection for passengers, there needs to be amendments to ensure the highest passenger safety protection, including full criminal background checks and continued zero tolerance—the kind of things current drivers have to go through but the Uber drivers don't.

(5) We need fairness to consider licence for all. The Province needs to ensure that licence requirements are the same for the taxi and Uber, same insurance, same requirement to serve the whole city, same requirement to charge the same price, same requirement for insurance industry to serve all city and including the disabled.

(6) We need fairness—recognizes of our investment and property rights. We're small-business people who have invested a lot of money in an industry. Bill 30 wipes out our investment, destroys our livelihood and takes away our legal and property rights. The government should maintain an existence licence structure. If they transfer taxi to the City, the government should have removed the section of Bill 30 preventing the industry from seeking compensation for 'exproation' and being able to take legal action.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Pandher.

**Mrs. Colleen Mayer (St. Vital):** Thank you, Mr. Pandher, very much for your presentation. I have listened to the presenters before you, and I've listened to you, and I wanted to thank all of you for coming here to speak, because I think it's important for you to have a voice and share your thoughts, so thank you very much for this evening.

I wanted to ask—many of you and you have brought it up today about driver safety. Could you

talk about some situations that you have found yourself in in regards to driver safety? *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Pandher.

**Mr. Pandher:** Sorry.

When I was driving nights—I drove nights for almost 20 years 'til my oldest started going to university. That nighttime, we was transferring a lot of criminals. We don't know who they are, and they was frequently taking the taxi to deliver there whatever they was doing. Since we got the camera and the safety shield in the car, it dropped off to almost zero. They don't use anymore.

Of course, as we refer to the City and if we—other cabs, Uber or anybody else are going to come to have a camera and shield to help the police to catch those bad people or do anything bad in the city.

**Mr. Kinew:** I was wondering if you could talk about driving at the—for customers at the Perimeter airport and what some of the services that are provided and also the bill payment options. Like, how is payment for some of the passengers from Perimeter paid for?

**Mr. Pandher:** Yes, Mr. Wab Kinew has asked my colleague earlier, but he was one of our 'competitor' from Unicity, but he didn't know anything about the Perimeter because Duffy handles that.

We have a lot of First Nation people coming into Winnipeg, Manitoba, for their medical needs, and we have a special account set up called FNIHV, I think—something like that. It's already ticketed with the treaty number and the authorization number we get, so when they come to Perimeter air, we transfer them to the group home or to the hospital or anywhere they need to go.

So the other cab company, whoever, Uber or whatever, they're going to come; they're not going to do that kind of service we are providing right now.

**Mrs. Mayer:** Sorry, I just want a clarification to your answer. Have you—I know you talked about the individuals that you would have picked up. You speculated that they were up to criminal activity; you could tell by what they're—have you found yourself in danger, specifically harmed in any way? That's what I was looking for, clarification on that. *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Pandher.

**Mr. Pandher:** Sorry.

With my experience one night, I finished my shift like almost 3:30, 4 o'clock; I'm driving on

Selkirk. I got by Selkirk and Charles, a guy is limping, and he flagged me down. I said, well, you know, he'd probably—if you're going to let it run, I'm going to run more. He wants me to make a U-turn around. I was going both to Salter or McGregor, that side. I live in Maples; I was going home. So I have to turn around for him. I crossed the Selkirk to Main. Everybody probably knows, well, there's a park by the river there. He was going to take me there to rob me. And, when I come to the Selkirk and Austin stop, I said, how further are we going to go? I know it's dark there, and I know where he was going to take me, because that's where it happened—a cab driver got robbed in that park there. He goes—he's swearing at me and all that. I said, okay, that's fine. He said, if you don't drive me, I'm not going to pay you. I said, I'm sorry, if you don't want to pay me, it's only \$5. I said—I dropped him out, turned around. You know, if I had followed his steps, I would probably be robbed and killed in that little park by the river there—and the rest.

\* (21:10)

This is lot of safety concern with taxi industry, that the new company going to come, they're not going to have any criminal record checks. Now we're going through the city of Winnipeg, like, please. Like, myself, I'm not any criminal. First time when the taxi board asked the police identification checkup, I went to the safety building and applied for it. They run my name through, and they told me I'm criminal. I said, excuse me? I've been here for 25 years and driving cab and the cops never came to me. Then she says, well, probably not you, but somebody with your date of birth or name or something. Now every four years, I have to send my fingerprints to the Ottawa.

So, with this new company going to come, they're going to do their own. They're not going to go that far to check the fingerprints.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank you for your presentation. We are out of time on this particular presentation.

Thank you, Mr. Pandher, for your presentation.

We will now move on to presenter No. 19, Gurinder Singh. Gurinder Singh. Presenter No. 19. Gurinder Singh? No. 19? Mr. Singh does not seem to be present, so we will move him to the bottom of the list.

The next presenter, No. 20, Omkar Litt has asked that his name be removed from the list. So we have removed it.

No. 21 presenter, Balkar Brar. Balkar Brar.

Thank you, Mr. Brar. You—I see you don't have any written materials, so you may proceed with your presentation when you are ready. Thank you, Mr. Brar.

**Mr. Balkar Brar (Private Citizen):** Thank you for—everyone. Good evening. My name's Balkar Brar. I live in Winnipeg 27 years. I drove taxi 20 years.

And, first of all, I'm talking all. Please you can listen, there, in 'confidentiality' and that I fully appreciate Mr. Maloway—presenting Bill 30. And safety, starting for the—our taxi, transit bus, Handi-Transit, and either Uber or ride-sharing—there's no safety. That's *[inaudible]* what's safety there, or us, and then—we met the 'qualification' before the elections, even the Premier (Mr. Pallister) or MLAs and after elections, day by day, and that we're meeting them, they always saying level playing field—fielding—same. But I wasn't see anything for the Bill 30 is the same. That's our investment, retirement investment. There is—going—killing us.

I've—raising two kids. Second year in university, my daughter. And my son, St. Paul's High School. Highest average in Manitoba. He won the gold medals. When was the gold medals—Andrew Smith, mayor was there.

So I worry about my kids' futures, and my family's. Paying your mortgage, bills, day by day, I start every day at 4 o'clock in the morning. I work 80 hours a week. Continue last 27 years. So please, whatever, if you can, that's going to move the Bill 30—you can start again with the industry. Think about it.

Thank you very much.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Brar.

**Ms. Clarke:** Thank you very much for your presentation. And, again, I want to speak to the whole group here tonight because what I'm seeing here again tonight is a very respectful group, a very hard-working group, and I appreciate that.

The—I'm getting the same discussion tonight from pretty well every one of our presenters. You want safety; totally understandable. You want a 'clair'—play—fair playing field, totally understandable.

You want sufficient work to make a good living for your family. You want the education for your children. You want a good life. That does not have to change. You clearly—we are hearing—and I'm not hearing from you—our member opposite keeps referring to, you need to be compensated; you need to be compensated. I'm not hearing that from you. You are willing to work. You are willing to do the work that you have to do to make a good living; that's totally understandable, and that's respectable.

However, if this devolves to the City of Winnipeg, they need a good vehicle-for-hire industry. You have every opportunity to go out there and show them what a good industry you are. You are already doing a good job, so if you 'dood'—what—exactly what you say you're doing, Uber doesn't have a chance, because people will use your services, clearly, because they want to be safe as well.

So don't be fear-mongered by what you're hearing here. You—be confident in who you are. Be confident in the industry you already have. You're there. You don't have to set up in Winnipeg. You're here. Make it work. You have that ability. Go for it. *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Brar.

**Mr. Brar:** Thank you very much, and I never to say to compensate. I wasn't asked to compensate. I asked for fair field playing. Safety and insurance. Same. That's we want: same insurance for the Uber and same—we pay the insurance for the \$10,200. When I started the taxi industry, we pay an insurance \$2,700. Within 27 years—20 years now, how high? That's we want—same, everything same.

I wouldn't ask, ma'am—compensation. Thank you.

**Mr. Maloway:** Well, I want to thank you for your presentation, but, you know, this doesn't—this bill doesn't require any of the things that you have right now that you want to keep by giving it to the City. I mean, think about this. What they are doing is they're saving themselves a half a million a year, and they're turning you over to an open system at the City where you're going to be eaten alive by Uber and all these instant Uber drivers who are not paying insurance rates like you're paying right now and don't have the costs that you have right now. That is the whole point, and the whole reason you're here is try to convince them that the regulated industry that we've got right now is the best in, maybe, Canada, maybe North America. And if you want to talk about what is

happening in other parts of the world, dealing with Uber, you only have to look at Australia. And, in fact, they are offering compensation in all of those states in Australia. So why wouldn't you want the same treatment here in Manitoba?

**Floor Comment:** Thank you, Jim Maloway.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Brar.

**Mr. Brar:** Thanks for laughing at me. Thank you for your good story.

Anything else you wanted to say?

**Mr. Ewasko:** I just wanted to say, again, as it's been said from many of our colleagues on both sides of the table, I want to thank you for coming in and giving us your presentation and sharing your story about your kids as well. And I just commend you for sharing that. I commend your kids for driving forward and continuing with their education because education is the key.

And I just wanted to put a couple of words on the record as far as clarification, what I said to Mr. Singh earlier, and I hope he's still here. The fact that Bill 30, when and if it does move forward, it basically takes, sort of, the—not sort of; it takes all the regulatory powers over to the City of Winnipeg, and then they will create the laws, the licensing and all of that, the exact same powers that the provincial government has.

\* (21:20)

So I just wanted to make sure that you and Mr. Singh and absolutely everybody else that's presenting today understands that this is just moving the regulation body—the regulatory body from the Province over to the City of Winnipeg just like every other province in Canada, this great country of ours, in Canada has given their capital cities the authority to do so.

So we're tired of being last as pushed into from the previous government, and we're trying to move ourselves forward and make ourselves the most improved province in this great country of yours. And so, hopefully, you can make comment—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Ewasko, if you could wrap it up, we're out—we're over the limit, but I will allow you a few seconds there to respond to that.

**Mr. Brar:** Thank you, sir. Okay, where is the argument—and [*inaudible*] Uber is paying same insurance now. They have a sticker on the car. They're not using any other cars, regular cars, what

they were using before. Taxi cars all are registered under the MPI.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Brar.

**Mr. Brar:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much for coming out and giving us your presentation.

**An Honourable Member:** Mr. Chair, just could I ask leave for Mr. Brar to just finish his statement, because he was sort of just cut off there.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay, go ahead. Please finish your statement there, Mr. Brar.

**Mr. Brar:** Yes, this—I mentioned they had a sticker on the Uber, the cars, same insurance. Uber drivers cut 50 per cent off to driving, because their expense is high. Number 1, 35 per cent Uber takes, and, once you guys can think about it, the tax money, they're going to pay here in Canada or they going to—stealing our tax.

I really appreciate the federal government and then they apply—comply to GST for them. Four, zero tax for us. We are all taxpayers—not me, you guys too. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Brar.

**Mr. Brar:** Thank you for everyone, good night—good morning.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We will now move on to our next presenter, Rupinder Brar. Is Rupinder Brar not here? We will move Rupinder Brar to the bottom of the list.

Number 23, Harprit Jammu asked that his or her name be removed from the list. So we will remove No. 23 off of the list.

Our next presenter will be presenter No. 24, Andy Dhaliwal. Andy Dhaliwal is not present. He will be moved to the bottom of the list.

Number 25, Vishav Sidhu. Is Vishav Sidhu present?

Mr. Sidhu, do you have printed material for the committee.

**Mr. Vishav Sidhu (Private Citizen):** No.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Then you may proceed with your presentation as soon as you're ready.

**Mr. Sidhu:** Good evening, I want to talk to you about who we are, the people that drive taxis, the owner and the driver—our stories. Many of us are immigrant to Canada. We came here for a better future for ourselves and our families. You will probably—heard tonight from people about just how much we have invested in the taxi industry. Some of us brought the money from our home country to invest here. Some people even came as a business immigrant to invest in the taxi industry.

However, we invest, buy mortgage—the house, by taking out loans, that is how you build a small business like a taxi. But there is another thing you may not realize. Just ask our drivers. There are people in the taxi industry are driving taxi who back home are doctors, lawyers, engineers and other professionals.

Why are they driving taxis? Because, in many cases, they are unable to get their professional qualifications recognized. Some are errantly—successfully.

We have doctors in the city who start out in Canada as a taxi driver.

There is something else, as well. The taxi industry has been a stepping stone for many people who are newly immigrants to Canada. It helped many of us bring family members over, people from our community back home. Here in Manitoba we are proud now that we have a grown population, much as that comes from immigration. The taxi industry is a classic example of why we are having that kind of growth.

What is going to happen now? What happened to message does it send about taxis to the other potential investors? Can anything influence? If you can take away our rights as taxi owners, if you can prevent us from having any opportunity to go to the court to ask that we have recognize as having an exempt—exportations that will destroy our investment. What message that does that send? What message does that send to other potential future immigrants? Canada has a reputation as a country where there is the rule of law. The country is rich. Government cannot just do what they please. So what are you going the taxi? Where is the rules of law? You, who want—who will not even allow us to go to the court to argue our case. That is shameful.

If you are not connected about the impact of immigrants, what about on other Canadians? If you can do this to taxis today, who is the next business

owners? Farmers? Industrials have their own land and the other property. What I find a very surprise is that it is a—comes out of a government that is doing this. I have been told that when we were in a position you talk a lot about the property rights of farmers having their lands exploited by Manitoba Hydro. They are both had compensated but he felt that the process was unfair. Perhaps there was not enough computations.

So what are you doing now? You are in a government—you are in a Conservative government that talks about the property and legal rights, for that is now taking away our rights—our property rights, our legal rights. Does anyone do that if we were group of farmers with a daily quota, or fishers with a licence? That we would be in that situation, I personally not want to speak. Competition, I want to taxi system, it is a fair to me and other people who are invested in the industry, does not wipe out our value. I would rather be in positive to sell my licence at same point and time that at least get back what I invested. I would like to be in position to do that so that I can have a pension when I retire, but you are taking off that way for me.

Excuse my frustration, but I think if I—if the government, with this stroke of a pen, wiped out hundreds of thousands of dollars of your investments, you would be frustrated, too. You would be frustrated if you put years into building up your business and building a future for your family. You would be frustrated if you knew that you might lose your home, your kids might not go to the education you were hoping they would be able to.

\* (21:30)

This bill is not justice—a bad bill, it is bad literally for all of us who believe that there is a sense of fairness in the country.

I ask you to think about this before you vote on this bill. Please vote no to the bill. Take the time to get it right if you are going to push it through, an amendment. It is, in short: safety, fairness and community, the things that our industry is thinking about.

Finally, I want to say that if I am frustrated, I will promise you will—one thing, I will not just be the—this committee. If you supported us, I will be there to support you. I will not forget. Our industry will not forget. Our community will not forget. Please do not forget us.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Sidhu.

Questions?

**Mr. Saran:** Thank you, Mr. Sidhu.

I think—do you think this is a number game and they won't care if they throw you under the bus—taxi industry. They will care if something happened to the farmers because that's where they get votes. I think it's totally politics. Does not matter which, that's what's happening over here.

What's wrong if they remove the clause and you can take to—them to the court. It's up to the court what they decide. What's wrong if Uber have to buy the licence on the same market price as the other people have to? What's wrong if government can make money on that—on taxi board, where either you can buy from the taxi board—like on that ongoing price, or you can buy from the market? Government will make money and that price will be stabilized.

What's wrong with all these things to think about? And simply saying sorry, we are going to give to the city, and the city will do whatever they want. And then they won't have any control on them.

So they're—I think this government is throwing the taxi industry under the bus, and they are—all the savings will be wiped out. And it's not ride sharing, it's free ride to the Uber who have already so much money. Why they are want to give free ride through the Uber? Same thing I question to the mayor, same question to the Premier (Mr. Pallister).

What kind of deal they have with Uber? Can you tell me? *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Sidhu.

Now you can answer. After I recognize you.

**Mr. Sidhu:** I don't know what kind of—they have a deal, but we need compensate if the Uber comes here. Like Australia.

**Mr. Maloway:** I'd like you to tell me what it was like driving cabs before we had the requirement for cameras and shields in the cars. *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Sidhu.

Mr. Sidhu, you have the floor. You can answer.

**Mr. Sidhu:** We need a class 4 licence and criminal record check and child abuse. Right?

**Mr. Maloway:** You were—you've been driving for a number of years. *[interjection]* Right. And you've

been driving before the requirement to put in the cameras and the shields in the cabs.

I just wondered what you thought of the—whether you thought it was a—how big an improvement you thought it was when you had to put in the cameras and the shields, compared to what it was like before.

**Mr. Sidhu:** Before, the safety was not there because we have no camera, no shields. Right? And it was a very dangerous job. Still, even—we are—still our dangerous job, you know. So right now, we have improved lots. Our jobs, you know, help the people and have camera, safety shield, clean cars.

**Ms. Clarke:** And I want to stress I think I've heard from every speaker here tonight about safety and this government, of course, is very concerned about the safety of our taxicab drivers in the industry, and I cannot imagine that the City of Winnipeg, if and when they are working with our taxicab industry, that they would not take that as a top priority. It is their job to protect and serve every single Manitoban, every taxicab driver. It is their job to protect you, and right now, that's who protects you, is the City of Winnipeg, the police force.

That will not change. That, in fact, could get better because they work for the City of Winnipeg. The taxicab industry would be regulated by the City of Winnipeg. They could actually do a better job to work with you, to protect you, as drivers, so that you do get home at night.

I think that safety is No. 1, and I cannot for one minute imagine that the City of Winnipeg doesn't take safety of your life just as seriously as what we do. That should not matter who's in charge.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Sidhu, we are out of time, but if you wish to make a brief comment back to that, we'll allow it.

**Mr. Sidhu:** Okay, then. That's okay, thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Sidhu.

Our next presenter is presenter No. 26, Manpreet Paul. Is Manpreet Paul in the room? Manpreet Paul?

Mr. Paul is not—yes—no—Manpreet Paul is not here. We will move him to the bottom of the list.

Our next presenter, No. 27, Gurmeet Singh. Is Gurmeet Singh—*[interjection]*—thank you, Mr. Singh.

Do you have any written presentations for the committee?

**Mr. Gurmeet Singh (Private Citizen):** Yes.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay. We'll get them handed out, and as soon as they get handed out, you may proceed with your presentation.

**Mr. Gurmeet Singh:** Good evening, everybody, and thank you for all listening us that long time. It's already midnight.

I'm very pleasure to be here today. It's the first time I will done anything like that, but I think it's important to speak.

I'm speaking today not just on behalf of myself and my family and all taxi peoples. We are worried about what happen to the taxi industry, as I heard lots about what does that bill mean for my family, for people we know.

For me, it is a very bad bill. They are telling me there are a lot more things than just transferring taxi from the provincial government to the city. They say that threaten to wipe out everything with the current licensing system. They say they take away any legal right that have—people are saying they will lose thousands of dollars that the investment and all the time they have put into the succeed will be destroyed.

I know a lot of people are talking about Uber. A lot of young people are talking about Uber, but have you ever checked that Uber is really all about? They are not part of the community. They are a big company worth billions of dollars. Google Uber and you will find out that it is a broken law around the world, and they treat peoples terribly, their drivers and their employees are 'namit' and they don't carry full-time jobs. They destroy full-time jobs.

My generation's facing an economy and fewer and fewer good full-time jobs. I ask people to the taxi industry how many jobs they are—did we know there's 1,600 mostly full-time jobs, and that is 1,600 families. How many full-time jobs will there—at a school we're taught to go—do the homework. Please do not—please do your homework so what work you are doing is against—not-good work, our families and it's not good for our economy.

\* (21:40)

Bringing Uber in to destroy the taxi industry is a very bad decision by the Manitoba government. Please listen to our families and us. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thanks for your presentation, Mr. Singh.

**Mr. Maloway:** I want to thank you for your presentation.

I'd like to know how this move will affect you, your family, your kids and your loan—debt situation. *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Singh, you have to wait until I—

Okay, Mr. Singh, you can proceed now.

**Mr. Gurmeet Singh:** See, I bought a taxi. I came here in 2010, and my father, he was pass away. And my mom, she was in India and I came here, I started my job. But sometime I have to go back my home. And my employer's not let me, like, give the vacation. That's why I think this cab—buying a cab is good idea. Whenever I need to go, my home country anyway, then I just get somebody to drive for me, and then I'll go there. And now I have to pay for, like, my mortgage for the—my taxi. And thank you.

**Mr. Isleifson:** Again, Mr. Singh, thank you for coming out tonight and sharing your concerns and your viewpoints.

You make some pretty good points. In your statement, though, there's a couple of things that have left me with a question. Wondering who you've been speaking with. There's some word out there tonight that the industry was not consulted, and yet we have fax proving that it was. And, in your statements, it's just a couple things you said that—they are telling me there's a lot more. They say it threatens to wipe us out. People are saying that they will lose hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Who is they? *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Singh.

Mr. Singh, could you please proceed now.

**Mr. Gurmeet Singh:** Like, the cab industry guys. My friend, my family members. Yes.

**Ms. Marcelino:** Thank you, Mr. Singh, for your presentation.

I have a question: Do you know how much Uber drivers are paid?

The reason why I'm asking is I had the occasion to take Uber on three different occasions, twice in the Philippines and once in the United States. I asked the driver how much they're getting paid, and they gave me a percentage. But, overall, they said it's not enough. It's not enough for us to pay for the loan that we took for the car that they're driving.



And then, when I asked if something happens to us, am I covered? Am I insured if we get into an accident? And the driver couldn't answer me that question.

In the United States, I asked the same question to the driver, a lady driver. And she said, oh, I'm just doing this part time. It cannot be a full-time one for me. As it is, it doesn't—it's not enough. But, with very little work available, I have to do it.

And I notice there was no security camera in that car—that Uber car. And then, when I took a regular taxi around the same place, I saw the taxi was equipped with a camera. So I felt safe that way. And I had the occasion to ask the driver, too, how business is going with the regular taxi. And then he responded that, oh, we got less income now with Uber. But I believe the taxi driver said we provide better service.

So do you know how much Uber drivers—  
[interjection]

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Singh.

Mr. Singh, proceed.

**Mr. Gurmeet Singh:** I don't know that exact calculation, but I heard that 30 per cent how much the driver makes—30 per cent goes through the Ubers. And that's a very big amount of money. We are making here that money and I'm bringing out of the country. That's not good for our country too.

And, for us, we have to pay, like, \$10,000—more than \$10,000 every year to MPI. If we go with part-time payment, I have to pay the interest on it too. If we go, like, monthly payment, they said, okay, you have to put three point something interest on it.

And for the cameras, I have a two personal happenings with me. One is a, I think, last year, there's a—in the Charleswood area, I got a call from some—from there, at the intersection. And in the midnight we have our right to ask the money, if it's a drunk or something like that, and I ask him money, and he refused to give it to me, and he called the police. They explain everything to him, and he leave my car. After three hours, I get a message from my screen and they said, who had a bad customer? I call my company. I said I have that customer, and he said, okay.

Then I got a call from the Winnipeg Police. The guy, he broke in five cars over there, one garage, and he 'snabbed' one old lady there, and the next day the

Winnipeg Police called me on Princess Street. Then they took all the pictures from my camera—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Singh, if you could wrap it because we're well over the time.

**Mr. Gurmeet Singh:** Yes, yes. And the—then they found out the guy who actually did that crime.

That's why safety is good for me and for everybody.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Singh. We greatly appreciate you coming out tonight.

We will now move on to presenter No. 28, Harpreet Singh Sidhu.

Presenter No. 28, Harpreet Singh Sidhu?

Mr. Sidhu is not here. We will move him to the bottom of the list.

And we will now move up to No. 29 presenter, Iqbal Dhillon.

Mr. Dhillon, you may proceed with your presentation when you are ready.

**Mr. Iqbal Dhillon (Private Citizen):** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Iqbal Singh Dhillon.

I came to this country since 27 years ago, and I started taxi almost 25 years ago. I am working hard every day, almost seven days a week, 12 hours. And I have three children. They're going to school; they're going to the university. And my parents are living with us, and these days so far we are okay because I'm working. If the Uber coming tomorrow, then I don't know what's going on with my family and me. So please give us help. We don't need any Uber here. We need help from you because we are paying too much insurance and we are running through the taxi rules and regulations and everything after Uber coming from the roof. They are not paying properly insurance, not rule and regulation, no nothing. So please, we need help from you guys. That's all.

If the Uber is coming, we need the same rules, same insurance because this is the same work, same rules and regulations.

That's all. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Dhillon.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Thank you, Mr. Dhillon, for coming in and giving your presentation tonight.

It's—I've looked at the MNP report, which was actually put out there for the study back in 2015 under the previous NDP government. And just to let you know, unlike the member from Logan, I have not travelled in an Uber-run vehicle yet, and I've had the pleasure of riding in a Duffy's and a Unicity cab here in Winnipeg, and I'm from outside of Winnipeg; I'm from rural Manitoba. And I do treasure the safety that you and other drivers and owners provide to us transporting us from place to place.

\* (21:50)

Do you feel that—I'm just looking at some information from the MNP report, and it shows that we are—Winnipeg's ratio of taxicabs to population is lower than all other compared cities at one cab for every 1,555 people. There's 400 licences and there has not been an increase in licences since 1947. Do you feel that there's not enough work to go around?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Dhillon, you may proceed now.

**Mr. Iqbal Dhillon:** Sometimes 400 taxis is enough, because this is not New York. This is not LA—*[interjection]*

Yes. And wintertime, we bringing—last week, we bringing 112 seasonal cars on the road, so there's nothing wrong in the winter too, because the only problem—when the storm is coming, our service a little slow. And these days, the City of Winnipeg, they're fixing the roads. That's why sometimes—or a service road—you now see—you see the Donald and Ellice these days, you see Scurfield and Route 90, what's going on there is big lineup, then what are we going to do when the traffic is slow?

And sometimes—morning time at the airport, the flight is late and delayed. Around 3 o'clock, 4 o'clock, seven, eight flights are coming together, same time. That's why our service a little bit slow. If you're going to the Tim Hortons, the five people sitting in front of you and a coffee cup, you need to wait 10 minutes—more than 10 minutes.

But there's no problem for taxis. There's already taxis enough.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Dhillon.

**Mr. Maloway:** I'll defer to the member for St. James.

**Mr. Scott Johnston (St. James):** I've been sitting here patiently through the whole evening listening to a great deal of presentation from a number of

different individuals, and I've been impressed with all of them, and I do believe you're passionate about your position.

Minister—*[interjection]* Minister Clarke—sorry—mental block—Minister Clarke made a point, and it—every presentation that's come up so far, her point, I think, is relevant to the comments that I've heard, and that's that you've got a very proud industry; you've got a very efficient industry. You've got an industry that certainly is well suited to be able to accommodate all of the needs of the city of Winnipeg.

And I'm—represent the constituency of St. James, so certainly with the airport being in my area, I see a number of the services that your industry does offer to and fro from the airport at all hours of the day. And I personally think that the service you offer is excellent. Every time that I've ever asked for a cab—pre-booked a cab, it's always got there on time, and I've always been extremely satisfied with the service that's been offered.

So I guess what I'm wondering, and I'm echoing a little bit what Minister Clarke was saying, is that I don't think you have to be threatened at all by any competition. I don't believe that people that have been satisfied with your service and depend on a very credible service are going to leave the confidence they have in your service. So I think it's, quite frankly, a matter of adjusting to a change in the marketplace, as a number of industries have to do.

I think your points in regards to playing on a level playing field are relevant, and I think that when the City of Winnipeg, who is going to be—if Bill 30 passes, going to be responsible for this, will deal with this, and I can't see them not ensuring—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Johnston?

**Floor Comment:** —that there's consideration to your industry. So my point is—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Johnston, we are out of time. *[interjection]* So we will allow Mr. Dhillon to answer, but a brief answer, please, because we're well over our time allotment.

**Mr. Iqbal Dhillon:** I'm—I don't have any answer for his question, because his question is not clear.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Dhillon.

Ladies and gentlemen, at the beginning of this committee this evening we talked about

allowing 45 seconds for each speaker basically so they can ask a question instead of continue on because we are running out of time. So I would ask people to slow—to sort of get to the point of the questions. And then more people will be able to ask questions. Thank you.

Our next speaker on the list is Mr. Paul Moist. Is Paul Moist present? Mr. Moist, you have a written submission for us? Thank you. Somebody will pick it up and distribute it. And you may proceed whenever you are ready.

**Mr. Paul Moist (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives—Manitoba):** My name is Paul Moist, and I appear tonight as a research associate with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Manitoba. And we welcome the opportunity to speak to Bill 30.

Attached to the presentation I'm giving right now is a copy of an analysis piece we wrote last April: Uber No Solution for Winnipeg. And it speaks a bit about the industry and, interestingly, issues dealt with in Bill 30.

Transferring responsibility for vehicle-for-hire regulation and governance to municipalities—principally, we're talking about the City of Winnipeg—ought not to proceed until the following issues are addressed.

(1) According to the MNP report, the current system costs the province about \$728,000 a year to run. Thirty-six per cent of this cost is funded by fees paid for by participants in the industry. The remainder is funded from provincial revenues. Bill 30 is silent on the transfer of funds to the city to run the system. This needs to be addressed. These are just the administrative costs; they don't include the enforcement costs.

(2) At its inception, regulation of this industry in Canada, the principle that workers within the system earn a living wage, was well-established. In 1936, The Ottawa Journal spoke of this principle. No one has the right to expect a taxi ride at a price that does not permit decent wages and working conditions for those engaged in providing it—a different time. The MNP report cites the fact that more than 50 per cent of cab drivers earn less than the low-income cut-off for our city, less than \$24,000 a year, many of them much less.

The report indicates that 2,200 workers are licensed as cab drivers in Winnipeg. There are only 656 taxicab business licences across all categories, and some of those are only for a certain portion of

the year, as has been mentioned. None of the workers interviewed by MNP—none—according to MNP, indicated that they earn an hourly wage. Only less than a third are licensed owner-operators. Not one driver out of hundreds interviewed said they earn an hourly wage. After expenses, they earn a percentage of what they take in during a 12-hour shift. Many don't earn anywhere near the minimum wage in a 12-hour shift, as MNP points out. MNP says most, in fact, are employees, not independent contractors. And to quote from the report, these drivers find it, quote, difficult to represent their interests to the labour board with the power imbalance and limited choice in the industry. Close quote. And you heard one worker speak to that tonight.

\* (22:00)

The precarious nature of work within the present system contributes to its many failings. There's been talk of the value of taxicab licences around \$406,000 in 2016, plummeting when and if ride-share firms such as Uber are allowed into the Winnipeg market, which has been well-documented as the experience throughout the world. The Winnipeg market will not be the only market on the planet where licence values don't plummet, and they will.

Talk of compensation for licence holders is one thing and it's a legitimate issue, but what about the vast majority of cab drivers working day in and day out for poverty wages? Who's speaking for them tonight? Who's asking questions about them? We submit that Bill 30 should be tabled and the Province should fix the many problems in the current system prior to downloading it onto the city of Winnipeg.

Last point, (3). Since we published our piece this past spring, Uber's continued to encounter problems throughout the globe. Uber drivers are not making what they were promised. Many are asserting that they are employees, not contractors. They are in the courts in a number of countries around the planet and they're winning. They're not independent contractors; they can't pick up their own fares and they're making poverty wages. Uber's pulled out of Denmark rather than adhere to regulatory—equal regulatory provisions. The same seems about to occur in the city of London. Uber is a non-solution for Winnipeg and it will cement a system that already perpetuates low wages. It'll drive those wages down further.

In closing, we measure Bill 30 in the context of overall provincial-city relations, something not talked about much tonight. So far this

year, the Province has abandoned long-standing revenue-sharing arrangements such as a portion of the provincial income tax granted to municipalities, brought in by Mr. Schreyer 45 years ago, which has been in place for over 45 years. Recently, the Province announced it has ended the long-standing fifty-fifty sharing arrangement for the running of Winnipeg Transit. Each of these moves makes it harder for the city of Winnipeg to deliver the essential services that citizens expect and deserve from their civic government.

Now we have Bill 30, which downloads responsibility for today's taxi industry to the city at a time of great upheaval in that industry. We submit that prior to even considering such a move that the Province should clean up the mess that represents the current taxi system that you preside over, beginning with fairness for all those workers in the present system. And we submit that Bill 30 probably should be completely withdrawn, but it should be tabled at the very least until such time as the city and the Province can come to a consensus on what this change will mean for both levels of government.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Moist.

**Mr. Kinew:** Thank you for the presentation.

I'm wondering if you could talk about the changes that this sort of shift to having large tech companies treat people as independent contractors rather than employees, what that can mean for the economy. What does that say about the spread of precarious work through the economy and the impact on the average person just trying to work for a living in Manitoba?

**Mr. Moist:** Through the Chair, it's a good question.

The lead item on CBC news at 4 o'clock today was Walmart in North America ramping up their app-based shopping system. We will, in the future—I guess, those who go into Walmart will grab an app-based device and simply walk around and put things in your basket and simply walk out of the store, because you'll be paying as you tap all the way through. And a question was put to the economist on the CBC show at 4 o'clock: What does this mean for staffing? And Walmart said, so far nobody has lost a job because of this. But the writing is on the wall. And in this industry that we're talking about, I can't compliment the status quo, and that doesn't mean workers don't work hard within it.

The current industry, as structured, treats many workers badly when it comes to wages. Multiply that times 100, and the ironic thing about it is we don't have any of them here. We had a spokesman for Uber here earlier tonight, but there's no Uber drivers here. Uber drivers throughout the planet are low paid and are asserting that they're not independent contractors. Why would a worker assert that he or she's not an independent contractor in this world? Because they're getting screwed wage wise, and they want even minimal employment standards or minimum wage protections.

So I think, as policy-makers here, before we devolve something to—the current provincial government, didn't like the health accord where Mr. Trudeau brought change in. They thought it was a devolution down to the provincial level. I happen to agree with them on that argument. It's the same position CCPA took.

But don't devolve to the civic government as you download and hurt the financial arrangements you already have with them. Don't download this complicated file. Clean it up first. The Meyers Norris Penny report had 44 recommendations—short-term, mid-term, long-term. One of the long-term recommendations was meet with municipalities and the City to discuss whether it's a good idea to do this. That report is dated December 2016.

The Province couldn't wait to put pen to paper to get this hot potato off. I find it gratuitous, Mr. Chair, that somebody would say to a worker, don't worry; you can compete. Around the world the economics of ride-sharing services has driven down the value of licences everywhere. That is the pension plan for these workers. That's their pension. That's their investment. One guy stood here tonight and said 35 years he's been working in the system, and with the stroke of a pen Bill 30 and ride-sharing will do in Winnipeg what it did in London, what it did in Berlin, what it did in Los Angeles, what it did in New York. It will drive down the value of the licences. You don't do that to people who have worked 35 and 40 years in the system and been hard workers. You don't do that.

**Ms. Clarke:** And I thank you for your presentation, but I would like to clarify some of your comments made here tonight.

You've indicated that the municipalities are being misrepresented, mistreated due to the granting that they're getting. In fact, the municipalities are getting exactly what they asked for. They asked for a

single-window application. They asked for basket funding, so they could choose where their money was spent.

Our municipalities this year will in likely get more funding than they have in the past because in the past money was left on the table because it didn't fit the criteria.

This year they have the opportunity to choose where their dollars go. The municipalities asked for what they're getting. They are not being short-changed in any way.

You talk about the 50-50 sharing agreement with the City of Winnipeg Transit. It is unreasonable to think that a government would say, okay, you spend whatever you want and we will cover 50 per cent and have no say of how that funding's spent. That is not good government and, again, no apologies there.

You talk about municipalities in general. Municipalities in this province have been in charge of the taxicab industry all these years, everyone except the City of Winnipeg. Municipalities want that control. They're enjoying it. They want it. They choose that, and I would also indicate that other cities all across this country are doing the same.

Manitoba goes well beyond the City of Winnipeg.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Ms. Clarke, time for question period has expired.

Mr. Moist, we'll allow you a brief answer, if you'd care to.

**Mr. Moist:** Through the Chair, the City of Winnipeg represents about 68 per cent of the population of this province. They did not ask for a percentage of the income tax that they've had for 45 years to be taken away from them.

Taking their grants and saying you'll get the same as you got last year in one envelope ensures that what he put in place will mean less money going to the City over time, so I don't buy that and never will. The silence from 510 Main Street is deafening on this file, and I think the City and the citizens of the city are getting screwed by this hot potato being given to the municipal government.

Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Moist.

Our next presenter, presenter No. 31, Mandeep Sidhu was asked to be removed from the list, so they will be removed.

We will now move to presenter No. 32, Rajinder Sharma–Rajinder Sharma.

\* (22:10)

*Mr. Vice-Chairperson in the Chair*

**Mr. Vice-Chairperson:** Good evening, Mr. Sharma. Just wondering if you have any written material for distribution.

**Mr. Rajinder Sharma (Private Citizen):** Nothing, Sir.

**Mr. Vice-Chairperson:** None at all? Please proceed with your presentation.

**Mr. Sharma:** Sir, I am very concerned about the Bill 30 today because there is a lot more in the bill than just transferring the 'jurisdiction' to the province to Manitoba—to the city. It wipes out the existing licence sector, and there's nothing to ensure highest level of safety in the bill. It takes our legal rights away. It threatens to disturb taxi services that—there for all Winnipeggers and our community. We oppose the bill, sir.

And they made no consultation with the industry before taking the bill, so you should take time to get it right. So—what—do you know, sir, the taxis owned by small-business owners. You should think about their families. They brought their hard earnings into Canada from back home. Somebody sold a property, somebody—hard-working—whatever.

So, second number, safety that cannot be ignored. Taxi drivers are highly trained and we have cameras and everything explained by earlier—my colleagues, they have already explained these things. And passenger safety's at risk too, sir. If, suppose, like—the biggest thing is that if there is no camera, nothing, the biggest issue in the cities now for our young generation is the drugs. So they can take benefit—gang members can take benefit. They can spread it, and our young generation will be ruined. Who will be responsible for that?

And I have a lot of frustration about what is happening with the taxi regulation in the province. The province is bringing the Bill 30, which will wipe out all the licence structures and—which will bring multinational 'organisation' to the city, and they will take our province money outside. We'll need to think about that, sir.

So—people in the industry already, you know, that's what—they had invested lots of money, lots of dollars. Lots of their hard earnings; some—they're paying mortgages still and they're raising their children. So there's the big issue, I think, sir. And you're wiping out all the licence by taking this bill. You're taking our legal rights away. You're putting the safety of Winnipeggers, 'Manitobians', our community peoples away.

Where the government responsibility? If they're giving it to city, where is the government responsible? Why are they running from it? We have elected a government, they should think about us.

That's it, thank you.

**Mr. Vice-Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Sharma.

**Mr. Wharton:** Thank you, Mr. Sharma for your presentation. I certainly appreciate your concerns tonight.

And I come from a transportation industry as well in my background—an entrepreneur all my life in the transportation business; where you transfer people, we transferred furniture. So I can understand that regulations and changes and moving, evolving issues continue to be a challenge. Especially being an entrepreneur like yourself.

In the consultation, you had two points, Mr. Sharma. You had mentioned about no consultation. Well, I can tell you that the most thorough consultation process was done—by the way, commissioned by the former government, the NDP government, in 2015, by Meyers Norris Penny. And the consultations included consultations with about 10,000 responses that right—that came across to—including 500 telephone interviews, totalling 9,200 online surveys completed. There was a lot of consultation done, Mr. Sharma. I want you to be very aware of that. And we—that's why we love this process tonight too, as well, because we can hear more from you folks, as well.

And to your other point on licences, where you said licences—and I quote—will be wiped out: again, that's very false, Mr. Sharma. I don't know where you got that information from, but I can tell you that existing taxicab licences issued by the Taxicab Board will be—continue to be valid through the City of Winnipeg's new bylaw. So that licence will be transferred when the new regime is developed with the City of Winnipeg, which we will support as well going forward and along with yourself. So thank you.

**Mr. Vice-Chairperson:** Thank you. Mr. Sharma, any comments to—

**Mr. Sharma:** Yes. Do you know, sir, what was the licence price before when the bill not arrive—when bill was not arrived? Maybe three, four hundred, \$500,000, and what is the present value of it, sir? And what will happen if it will goes in the hands of the City?

**Mr. Vice-Chairperson:** Thank you. Any further questions?

**Mr. Maloway:** The fact of the matter is the Conservatives here are trying to convince you that you should accept this bill and trust the City, and, you know, how far has that got you? Right, you can't even get a hearing with the City, right. *[interjection]* Yes, of course.

And the fact of the matter is that, you know, I hate to keep repeating this but it bears repeating. Why did they put a section 10 in the bill? And I'm going to read what it says. It says: No cause of action or remedy arises as a direct or indirect result of the cancellation of a licence or a certificate under section 1, and no compensation or damages, included but not limited to or any loss of goodwill or possible profits, are owing or payable to any person in connection with or as a result of such a cancellation.

Why would you put that in there? If it means nothing, why put it in there? Because they don't want to pay one cent when the value of your business goes down to nothing.

**Mr. Sharma:** Right, sir. That's totally true, sir. I'm totally agree. Like—it's like totally killing—clear killing.

**Mr. Wharton:** Again, the member from Elmwood continues to fill the room full of fear which is not factual but just fear and that's something that Mr. Maloway—pardon me, the member from Elmwood is very good at.

*Mr. Chairperson in the Chair*

But I can tell you, Mr. Sharma, that determining the value of the licences—and you'd asked me the question earlier—licences transferred to the secondary market has never been part of the Taxicab Board's mandate. Those prices are set by the private party's concern, okay. So the Taxicab Board never mandated the pricing in the licences. The City of Winnipeg, when they develop their new regime moving forward, when it transfers from the Province's mandate to the City of Winnipeg, be sure that those

licences will be transferred and will be active with the City of Winnipeg. Thank you.

**Mr. Sharma:** It will be transferred, sir, but what about the value, sir? What is our fault if we pay lot of money for that? Who will be responsible for that, sir?

**Mr. Wharton:** Yes, thanks, Mr. Sharma, and again those prices were set by the private party's concerns, so my understanding is—and maybe you can help me through this as well—my understanding is that when a licence was sold it was a deal between two private members. That determined the value. So there wasn't the Taxicab Board that determined the value; it won't be the City of Winnipeg that determines the value.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Sharma, time is out so you if could just briefly answer it we would appreciate that.

**Mr. Sharma:** Yes. So, I just want to say that we can make a different system so that nobody will affect instead of ruining everything.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Sharma.

We will now move to presenter No. 33, Harjinder Dhillon. Do you have a written presentation for committee? Once it's—you may proceed with your presentation whenever you're ready Mr. Dhillon.

\* (22:20)

**Mr. Harjinder Dhillon (Private Citizen):** Okay, good evening, everyone, all respected members and Chairperson.

I will start from differently. What a luck for immigrants. I came 25 years ago as an immigrant in this country, fighting with the corrupt system back home, to have a better system in this country and make a better future.

And I don't want to make any complaints until this Bill 30 came out. The future was very good, present was very good. All there was only work hard, and that's all of our members, they already told you guys. We came from that land. We are so used to work hard, and we will, no doubt.

But the situation is very awkward. I remember since 1994 when I came in Canada, I was graduated from university—no jobs there. Earlier, I told you, to have a better future, I came here. Within 20 hours, when I flew from New Delhi, 20 hours, everything was changed. The language was different. The

culture was different. Everything changed. A lot of hot over there, there was snow here.

But the only thing was, in our—my mind, I will be successful one day. Came with the \$20, \$50. Had a very good life over there, but the system wasn't good. So I came here, see the system, starting from a cleaning job. I was a university student start from Superstore—no regret, no complaint, because I knew that I will do it. And I try to go to school—same thing. The school told me, you have to spend another three, four years, and I couldn't afford it because my parents, they came with me, and they were old.

I have to start work, and that's what I told you, cleaning. Then I started in a factory for a couple of years, get a cab licence driving for somebody else, got my own. Until today, I have my own. I got married, went back home—two young kids now. My son is going to university and my daughter, she's in school. Feeling so proud, and they feel so proud at me because they see I've been through the situation. Everybody's sitting beside me, and they go through the worse than me.

So this is a little my story. And as I told you, everybody's had a same story. But people they're speaking, they never came to stay; they never came to the mic—you can see that; you can judge that—because the pain is so sharp. When the pain is so sharp, people, they cry, no matter what they want to cry or they can cry. So that's what you're hearing today.

So same thing, regular things. I'm here today on behalf of Duffy's Taxi, present our position on Bill 30 objection.

First of all, I am objecting the name ride-sharing. This is a totally fake word they are putting in our mouth. And I met a lot of politicians, ministers, all responsible people. Every time, they start meetings from the ride-sharing. This is not ride-sharing. This is a taxi industry just owned by billionaires and through the Internet—very simple. They are dispatching through the Internet. People, they're paying through the Internet by the card. This is the only difference than cabs. And cabs have extra things—people, they're going to pay in cash. And people, they can phone in our office. Old people, they don't have a—old schooling people, they don't know what—how to use the technology. So this is a difference.

So, since 1950, Duffy's Taxi had—proud to serve Winnipeggers. We are proud that our owners are

part of this community. Our owners are individual small-business people who work hard under very difficult situations.

Our message today to you is that the way in which the Province and the City is moving to dramatic change the taxi system in Winnipeg is totally unfair. You are pushing us. You are pushing Bill 30 through the Legislature without consultation with the industry. Bill 30 does more than just transfer the jurisdiction to the City, but it takes away our legal rights and livelihoods.

Our concerns: first, safety. I can't stress enough the hazard our industry face on a daily basis: racism, accidents, robberies and assaults. Taxis are one of the most unsafe occupations in North America. Here, in Winnipeg, driving a taxi is a lot safer because of the safety shield, camera, which makes one of the safest taxi industries. Our vision: safety, fairness, community.

Why we are—why are we concerned? There's a lot of more in Bill 30 than just transferring jurisdiction for taxis from the Province of Manitoba to the City. It wipes out the existing licence structure. There is nothing to ensure the highest level of safety. It takes away our legal rights. It tries to disrupt a taxi service that is there for all Winnipeggers.

We oppose Bill 30. There has been no consultation with the industry. We ask you to withdraw the bill so that we can have input. You should take a time to get it right. Still, if you proceed with the bill, there needs to be major amendments. What everyone should know: taxis are owned by individual small-business people. Our dispatch company is actually a company of local independent shareholders and operators.

We are your neighbours, your family, your friends. Safety must be key. Taxi driving is one of the most dangerous occupations in Canada. In Winnipeg we now have one of the safest industries because of the shields, cameras and training. We don't want to go back the days when the taxi drivers were murdered in the city on a regular basis. This is what will happen if you water down the safety protection for drivers. Passenger safety and the risk. We have screening for drivers, for criminal records, child abuse and other issues.

There's an English language classes test, an interview training. We have strict zero tolerance in the industry for people accused of anything. This is very different than Uber, which has limited

screening, training and the many jurisdiction has ignored passenger-safety-related issues.

We have a lot frustration about what is happening with the taxi regulations in the province. The Province is bringing in Bill 30, which wipes out that existing licensing structure and paves the way for the multi-million corporation that has broken laws and regulations around the world and set a new low standard in the taxi industry.

The provincial government did not have a courtesy to consult the taxi industry before bringing in the bill. People in the taxi industry have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in their licence, their vehicles and much more. They follow the rules; they are taxpayers. Our community—what you are doing wiping out of licences and wiping out our livelihood.

Important points: you are wiping out the value of our licence. You are taking away our legal rights. You are putting safety at risk. This is a bad bill for our taxi industry. Please listen to us. Stop this bill. Protect drivers and passenger safety. Protect our legal rights. Protect our taxi service. We want safety, fairness, community for our industry for Winnipeggers.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Dhillon.

\* (22:30)

**Mr. Saran:** Thanks to Mr. Dhillon to be here, and, as honourable minister mentioned that when you transfer a licence from one person to the other person, that's between the buyer and a seller; that has nothing to do with the government. But, on the other hand, the taxi board asks you how much you paid and, if you paid less, they say, no, you avoiding the tax. What do you say about that and how—what you will think if Uber have also buy the licence at the ongoing price and everything is equal; would you be happy?

**Mr. Harjinder Dhillon:** We don't have any problem at that. But you're—earlier you ask the price. Is this through the—every cab when is sold is go through the Taxicab Board. And Taxicab Board under province government. I think the province government is sitting right here, and they know what's going on and I think they are responsible to control the price if they want to, and, if the price is going down—and they are responsible for that too.



**Mr. Maloway:** I want to thank you for an excellent presentation. I'm just looking at the legislative calendar here and the—this session is going to end three weeks from now, on the 9th of November. So this bill is going to pass through here, because of these 40 members of the government when what they could do, if they wanted to pull back a bit and take your really good advice, is they could withdraw the bill and we have a brand new session coming up a week later, starting on the 21st of November. And they could reintroduce it any time after the 21st of November. We're talking a matter of weeks here.

But the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and this government are intent on driving this thing through and get it all done so we can, you know, finish up here on the 9th of November. What would you have to say about that?

**Mr. Harjinder Dhillon:** Yes, if they'll do that, that be really 'appreciable'. But I have a doubt they'll do it, because the last year—since last year's, before election and campaign, Premier he promised with industry it's going to be a level playing field. And we want today—if even the bill is moving towards the City, we need his promise.

Province government I think is higher level than the city government. And, if they're moving Taxicab Board towards the city, why they are not mentioning those kinds of stuff? Existing plate should be—the remain same price or either safety—those are most important things. Why are not they're mentioning in this bill? That—this is my question to the running government.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Thank you, Mr. Dhillon, for coming in and giving your presentation and also giving us a hard copy of it as well.

So I'm just looking in your presentation, and here it says there has been no consultation with the industry. Can you tell me who has told you that there's been no consultation with the industry?  
*[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** You have to wait until I recognize you.

Mr. Dhillon.

**Mr. Harjinder Dhillon:** Okay, consultant means, we are not denying anything. Industry was consulted. Industry have—we have our own issues. We told the government: This is our issue we need to solve this first. But that was only consultation. And, in that meeting, the minister told us we are moving you

towards the city; they'll do everything. I don't know how you can say this was a consultation. If nobody's listening me, or just saying me, okay, I hear you, but I'm not going to listen you—what is that? That's what happened. We're not denying that. We had a meeting. People they listened to us. But end of the day, nothing came out.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank you for your presentation, Mr. Dhillon, but question—our time allotted for questions has expired.

**Floor Comment:** I need your—one minute. Proudly, I want to say—sorry about that. You will be—feel proud what I'm going to say. My son, he played for a Manitoba team for three years, and he—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mister—just hang on for a second.

Yes, now you can go ahead. I'll recognize you and you can go ahead.

**Mr. Harjinder Dhillon:** Sorry, okay.

History of the Manitoba, he star basketball; first year, they went to Canada Games. They won silver medal. The next year, they won a gold medal in Sherbrook and Quebec. So proudly, I'm going to tell you guys the reason because it was my hard work, and his was hard work and game, because I was working hard to afford it to send him to anywhere and stay several years. Today, he's playing for Manitoba Bison, but he's asking me every evening. I feel proud, but he's embarrassed today. That's what is going on.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much for your presentation, Mr. Dhillon.

We will now move over to presenter number 34, Gurcharan Dhaliwal.

Mr. Dhaliwal, do you have any written presentation for the committee?

**Mr. Gurcharan Dhaliwal (Private Citizen):** No, I don't have.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Then you may proceed with your committee—your report to the committee as soon as you're ready. Thank you.

**Mr. Dhaliwal:** I am ready. Thank you for giving me time.

I have only two, three point. One, we want to stop bill totally. Because I'm working from 22 year in the taxi industry. I have seven kids, everybody study. I alone work only; my wife is sick. Now I am

over 65. I have pain—back pain, and diabetic, and knee problem.

Now I sell the property in India. I bring the money here put in the taxi, then I buy the taxi. I work hard, everybody knows, very hard. Then my kid I can survive together, everybody study. Now, I am going on pension. My career is finished. Where I can go, you can tell me? What can I do?

Everybody need Uber, Uber, Uber. I proud of Winnipeg taxi industry, No. 1 in the North America. Service-wise, and taxi—new taxi we have, my taxi broken today. We don't go to the junkyard; we go to the showroom, bring the new taxi right away. You go back, 20 year back, you go there. That time, driver driving the taxi, they go do the lunch. Despite your car free, you come here, customer waiting for their taxi. They said we have only lunch. They have a taxi, bring to the junkyard, they have a hole like this in the floor.

We have a new taxi, now, we get the tip. We go to then five minute, front of customer house. We call the customer. The customer said, please, you wait two minute, I take coffee.

I can't do anything, you go for bill, everything you can pass. You have a power. But I can tell you, you can't—any industry, you can't take care for the rider. You can't take anyone more industry back more than better this taxi industry. You have—you give that to everything they have, everything okay. Why you bring the Uber? Who's the Uber? They pick up the money Canada to going the United States, and too many refugees coming from the United States to Canada. You put the money to United States. What is the thinking, this one?

I don't have more answers. I—thank you.

\* (22:40)

You know—one more. I wake up morning 2 o'clock yesterday. I sitting in the bed. I thinking over the taxi, what is to do now. Everything finish. My heartbeat going very fast. I can't tell please—tell you if you do like this, too many people, they get damaged, maybe very soon me.

Everything you—everybody—you want to kill us? That's okay.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Dhaliwal. But there may be some questions—no? No questions from the—we will now move on to presenter No. 35, Paramjit Bhangoo.

Paramjit Bhangoo, No. 35? We will move Mr. Bhangoo to the bottom of the list and we'll move on to presenter No. 36, Baljinder Bedi.

Do you have a written presentation for us?

**Mr. Baljinder Bedi (Private Citizen):** I do, Sir.

**Mr. Chairperson:** You may proceed with your presentation as soon as you are ready.

**Mr. Baljinder Bedi:** First of all, I'd like to take this time out to thank the Legislature and all the members here and present, along with my family members behind us, for taking this important time out just to hear our concerns regarding Bill 30.

I'd like to start off with the beginning. You know what, my parents migrated to this country about 30-some-odd years ago to provide a better home, better future for both myself, my brother, two of our other siblings. They worked themselves well into their 60s when—at a time they should have been saving for their pension, they left everything behind. My father had a good business, an export business. My mother worked in sales tax for the Indian government. But they decided to pack everything up and migrate over here so that they could provide a better future for our kids.

My brother and I, with the help of our parents remortgaging their house twice—not once, but twice—just to put basically enough money down so that we could afford a taxi loan, because, at the time, nobody could afford anything like that. They put whatever they had together and they made things happen for us. Since then, my brother and I have been working tirelessly for the past 18, 19-some-odd years that I can remember. And he's a couple years older than I am, so he's actually put in way more time than I have. Working some days, some nights, working shift work, 16, 18 hours a night just to put food on the table, just to pay off some of those loans. And we haven't still to this day paid off those loans in complete.

Sacrificing time with my parents, sacrificing time with our families, we're out there working literally seven days a week at times. On the seventh day, on a Sunday—if I'm lucky to have that day off—I'm out there still. I spend maybe three or four hours with my kids until they go to bed. After that, I head out again just to make enough money, just to support their extracurricular activities.

I'm all in favour of any kind of ride-sharing that you guys are proposing. I'm not against that, not biased to that. But what happens—what happens to our investments? These are my parents' investments, right? Like, I mean, they have nothing to look forward to. They've worked themselves sick, literally. Like, my mom's on dialysis three nights a week. She's worked well into—past 65. She shouldn't have to do that. If this was the case—I mean, you know what? Just take the medallion. None of us need it. Pay off all these medallions for us—heck, I'll drive Uber on my day off. Why not? I'm all for it.

But what happens to these investments? People are going to hang themselves, you guys. Like, I'm not even kidding you, here. Okay? You take away something like—one of the chairpersons here said, like, you literally put a driveway—like, a through-road into your driveway. How are you going to get out of your house in the mornings? What do I tell my kids? This is supposed to be their education fund that my parents put out their whole life for. What do I tell them? Oh, you guys can't go to university. Daddy's only working nine to five; I'm sorry, but, you know what, college may be a year. If you're lucky, that's all you're going to get out of this? What do I tell them?

What do I tell my parents that I'm supposed to be looking after now in their golden years? When they can't even—basically, they can't even afford their medical expenses at this time right now.

I'll open the floor for questions, if you guys have. I just wanted to express my thoughts; that's all.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Bedi.

Do we have any—honourable Mr. Wharton.

**Mr. Wharton:** Thank you, Mr. Bedi, for sharing your very passionate story about your mom and dad and your brother and yourself being involved in the business. I can relate totally. We have a family business, and we had a family business for many years, and being an entrepreneur is probably one of the most toughest jobs there is in this world we live in. But I can tell you that many of us have experienced those same challenges with refinancing mortgages and—to ensure we put food on our tables as well. And I can certainly appreciate the passion that you're speaking with today, and thank you for sharing that story with us.

I guess my question would be is that you mention in your note here, it means cancellations of all taxicab licences in the city, and we are left at the

mercy of the City of Winnipeg to make decisions on our well-being and term investments. Can you just give me a quick explanation on—or, first of all, where that information came from—your licences will be cancelled if it's transferred to the City? *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Bedi.

**Mr. Baljinder Bedi:** Sorry. My bad.

Section 10, under the Bill 30, whatever's getting proposed. I mean, from what I saw online, it clearly states under there that all taxicab licences can and will be cancelled indefinitely.

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Mr. Baljinder Bedi:** It doesn't state that anywhere there, that they cannot be cancelled? It's really up to the City. I mean, we're really left to the mercy of the City to decide as far as whatever they want to write in that, right, for the new legislation.

**Mr. Wharton:** I'd mentioned this earlier in a couple of comments that had come up about the fear that has been created by the NDP opposition, and I can tell you that the existing licences issued by the Taxicab Board will be—continue to be valid in the city of Winnipeg. So, essentially, when the new regime is transferred from the Province to the City of Winnipeg, those licences will be transferred with it. Those cabs will continue to roll under the City of Winnipeg's regime.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Bedi, did you have a response to that?

**Mr. Baljinder Bedi:** Fair enough.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay.

**Mr. Kinew:** Thanks for sharing the story about your parents and your kids. I think, you know, a lot of us as parents can relate to the challenge that you're facing about your kids' future and the uncertainty with all that.

I think that what you're getting at is the impact that this government's decision to move forward in this way is having on the value of the investment that your family has made. Is that accurate? Because regardless of, you know, certain lines that the minister might want to quibble with you over, the bottom line is that these investments have lost hundreds of thousands of dollars in value. And this is what's motivating you to come forward, at least as far as I heard from your statements.

And, you know, I think it would be reasonable for anybody to expect that if a business or an asset that they held suddenly lost hundreds of thousands of dollars in value because of a decision made by a government, that it's reasonable that people would come to voice their concerns. And, you know, I think it's a testament to our democracy that you have the ability to voice those concerns, but I would hope that the concerns, when you're bringing them forward, are taken seriously by people.

I do have a question—has to do with the transferability of licences. My read of the bill, as currently structured, is that it would be up to the City of Winnipeg to decide whether or not new licences that they issue could be transferred by people who buy those licences from the City. They may have to be given back to the City instead of resold on a secondary market.

If that were the case, if there's not the ability to resell new licences as issued by the City, can you explain what would that mean in terms of such a licence being an investment or not? Like, would that still be an option?

\* (22:50)

**Mr. Baljinder Bedi:** If all those licences were handed over back to the City—I mean, it was really up to them to distribute whichever way they felt that it was necessary to supply those licences out.

Me, personally—you know what, like I said, if our investments aren't looked after—we're not looking for a profit. Me, personally, everything that we've already invested, I'm not looking at time here or anything, just cash-value wise, if that could be paid out, heck, I will gladly drive Uber. Like I said, I have no issues with any third-party ride-sharing apps or anything coming through, but if it was up to the city to be fair, if you have to write a law, make sure it's fair all alongside everybody. If you're going to hand out those licences, those medallions to people, fine. That's fine. What happens to those out there that have invested so much into it prior to—why not have this level playing field?

I sympathize with this guy back here, my—our previous speaker. Honestly, like, there are people literally out there that they're counting on this as their medallion, as their long-term investment into retirement.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation tonight, Mr. Bedi, but our time is—on this question is out. We want to thank you for your presentation.

We will now move on to presenter No. 37, Manjinder Ghuman. Presenter No. 37?

Mr. Ghuman, you—if you don't have a written presentation for us, you may proceed with your presentation as soon as you are ready.

**Mr. Manjinder Ghuman (Private Citizen):** Good evening to everybody in this hall.

I'm Manjinder Ghuman, one of the owner and operators—shareholder in the Duffy's company. I am in Winnipeg from the last 14 years—I came in 2001.

And I'm the agriculture professional, but I didn't get any job in this, although they have recognised my degree equivalent to the graduates here. But I didn't get any job. Wherever I went, age factor was the main hindrance in my means of getting the job. So, at the end I started this profession.

I invested everything what so I have brought from my country here, I invested in this means, taxi business. And I'm, means, helping my kids, they go to that university; my parents, old-age parents—near about 87, my dad, and 85, my mom. They are handicapped. I look after them, and this profession helps me to look after them properly.

And when I listen about the Bill 30, I am frustrated on from that because it will affect my—this profession directly or indirectly. As—means, we invested in what we have earned, from my country I brought, that is invested in it. But with this bill, everything will go zero.

Because if we calculate everything, we have to pay the mortgage which I got on my, means, the house for the—this business. I have to pay that one. I have to pay the fees of my kids, because this year the fees are also raised—tuition fees are raised. So I need an extra amount for that one. I have to look after my parents for their medicines, for their needs. So, if this bill is passed I cannot fulfill all those things. So I have to be bankrupted it means.

When the income is less—pay the mortgage; I can't to pay that one. The expenses on the—this business: insurance—1,000, almost, insurance of one month; I can't pay that one. Dispatch fees; I can't pay that one. That is, means, near about 900 per month. It means total expenses I need for one month is near about 3,000 for the—only for this business except my mortgage and other things. So I totally need your help to stop that bill so that we can keep our business running in the street.

Because as we think and it is a reality that Canada is the No. 1 country in the world because they respect the rule of law. But, according to this bill, we are barred from that rule of law. We cannot get any benefit from that bill because we can't compensate from that one. That is the main thing, that what I found is a bundle of lies. When we respect all the rules, all the laws, all the law in the, means, throughout the world. It is famous for that one, but here we think that is partiality with us.

For our community you can say, because mostly the Punjabi community or the Indian community is in this business, so we think that—I think, not we think, I think that it is partiality with us.

So I request that keep in mind when you pass this bill. Please think about us. That's it.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Ghuman.

**Mr. Maloway:** Well, thank you for your presentation. It was excellent. And the fact of the matter is, when the government first introduced this bill, we went to the briefings. We went through the bill and we saw what they were concerned about. You know, when government's looking to do what they are trying to do, basically offload you off to the City so the City will do the dirty work, they were careful to put a section 10 in this bill.

We couldn't believe that they would do that, but they did it. And the fact of the matter is that, you know, it's common that we have expropriation based on appraised value. You know, these are Conservatives. They believe in this stuff. They believe in property rights, that if you take somebody's property you compensate. That's why I can't believe they can just sit here. I'm sure that some of them are turning already and are going to be supporters of yours tomorrow in their caucus meeting, because I'm sure they don't agree with what's in this bill.

And, I mean, what I'm getting from you and other people is that we have to go along with being shovelled off to the city, well, fine; we'll end up doing it, but we want to be compensated. And the fact of the matter is, in Australia, every state jurisdiction is compensating—every one—*[interjection]*—well, Canada and Australia, you know—well, anyway there are some similarities there, but they are regulating taxis based on the state jurisdictions, and it's Victoria State that's providing the most compensation of \$100,00 per cab licence.

We're not saying you just write a cheque for \$100,000. We're saying it's going to be expropriation based on appraised value, so somebody will get \$100,000 and somebody will get more. You will have to prove your loss. That's all I think we're asking the government to do.

So, you know, withdraw the bill; that's what they should do tomorrow. Withdraw the bill and do some consultation and think about this for a while and, if you want to bring it back in, then bring it back in, but don't put section No. 10 in the bill. Allow for proper compensation. Like, what could be wrong with that? I ask the government members: What could be wrong with that?

**An Honourable Member:** A billion dollars.

**Mr. Maloway:** Oh, so now it's a money issue, so it's going to add to the deficit, evidently, if they have to compensate.

**Mr. Ghuman:** You are right that when any business is affected by the policies of the government, they compensate. Why are we not? Answer the question.

**Mr. Wharton:** And thank you, Mr. Ghuman, for your presentation. Again, there's a common theme tonight, and it's very interesting to hear all the stories and the personal stories that go along with it and, again, we're putting a lot of onus on a licence that's going to be transferred from the Province to the City of Winnipeg. So, in essence, the cab—the meter still is going to be running with the City of Winnipeg.

But, further to that, though, I think we're putting a little bit too much onus on that. Being an entrepreneur myself, and I know that the value of a business that we built, my family and I for years, the value is you and each and every one of your colleagues. You are the value of that licence, each and every one of you. You bring what you bring to your cab every day, and the services that you provide and the safety that you provide for Winnipeggers and Manitobans is exactly what you do, and you guys do a fabulous job at it.

Let's not lose focus on who and where the value comes from. It's driven from each and every one of you because you guys are the ones that are putting yourselves out there every single day, and for that I thank you, sir.

**Mr. Ghuman:** Thank you for your comments. It means—I appreciate your words. That's why we are saying that keep in mind when you're transferring our taxi board to the City. Keep in mind that we are

totally dependent. It's our full-time job, so keep in mind everything. Thank you.

\* (23:00)

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Ghuman.

We will now move on to presenter No. 38, Andrez Singh Brar. Presenter No. 38? Andrez Singh Brar?

Seeing's that Mr. Brar is not here, we will move him to the bottom of the list.

And we will move on to presenter No. 39, Zeweldi Beyene. Zeweldi Beyene?

Seeing's presenter No. 39 is not present, we will move that presenter to the bottom of the list, and move on to presenter No. 40, Jagtar Sidhu. Jagtar Sidhu?

Mr. Sidhu is not present, we will move him to the bottom of the list.

Presenter No. 41, Manjit Sidhu. Presenter No. 41 is not present. We will move him to bottom of the list.

Presenter No. 42, Sukhwinder Khosa.

Mr. Khosa, do you have a written presentation or just verbal?

**Mr. Sukhwinder Khosa (Private Citizen):** Verbal, so I'll read it.

**Mr. Chairperson:** You may proceed whenever you're ready, Mr. Khosa.

**Mr. Khosa:** Thank you for—everyone—evening. And we're talking about the taxi industry.

I came here in 1986. In Winnipeg, I start taxi board in 1987—since I was 22 years old. We work hard. We bought the share from the Taxicab Board. We were Taxicab Board selling the price. They know at home—at the price that time, even before that, since maybe '70-71, they're selling the price too. That government knows that—how much the value of that time going, of the price, because they're smart. Price was not under the table or under the ground. Nobody know it. They know it. The government know it.

And what do we need talking—like, Bill 30—we're proposing to stop this kind of bill, because this bill totally threatening to the taxi industry, because of Manitoba government transfer this taxi industry from Manitoba government to the City of Winnipeg.

What is the guarantee we can save—bill with their—our investment? First thing off, because that's—everything going away under way Manitoba Taxicab Board; they know it, what kind of the value—that time we bought the loan, home and the mortgage, because my two kids, they're going to university too.

We need to pay them—like, food and the living too. If we will lose our jobs—according to Manitoba government, they say no, we don't doing nothing. That's why we're going to City of Winnipeg; you still will be safe.

What kind of a guarantee we will be safe there? First thing, will we save our value there? Or will the cost of that—what we're paying to the value, how much we paid them, get the loan from the bank, second mortgage from the bank on the house. How we can afford it? Like—these can happen when they're going on.

And, if this bill coming out, that's—our price value will be totally going down even when we're working. I, myself, working and my friends all working taxi drivers, who's the owner or the driver, whatever, they working 11 to 12 hours maximum every day—not only five days or four days, they six to seven all year round. We don't have any benefits. Even if you can calculate how much we make in one hourly rate, not even going to minimum wages too. If we work eight hours, we can't survive. How much we pay the car insurance—10 to 11 thousand dollars car insurance per year. Plus, we have the dispatch fees—closer to \$11,000. Plus, our car value, which you're buying about 32, 33 thousand dollars—mostly going to four to five year maximum, maybe before that. Who will we—how we can cover the kinds of expenses, if a driver or owner can make 150 to 200 dollars a day?

How we can make it—a payment if they're, like, talking about more taxis? If there're more taxis coming, by counting the population how much will we need it? That's what we agreed, that time. If we're talking about Uber or Lyft, net—throughway company, they can call. But those kinds of job only part-time job—not by the regular job. We working—I working for at least 29 years for taxi industry, serving in Winnipeg. Day two, on when it started. We don't have any holidays. We don't have any paid day. We don't have any overtime. How we survive? Work more hours. At least one year around 35 to 40 year—a \$40,000 expense for one taxi. How much that can make in a day?

That's my request for myself. We need save. And out of—what should we save? Like, how much we spend the money on the car, because that's our pension. That's our benefit. That's what we spend to get the loan, then pay then—when we're buying the taxi from their government, then if we put value to zero. The taxi board say why they put value zero. They don't know value zero. They mention what kind of price that don't go. They go with that's the taxpayer money. We pay by tax. Plus no money problem, MNP like that five, six years back, government make a whole investment in the taxi industry. They can get immigration here. What is wrong for the people that spend the money here to—why they can go *[inaudible]* Because we thought we came here for good future in Canada. Why we live in cold weather here? Because we can go on—good benefit, we working hard. We survive here. If we were making deals here, we can move on—all other—anywhere else, too.

So my request from all the other owners, all issue the same for everyone. If Uber will be coming here, they should be same rule and regulation for everyone. Not like for only one pay car, where they pay 10 to 11 *[interjection]* twelve to fifteen hundred on insurance per year. If—they're *[inaudible]* car. They don't have like 100 to 200 to 500. And *[inaudible]* Part-time job. If anybody need, they can come now. Two hours, four hours. Cherry-pick. They can pick a nice *[inaudible]* After that, they can go out. And also, we're fixed by the government. We don't charging any extra 1 cent, 2 because whatever slow or busy or slippery or what kind of weather, we have to work.

If Uber really come here like any—Lyft—any other cab Internet—not under rule and regulation. If cab driver or taxi industry not making for living wage, so—how we can live on the road? How we can pay the insurance? One day, we can bankrupt or—all the way. Maybe on the welfare. Nobody know it.

So, if they were never making good money, like, for the living wage, how the cab driver can survive? How they can keep car on the road, pay expenses, keep run every day?

So that's my opinion. There should be safety, camera. Who will coming? We don't want to say they no come, but they should be follow rule and regulation and the meter check. Everything safety. If the same for everyone, we will agree. But if they don't, no we don't agree because we need to spend the money. We passed Bill 30 from provincial

government to the City of Winnipeg, what kind of safety when we going from here to there? Can—anybody can promise to us?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Are you done with your presentation?

**Mr. Khosa:** Yes.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much for your presentation, Mr. Khosa.

**Ms. Clarke:** Thank you again for your presentation here tonight. It's much appreciated.

It seems a lot of this is focused around—and our previous speaker referred to them as medallions. That's the first time I've heard that term. Because we're talking—'licenceses'—it keeps getting referred to. But there is the actual regulation licence that you have to have to operate, which is done through the Taxicab Board. However, we're also hearing licences, but now they're referred to as medallions. And I have a lot of questions around that because it—who are you buying these medallions from? You're not buying them from the government, you're obviously buying them from individuals. And who decides what they're worth? What is a medallion worth? I'm hearing from almost everybody here you've got literally hundreds of thousands of dollars invested so that you can have this work within this industry. And you are, I would say, a family working together.

\* (23:10)

That is a good thing. But I'm sure you can't borrow money from the bank to buy a medallion, because where's the collateral? You know, so I don't understand that.

And the percentage—this money that is collected for these medallions, none of this money goes to the government. This is for the industry, I'm sure. So I guess it begs me to ask, how much money within this industry is actually invested in the medallions? It has to be millions of dollars, because there are many people here that have indicated that they have invested literally hundreds of thousands of dollars. We're talking big money.

And I understand your concern, because you have invested. But you have not invested in the government; you've invested in your own industry, and that's a good thing, but I don't see how that becomes a government problem. You know, you—I would like you to explain that.

**Mr. Khosa:** Yes, why we spend the money—because we got the Manitoba government and the Taxicab Board make the rules and regulations. They know what kind of price going. They know it. That's why we spend the money.

**Ms. Clarke:** For the board to know it—and Mr. Saran has brought that forward in government many times. He said the board is aware of this. However, the money that is collected as medallions is not money paid to the government of Manitoba. Am I correct?

**Mr. Khosa:** Yes, we pay the tax on—when buying—when we get the loan from a bank, we show the income tax, and then we pay the tax, too. Why we lose our money?

You know, we paying by the capital gains, too—that time when—that time pay the money, too. Even governments tell one day before that 30 years, 40 years, why are you selling this price, \$10,000, \$20,000, \$50,000? Why not government stop that time?

**Ms. Marcelino:** I will defer to Mr. Saran.

**Mr. Saran:** Yes, I think a problem is there because the government let it—those licences made transferable. If they had been made non-transferable, then it was not their fault. Now it's the government's fault because they let them transfer one owner to the other owner and then go further. So that's, I think, the government's fault, and the owners are being punished for that, and the government say, no, we have nothing to do with that.

And I think that's where the fault is, and we must have to think about that. NDP government, PC government, all the governments let it happen. If they let it happen, they should take responsibility, and with that responsibility, they should be compensated, and they should be allowed to be compensated. Otherwise, why—in other industries, when those industries has been compensated, why these people are not being compensated? That's my question. *[interjection]*

Well, I think I was supposed to ask a question to Khosa, but I'm throwing it back to the minister.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Khosa, did you have a response to that?

**Mr. Khosa:** That's my question. Like, we need, from the government—keep our industry safe, how we can keep it. If they like to destroy the company, that's in their hands. Because if not making money, so how we can keep cars on the road, people can't get to

work on that night? If we do not making money, \$30 in a night, why I work tonight? Better then to go on welfare, then.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We'd like to thank you for your presentation, Mr. Khosa, but we are well over our allotted time for questions, so we thank you and we will move on to the next presenter. Thank you.

We will now move on to presenter No. 43, Khushwant Brar. Khushwant Brar?

**Floor Comment:** He's not here.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Brar is not here, so his name will go to the bottom of the list.

We will move on to presenter No. 44, Sasan Riyaj.

**Floor Comment:** Riyazi.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Riyazi? Sasan Riyazi?

He is not here. Mr. Riyazi's name will go to the bottom of the list.

And we will move on to presenter No. 45, Jastal Bedi.

Mr. Bedi, do you have any written presentation for us?

**Mr. Jastal Bedi (Private Citizen):** Yes, I do.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We will have that distributed, and you may proceed with your presentation as soon as you are ready.

**Mr. Jastal Bedi:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hello, everyone. My name is Jastal Bedi. I have been in the taxi industry for the past 20 years. I have a family with seven members. I have three beautiful children, twin daughters that are 10 years old and a three-year-old son. My wife and I also look after our elderly parents who are in their mid-70s, who live with us in our house.

My taxi does not just provide me income for myself; it provides a life standard for all the seven members of my family. I work long hours in a very challenging environment, but I am able to pay for my daughters' swimming lessons, bring food on my family table and pay for my elderly parents' medications. I am able to make ends meet with what I make from driving my taxi so far.

The Province is pushing Bill 30 through the Legislature. There was no consultation with the industry. Bill 30 does more than just transfer



jurisdiction to the City. It takes away our legal rights. We have major concerns about this legislation, especially how it prohibits us to any compensation or legal action against the Province.

Taxis are community-based small business, run by local people that have invested their life savings, even mortgaging their houses to make livelihoods for their families. Without any amendment, this bill will destroy their investments. The taxi industry has 1,600 full-time jobs. The legislation is aimed at paving the way for Internet taxi, like Uber, a multibillion-dollar corporation that will eliminate full-time jobs and take the profits out of our community.

The legislation is being rushed forward. We need to think carefully about how ride sharing is going to be implemented. We need fairness for the families that invested in these small businesses and a level playing field for everyone wanting to operate a taxi or ride-share vehicle.

Every taxi is also a small business with an owner and a driver and their family that relies on that business. These families have invested in a licence to operate a taxi. As we talk about ride-sharing legislation, we need to remember that ability of families to put food on the table, send kids to swimming lessons and pay for the mortgage is riding on our decision. It is not fair to have the Province requires us to buy licences, become a small business and then pull the rug out from under our families.

We understand that ride sharing is going to happen, but there are serious concerns that need to be addressed. Everyone who has invested in a licence to operate a cab should be compensated if the Province is going to dissolve the industry that we have invested in. All the ride-sharing drivers should have to undergo the same safety training and pay the same insurance.

I can't stress enough the hazard our industry faces on a daily basis: racism, accidents, robberies and assaults. But there's one thing very unique about our industry in Winnipeg, an industry where taxi driving is one of the most unsafe occupations in North America. Here in Winnipeg we have the distinction of having one of the safest taxi industries. Now, this didn't just happen. It was a direct result of the aftermath of the terrible murder of Mr. Pritam Deol in 2001. Mr. Deol in 2001.

\* (23:20)

Mr. Deol was a hard-working taxi driver who had only been driving for three months. He was brutally murdered. Out of this terrible tragedy came a recognition of just how much risk there was in the taxi industry.

The Province brought in shields, cameras and training that immediately reduced assault by 79 per cent. Most importantly, there has not been a single murder of a taxi driver in Winnipeg since.

We believe it is important to maintain the highest level of safety protection with shields, cameras and training. I would note our full support for the current intensive scrutiny placed on the drivers; that includes English language proficiency, passing a criminal record check from Winnipeg police, and Child Abuse Registry check.

In jurisdictions around the world, there are huge problems with Uber refusing to follow the same rigorous standards in terms of screening and training. I can make one thing clear today: Our industry is going to fight to protect not only our own interests but the interests of Winnipeggers.

What you're ramming through the City will result in reduced safety, less service for people in areas in our city and an outflow of profits from our community.

You will also wipe out the investments and livelihoods of hundreds of Winnipeg families. The vast majority of people in our industry are proud new Canadians. Many of us came to this country with a dream of building a better future for our families.

We worked hard for many years and, in many cases, invested our life savings into this industry. Many of us have mortgaged our homes to make a livelihood for our families. You are putting all of that at risk.

As a result of what you are ramming through, people will go bankrupt. Families will be unable to support their children's educations. We deserve better. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Bedi.

**Ms. Marcelino:** Thank you, Mr. Bedi. You have provided us very substantial, logical hard facts about your industry.

When you said, here in Winnipeg we have the distinction of having one of the safest taxi industries—as I was mentioning earlier, on three

occasions, I took Uber, primarily to get to know what this industry is all about. So I kept asking questions from the drivers. First I've asked the questions: What kind of insurance do you carry? What kind of compensation you're enjoying? And also—what kind of safety training have you undergone?

And the driver told me they only had to have this smartphone go to an office for 30 minutes. They get to know—they're trained how to use the app and then they're on their own. For them, it's not—for that guy, it's not a full time because he won't make enough money to be able to—it's not a decent pay that he's getting.

So here we are. Uber and ride-sharing and the regulated taxi industry with very strict rules and requirements, insurance and all that. I noticed, too, that the taxi—the Uber, they come with whatever kind of vehicle—could be big, could be small. And safety, security, they don't have cameras. So us passengers, we're not—we can't be very safe with them, with an Uber unless they'll be regulated to come up with the standards that is being required of the regular taxi industry. And also, they don't have the training that you have undergone, so we will be at a disadvantage as passengers. And you are right, the profits will go elsewhere, not just locally. It's a billion dollar industry and Uber is so huge. So there's so many questions here and you've pointed them out so succinctly, so thank you very much.

**Mr. Jastal Bedi:** Yes, you wanted to know about what kind of insurance we have. A lot of our previous speakers have spoken that we pay over \$10,000 worth of insurance on our taxi every year. There's an old saying, you get what you paid for. Okay. We pay over \$10,000, if you're in our taxis, you are covered for everything up to \$6 million. Anything. You're involved in an accident, you're covered for your physio, your chiropractor, all around, no matter what happens. So, if Uber is bringing in—coming into the city, paying \$2,500 insurance for a year, what do you think you're going to get for \$2,500? What is out there that we're paying \$10,000, how come they won't match that to protect the public?

Uber is saying they are going to be part times. Okay, I'm going to give you prime—little example. If those Uber vehicles are out there, in front of bars, getting hailed for a cab, right, for a ride, somebody jumps in that vehicle, they're not covered for insurance at that time because they did not take a trip from their so-called dispatch or right from the

Internet. So the public is not safe. If somebody gets into an accident while they pick that person up off the street from a bar, they get into an accident, somebody dies or injury—hospital will take the bill to fix them for that night, but then they're on their own for physio, chiropractor, and everything else. And who takes the bill for all of that? The taxpayers. Uber won't pay for that. It has happened in other jurisdictions. In Toronto, it happened lots. Other cities like, other places like London right, Quebec, why are they opposing them? Because they, you know, they don't follow the same rules. There are so many gaps that, you know, they go through to cut, make it less so they, you know, they can come into the market so they don't have to pay the same licence fees, they don't have to pay for all the same insurance. So sure, they can give cheaper rides to people, no problem. That'll be for the first year or so. But at nighttime, they're going to have, you know, Uber—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Bedi, if you could kind of wrap it up because we are well over our time allotment.

**Mr. Jastal Bedi:** They will charge—at nighttime, their pricing is different. Sometimes it doubles and triples. On New Years' Eve, somebody had paid \$1,600 for a ride that should have been \$30 in Edmonton. I'm sure a lot of people have heard of that. There's, you know, every taxi ride is regulated, we are heavily regulated, we ask for the same if they're going to come in. Same work, same rules.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Bedi. Seeing's time—your allotted time is over, we thank you very much for your presentation.

We will now go to presenter No. 46, Gurpal Sodhi. Gurpal Sodhi?

Seeing as Mr. Sodhi is not here, he will be moved to the bottom of the list.

We will now move to presenter No. 47, Kulwant Muhar. Kulwant Muhar?

Mr. Muhar do you have written presentation for us?

**Mr. Kulwant Muhar (Private Citizen):** No, Sir.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Then you may proceed with your presentation as soon as you are ready.

**Mr. Muhar:** Okay, I am ready. I am Kulwant Muhar. I've been driving over 30 years. When I came here, I came with a lot of hopes. But my hopes has

been prosperous so far, but now I think they've been ruined.

I love Canada. It is a good country. Is a—Winnipeg is a good city. I raise my three kids. I sent them to university. They passed university with good marks. I've been keeping promises. At home, I try to be a politician. Politics is a good profession. They made good promises, very, very good promises. They go in churches, they go to mosques, they go to everywhere they find some votes.

\* (23:30)

When they go to get some votes, they make so much promises. The same thing do at my home. At home, I play politics. I told my kids, I made so many promises: we will do this thing, we will do this thing. My kids been asking me, Dad, let us go trips, let us go somewhere else, let us go on holiday, let us go to, say, what's called 'Sidneyland'. I've been making promises with them since last 15 years. But this year I had to break that promise because of this, because the taxi is my all savings. This is my retirement saving. In a couple of years, I was supposed to be retired, to have some fun. I like to sit on the beach. I like to go on a cruise. But I can't because I have no money.

I've been working since—I never, ever had—went on compensation, never on UIC, never on sickness. Even I am sick, I took medicine, I go to work. I have to work. I have to send my kids to university, had to pay the tuition fees. It's too much. Think about it.

On—I'm talking about now safety. I tell you a story. About 15 years ago, I was sitting in front of the Westbrook Hotel, the five ladies came and sit in my backseat. I told them, sorry, I can't take more than five people. When I turned around, one of the ladies punched me. I was knocked out. When I woke up, I was bleeding; my shirt was full of blood. I went home, I was crying. What I did wrong? I didn't say anything. My wife said, what happened? I lied. I said, I slipped on ice.

In the morning, my kids woke up, they said, Dad, what happened? I told them, I have slipped. If I would tell them story the truth, they won't let me drive. If I won't drive, they won't go to university. I'm talking about the safety.

Since the shields came, there's less chances, there are less of fights, but if the Uber came, who will drive the Uber. Only the human beings going to drive the Uber. They are also my fellows; they could be killed, too. On the other hand, who's going to hire

the Uber? Young kids. Old fellows, they're going to— if there's no cameras, if there's no shield, there's going to be more sexual harassment; there's going to be more robberies. In the nighttime, when we drive, there are a lot of drug dealers. They can come to us, they said let us have a flat rate, run for us for four hours, they go door to door to deliver drugs. If there are cameras, they don't do that. If the Uber came, there are going to be more, more, more crimes. Think about it.

And I have to work hard. I work almost seven days a week. All my fellows said, how come you work so hard? But I can't afford. Luckily, I bought the house when that—when there was cheaper. If the taxicab broke, I won't be able to pay the property tax. I won't be able to pay the taxes. I have to go—I have to sell my house to go to an apartment building.

I tell you one thing I'm requesting to you. Tonight, or tomorrow night, all of you guys, please, listen to me, after your dinner, sit down your table, talk to your husbands or your wives or with your kids, tell them, honey, I lost my job, I lost my savings, the bank will take our house, we have to move in an apartment building. Then you woke up on the morning, let me know, tomorrow morning, if your family sleep all night or not. This thing is happening to me every night.

When I came here, I had thick hair, curly hair. Now, I am bald. Why? It's stressful. Taxi driving is a very, very stressful job. But who's going to do it? Somebody's supposed to do it.

So, before passing this Bill 30, think about that, please. That's all I have to say.

Any questions, please?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you for your presentation, Mr. Muhar.

**Mrs. Mayer:** Thank you very much, Mr. Muhar, for telling us your story. I appreciate your words and I appreciate you sharing your story with us.

Could you explain the medallion system to me? And where to do you purchase medallions? Or how does that work? Can you explain the system to me? *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Muhar, before you answer, you have to wait until I recognize you, so the—they can pick it up on Hansard.

**Mr. Muhar:** Yes, please.

I don't understand, sorry, your question, medallion. I don't understand term medallion.

**Mrs. Mayer:** So I've heard tonight discussion about the medallion system that you operate, and if you, maybe you don't have that answer, one of the other speakers—I didn't get the opportunity to ask—*[interjection]* No, it's fine.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order. Order.

**Mr. Muhar:** What kind of licence are you talking about, like the business licence or taxi licence?

**Mrs. Mayer:** That's what I'm trying to understand. But that's fine. You know what, I can ask another driver. That's okay. Sorry.

**Mr. Isleifson:** Mr. Muhar, thank you for coming and sharing your view and your story. It certainly allows us to look a little deeper into what we're looking at in regards to Bill 30.

I just noticed here, and I want to give you an opportunity, because MNP conducted an extensive consultation with taxicab drivers, the owners, dispatch companies, members of the public and so on. They received more than 10,000 submissions. A total of 675 drivers and owners were involved. But I'm not sure if you were involved in that process yourself.

So I want to ask you a question, because it looks like in the city of Winnipeg they have one taxi per 1,555 people. So part of the report from MNP clearly states that the current supply of taxicabs in the city of Winnipeg is insufficient to meet the existing demands. So, in your words, how do we fix that problem?

**Mr. Muhar:** I think there are a lot of cabs. You guys are comparing of in other cities. And in other cities, the people have to go to work very, very far. That's why there are more—need more cabs. On other hand, a lot of tourists come. They need more taxis. But here, what we can show to the tourist, only the museum? What we can show to them? What is interesting here, only a casino? Where we will take the customer? When we came with—passengers come from the airport, what is the interesting place here? What will we say? The casino, go and spend your money. What's that?

There are a lot of cabs. We have to sit almost three hours, sometimes four hours at the airport to get customers. I know sometimes it's busy when it is the welfare day, when it is the child family day, or a pension day. There are a lot of cabs. If you need

more cabs, you should give to the Taxicab Board, they can issue more licences. Why do you spend more money on Ubers? Uber, they won't go to a laundromat. They won't go to pick up the dirty people, like, I mean, who are injured, who are bleeding. Or sometimes, the four or five bouncers, they come out and they throw the drunk people in the cab. They won't pick like that. Even that's—we are sacrificing. We pick them up, drop them at a safe place. Sometime they don't know where they go. We—still we have to wait in front of the door until they get home, until they get inside.

That's all I have to say. Any questions?

**Mr. Saran:** I think I have two questions, but maybe I will be able to ask only one question.

Okay, I think this government is making it very complicated when it's very easy. Why can't we become a leader as compared to a follower? When I say that, because if other provinces have—every city have a jurisdiction, why Manitoba cannot have the Manitoba taxi board cover all the cities, because Winnipeg has 68 per cent, somebody said, population. So instead of making that complicated and just have—cover everything with the taxi board, what do you think about that? *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Muhar, you have to wait until I recognize you, and the time for questions is actually over, but I'll allow you a brief answer.

**Mr. Muhar:** I'm agree with Mr. Saran. Yes, the taxi board was working a very good job. You should not break that board.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank you for your—

\* (23:40)

**Mr. Muhar:** That's my solid, solid, solid request to you, please. Think about it. It's not only me; there are so many people, not just taxi drivers. There are a lot of industry behind—grocery stores. A lot of—another thing, restaurants, Indian restaurants, not only Indian—everybody. You go to good restaurants—how many times do you see a taxi driver eating in a restaurant? We don't. We can't afford. We can't go to the bars, even the weekends—sorry.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Muhar, we want to thank you very much for your presentation, but we're well over our time limit.

We thank you for your presentation, but we will be moving on to the next presenter.

We will now move on to presenter No. 48, Karnail Dhillon. Karnail Dhillon.

Is Mr. Dhillon present, presenter No. 48? Seeing as Mr. Dhillon is not present, we will move that presenter to the bottom of the list.

And we'll move on to presenter No. 49, Jasvir Gill. Jasvir Gill.

Is Jasvir Gill here? Seeing as Mr. Gill is not here, we will move Mr. Gill to the bottom of the list.

And we'll move on to presenter No. 50, Kuldip Bhullar–Bhullar.

Mr. Bhullar, you don't have a written presentation for us. You may proceed whenever you are ready. Thank you.

**Mr. Kuldip Bhullar (Private Citizen):** Thanks very much. First, I would like to answer the question that has been asked to previous two—or two of the presenters. The reason for Winnipeg's not having as many cabs as other cities have is our demographic. Winnipeg is a very small city. Look at our downtown, how small our downtown is. So, if you have a small city, you don't need very many cabs to cover the entire city.

And we've been doing—and then another question that no new cabs were added to Winnipeg taxi fleet. That's also a very big misconception. Unicity and Duffy's, both the companies, used to do Handi-Transit. Anywhere between 80 to 100 cabs were busy with doing just Handi. They were not doing regular cab business. As the regular cab business grew, Duffy's and Unicity, we started taking our cabs out of the Handi-Transit business and started giving them regular cab business. So those 80 or 100 cabs are now doing regular cab business. So had we not quit doing Handi, we would have asked for more cabs, said, okay, we have more business, we do need more cabs. No, we preferred quitting the Handi business. That's why Dignity is here, so you see Dignity cabs all over the city.

Now, a little bit more Uber-bashing—yes, see, why are we letting in a company that considers its employees its biggest liability, its drivers. They're waiting for the day when every single car is fully autonomous, then they don't have to pay a penny to the driver because they don't need drivers. Then all the money goes to them.

So then I would say, if we have—we are having the meeting that day, I'd have—if I'm still around, I would ask you guys, okay, those Uber drivers will be

here saying the same things: okay, do something for us; they're firing us; they don't need us anymore. The day would come, who knows when?

But Winnipeg is a unique city. And for our—and it has unique problems. So for our unique city, we need unique—our tailor-made, custom-made solutions, not what the other cities are doing. Maybe it works for them; well, it won't work for us.

And then, some of the taxicab representatives talked to the MPI about the—our paying a much higher premium than Uber's. So the reason that what the MPI said that—because Uber is on the road maybe a couple of hours a day, how do you know? When San Francisco and New York wanted the data from Uber, Uber did not give them any data. They took too long. The Uber had to be fined \$2 million. And I don't know if they still disclosed it to the city or the governing authority. So they defy and deceive the governing or regulatory authorities every which way they can.

They have a program; they call it Greyball. When the authorities started calling in for cabs so they can monitor them, that what's going on, they developed that software. And now that software can detect that this call is coming from the authorities. So the system does not dispatch a cab there. So they—that's how they're treating, like, New York and San Francisco. And we are Winnipeg; we are way too small.

If Uber is—when I have to start my day, my shift, 3 or 6 in the morning, the night before I go to bed at a certain time, I take seven, eight hours of sleep and when I start, I'm psyched up for the job. I know that I will be driving eight or 10 or 12 hours a day. But Uber says, okay, drive when you want. No, you are not psyched up for the job. You were sitting home, as an Uber driver, he was sitting home and he finds out, oh, it's busy there, let's go and work. No, he's not—he wasn't psyched up for the job. It will cause problems, unforeseen problems that maybe even those cities that—where Uber has established, even they don't know that what problems they are going through. There are going to be mental problems. There are going to be more accidents.

And then any time—or not any time—like, there had been cases where an Uber driver got into an accident and he was coached by the—by Uber that when you go to your insurance company, don't tell them that you were using your car as an Uber taxi; they might deny your claim. Do we want that kind of dishonesty? And who will be paying for those, like,

influx of accidents? The general pool. Our insurance will go up, my private car insurance will go up. I want the taxicab insurance to be included in the general pool so that we don't have to pay 10 or 11 thousand dollars.

As cab drivers, we have that Knowles Centre on Henderson Highway, we have Macdonald Youth Services, so we get underage kids from those, like, as our customers. There's a perceived trust. They know that that every single cab driver has proper, gone through proper checks, he has a Child Abuse Registry clearance, he has police clearance, you know. So all of—that's why they don't even worry, they don't even think twice before calling a cab. They call a cab and they know that cab is going to come, and the child will be given a safe ride. I have had so many male customers, like fathers or, say, brothers, they tell that they will never call Uber for their female family members. Maybe they will take it for themselves, but not for their female family members.

And the camera, as we have the camera, the camera is not just for the safety of the driver, no, no. I won't be partial or biased, though, there have been cases in Winnipeg where, unfortunately, black sheep in every business, the cab driver was at fault. The camera and—is more for the safety of the passenger. When I know that, okay, I have a camera, it's recording everything, if I do anything of a criminal nature or anything improper—so I will, the evidence is right there. So it gives as much safety or more safety to the fare, or to the passenger, as to the driver.

I got, about five months ago, I got hit in the head and I had a, what they call it, a subdural hematoma. There was blood in my left brain, so I had to go for brain surgery. But, unfortunately, there was no footage there. They could not catch the criminal.

And a little bit about my family, like, I've been living here for 25 years and I've been driving since '99; that's when Winnipeg held the Pan Am Games. I have three Winnipeg-born daughters. My oldest daughter got into medicine this year, a certified piano teacher and was the valedictorian in her grade 12. My middle daughter, an athlete, runs the Manitoba Marathon, basketball coach and plays guitar. And both my older daughters, they are both in third year of university at the U of M. They both speak French. And the third daughter, she's 13. She plays basketball. In fact, her team was the city champ this year, and plays hockey, the only female playing on

an all-boys team, and learning piano and drums and a member of the Winnipeg youth choir.

\* (23:50)

I've been doing it—my wife quit her job 22 years ago. She used to work at Seven Oaks. And she spent all her time, every single second of her life taking care of the kids. And now, I don't know—you know, like, come Uber, come other things, you know, what's going to happen to their future? And then she—and the way I lived my life, surviving on one income, I could have only done in Winnipeg. I don't think, had I been living in Vancouver or Toronto, no. It's very hard, almost next to impossible.

So there are lots of things, like, need to be considered before letting in a company. Like, it's like a decision made in a haste or something. There are lots of things, like our investments, as everybody's saying and—see, we could have moved to other cities, like, there are people living here, they came to Winnipeg and they chose to live in Winnipeg. They decided to live in Winnipeg rather than moving to greener pastures like Edmonton, Calgary and all that. So it's like, now, it's like, oh yes, after 30 years, oh man, it's wrong. You know, we should have moved. You know, maybe we made a bad decision.

But—okay, and then there is another thing, like, there is some kind of stigma, like, nobody wants to be—look like a cab driver. And Uber so kind of takes care of that, because you have your car, you have your SUV, you can drive Uber, nobody will even know that you are driving a taxi.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Bhullar, your 10 minutes for presentation has expired.

We will now take questions.

**Mr. Wharton:** Thank you, Mr. Bhullar, for your presentation this evening and sharing, of course, some of the challenges and concerns that you have going forward.

I did have a question on—you had mentioned, and I've heard it tonight quite often, about contracts, and you had mentioned the one on Henderson Highway that you get called to. And I'm just wondering, how are those contracts acquired? Are they done through a particular process? Or I'm just curious on how that happens.

Coming from the private sector myself, I can value—and I value the contracts as part of being diversified in business, and I understand, of course,

you're picking up a regular fare or a contract, there's diversification there. So I'm just curious to hear that.

**Mr. Bhullar:** So you want me to elaborate on that incident? Okay.

See, they were not my customers. I was driving, it was 2:30 Saturday or Sunday morning, I was driving Henderson north and a group of I think four people—one guy, three girls—and they were passing by, they were on the boulevard. And when I passed them by, I—it appeared to me that one of them flagged me down. I slowed down and stopped. I rolled down my passenger-side front window. I asked him, buddy, do you need a cab? He got just mad. He started saying all kinds of words, you know, bad words, this and that, whatnot, and came running to me and hit me, hit me in the head. I was okay for three months, but after three months there were problems started to appear.

**Mr. Wharton:** I just wanted to clarify, and I apologize, Macdonald youth centre you had mentioned was a contract and you had a scheduled pickup there. *[interjection]*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Oh, you must—Mr. Bhullar, you have to wait until I recognize you.

**Mr. Bhullar:** Because, like, Macdonald youth centre or Knowles Centre or other facilities where there are underage kids, so they—like, when they need rides, there is nobody—no attendant with them. They're by—with themselves.

The system trusts that they're calling a safe, like, licensed, like, person or a driver who will take care of the kid, whereas an Uber driver, because he does not or—have or won't have the same kind of, like, required measures, you know. So they won't be able to—I don't know if the system or those kind of institutes will—they can trust them. And then, when—it's like when Unicity Taxi used to have a contract with CPR. We used to provide them service from Place Louis Riel to the diesel shop by McPhillips casino. And so—flat-rate ride and all that, no problem. So, gradually, they started—there was a company Hallcon urban. So they introduced their vans and they were having their own vans and they were transporting the crew.

Any time they can't get the van, okay, Unicity will be there. See, as a company, as a business, you want the bulk of—the most of their business or if all of—all of their business, not just when they could not

get their van. Okay, then, call Duffy's or Unicity. They will take care of them.

So we are there even when we are not needed, because we have to work our 12-hour shift. When we—it's not, then, okay, let's go work. Oh, it's getting busy there. I—once I have made my whatever, as an Uber driver, once I have made my 40, 50 bucks, I will go home. After that, I don't care if the public still needs me or not. I don't care, because I have made my money. I can go and buy my six-pack and watch TV, watch a movie. I will come back the next day.

No, it's like a taxi is like an essential service, like hospitals, like firefighters and all that, you have to be out there regardless of the—how—if you're needed or not, because you never know.

**Ms. Clarke:** I want to thank all of you being here tonight and for being so patient. I know that these political processes are long and perhaps frustrating. You've done an awesome job, because I know you don't get up and stand in front of a microphone all the time and—

**Floor Comment:** No, I do.

**Ms. Clarke:** Oh, you do. Well, you do it very well.

**Floor Comment:** CBC wants to interview my family—

**Ms. Clarke:** Oh, there you go. Well, that's good. You're a movie star.

But I want to thank you for your open and honest presentation tonight, as well as all the others that are here.

And I've heard many times tonight, and I'll say again, what this bill is not about Uber; however, Uber is a big issue for you, so I'm going to address it. And, you know, you have stated, you know, this one presentation, they treat people terribly, they don't create full-time jobs, they destroy jobs, they break the laws. You have given many, many reasons for your concern, and I acknowledge that.

That is also backed up by media. We read the media, we read the papers, we know that in all jurisdictions there are questions about Uber.

Don't fear it. You are stronger than that. You're better than that. You are a big organization. You have 162 people here registered here to speak. That speaks of your strength. That speaks of your industry. Trust who you are. Trust what you're doing and go out and do a good job. Because you know what, others are not going to stand a chance in this

business if you are doing a great job. And everything says you are. Go for it.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The honourable Ms. Clarke, our time limit has exceeded our five minutes. We would like to thank you for your presentation tonight.

I would like to remind all members of the committee that pursuant to our rules, a standing committee meeting to consider a bill must not sit past midnight to hear public presentations or to consider clause-by-clause of a bill except by unanimous consent of the committee.

It being 11:59, does the committee—what is the wish of the committee? Do they wish to hear another presenter, seeing as we only have about a minute, or what is the will of the committee?

**An Honourable Member:** Committee rise.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Committee rise?

The hour being 11:59:35, committee rise. Thank you.

*COMMITTEE ROSE AT: 11:59 p.m.*

### WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

Re: Bill 30

Dear Committee,

Winnipeg Airports Authority (WAA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on Bill 30: The Local Vehicles for Hire Act.

When the Taxi Cab Board was created in 1935 there was logic in creating a provincial board to govern the 13 municipal entities that geographically comprise Winnipeg today. However, with the amalgamation of these municipalities in 1972, the need for provincial oversight lessened.

Today, it is time for the responsibility for regulation and oversight of vehicles for hire to be transferred to municipalities, bringing Manitoba in line with other provinces across Canada.

The primary issue for WAA is providing a vehicle for hire system in Winnipeg that is in the best interest of customers. The system needs to ensure we have the capacity to meet demand, and we have the

quality of service that brings pride to our city and province.

WAA is pleased to see the legislation include a clause that requires municipalities to work to "create and maintain a sustainable industry that meets the needs of the travelling public." This is of utmost importance to WAA as we are the front door to our community, with over 4 million passengers travelling through the airport each year.

The challenge is Winnipeg has one taxicab for every 1,252 people. This is much lower than other comparable cities, which average one taxicab for every 860 people. As Manitoba's largest taxi stand, the airport sees the impact of this ratio every day. Trips to the airport increased by 24 per cent between 2010 and 2015, up from 645 trips a day to over 797 trips a day. That is now more trips a day to the airport than there are taxicab business licenses in Winnipeg (797 trips to 756 licenses).

Today the current system is failing to meet the needs of our customers, which is an embarrassment for our city and province. Far too often we see line-ups for people waiting for taxis when they land in Winnipeg. For many people, this is their first impression of our city. While it is understandable that a minor wait can be expected in severe weather conditions, there is no reason passengers should be waiting on the curb for half an hour for a taxi on a sunny Wednesday afternoon in September. The escalating wait times we are seeing at the airport are a direct result of the lack of current capacity in Winnipeg. WAA calls on other taxi companies to serve the airport during these shortages, however there is an insufficient supply of cabs to meet the demand. Our analysis has found that travellers at our airport experience taxi shortages 24 times per month on average.

Equally important to capacity is the quality of service for customers. Bill 30 extends the by-law authority of municipalities to establish a Vehicles for Hire Commission that will make recommendations to council on a number of matters, including service quality and consumer protection for passengers. It is important that with this transition in responsibility, the vehicle for hire industry in Manitoba greatly improves its service level.

We need to move to a new system in Winnipeg that is customer focused. Consumers should be able to book cars through apps, have their choice of payment



options, and expect a clean, comfortable ride in the vehicle class of their choice. Drivers should be ambassadors for our city, talking about all there is to see and do in Winnipeg.

The vehicle for hire industry in Manitoba needs change. For this reason WAA supports Bill 30 as a step in the right direction and calls on the members

of the Manitoba Legislature to move ahead quickly with the adoption of the legislation.

Sincerely,

Barry Rempel  
President and CEO  
Winnipeg Airports Authority

The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba Debates and Proceedings  
are also available on the Internet at the following address:

**<http://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>**