



**SFMTA**  
Municipal  
Transportation  
Agency

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Edward D. Reiskin, *Director of Transportation*

**April 19, 2018**

**The Honorable Jerry Hill  
California State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 5035  
Sacramento, CA 95814**

***Re: Support – SB 1376 (Hill) – Transportation Network Companies and Accessibility***

**Dear Senator Hill:**

On behalf of the City and County of San Francisco, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) expresses our support of your bill, SB 1376, which would require the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to: develop regulations relating to transportation network companies (TNCs) and accessibility for persons with disabilities, including wheelchair users; consider assessing a fee on TNCs to fund on-demand accessible transportation services; and require the State to conduct workshops to determine local accessible transportation needs and develop programs for on-demand services and partnerships.

At the SFMTA, we want to ensure that with the emergence of new mobility technologies, including TNCs such as Uber and Lyft, the disabled community does not slide back toward the type of two-tiered system that was prevalent before the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)—with persons with disabilities relegated to fewer and less desirable mobility options than their non-disabled counterparts. Whether the TNCs provide accessible service directly or through another mechanism, such as funding alternative on-demand wheelchair accessible services, the end result should be equal access to the same type of service that is available to non-wheelchair users.

Since TNCs are regulated at the state level by the CPUC, the SFMTA is preempted from requiring TNCs to provide accessible services or impose taxes or fees on TNCs that would fund existing accessible services. In San Francisco, persons who are unable to use Muni bus or rail services due to their disability can utilize both SF Access service, the ADA-mandated, door-to-door, shared-ride van service, and SF Paratransit Taxi service. The SF Paratransit Taxi program is a user-side subsidy program, in which ADA-eligible paratransit customers receive a subsidy from SFMTA for the cost of their taxi trips, up to a certain capped amount per month.

Outside of these programs, wheelchair users who are unable to utilize TNC services can request wheelchair accessible ramp taxicabs. However, the supply of ramp taxis has declined in recent years, in part due to taxi companies cutting back on more costly wheelchair accessible taxi service in order to compete against TNCs.

Before the launch of Uber X in San Francisco in 2012, there were over 1,300 paratransit taxi trips per month provided as part of the SF Paratransit Taxi Program. After one year of TNC operations in San Francisco, that number declined to approximately 700 trips per month, and might have further

declined had the SFMTA not introduced a number of ramp taxi incentives in January 2014 to stabilize the program.

Requiring the CPUC to develop TNC accessibility regulations, conduct local workshops, and consider assessing a fee on TNCs to fund existing on-demand accessible transportation services could potentially restore, expand, and improve mobility access for persons with disabilities through existing programs.

We want to thank you for your leadership on this important issue of transportation equity and access, and express our support for SB 1376. We look forward to our continued partnership in advancing and strengthening this bill going forward.

Sincerely,



**Edward D. Reiskin**  
**Director of Transportation**

cc: Senator Scott Wiener  
Assemblymember David Chiu  
Assemblymember Phil Ting  
Mayor Mark Farrell  
SFMTA Board of Directors  
Shaw/Yoder/Antwih, Inc.

