



# Internet Association

**July 14, 2015**

The Honorable Bill de Blasio  
Mayor  
City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

The below companies and organizations represent the interests and shared values of New York City-based technology companies and those that make up the backbone of the Internet economy. We write to express our concern over legislation pending before the New York City Council that would cap new For-Hire Vehicle Licenses pending the outcome of a traffic congestion study. The Internet is an engine for economic growth and positive disruption throughout the economy, leading to lower prices and more convenience for consumers. Efforts to stifle innovation and competition run counter to our core values.

Despite claims to the contrary, the vehicle cap appears calculated to impede the growth of technology-driven companies in order to advantage more established industry players. Protecting incumbents can only serve to mute competition with new entrants, but the real losers are ultimately New York City's consumers, who will be captive to pay higher prices, absent robust competition from platforms like the ones we represent.

Solving big problems through innovation is the hallmark of the Internet industry. This is why it is particularly ironic that the New York City government is singling out the very Internet platforms that are doing the most to tackle congestion. Whether through Lyft Line, UberPool, or Sidecar Shared Rides, ridesharing platforms have facilitated more than 1 million carpool trips in New York City alone. Technology and innovation allows us to better utilize the cars on the road, increase wages for drivers, and save money for riders.

Unfortunately, the proposed legislation (Introduced bills 842 and 847, sponsored by Councilmembers Ydanis Rodriguez and Steve Levin) represents a significant step away from this progress. By capping the growth of Lyft, Uber, Sidecar, Carmel, Dial 7, and other companies using app-based technology to bring innovation and efficiencies to the For-Hire Vehicle industry, the proposal would deny New Yorkers the benefits of these services; create new barriers to economic opportunity for aspiring drivers; and call New York's current reputation as a hub for tech-driven businesses into serious question. This negative impact would be most deeply felt in the outer boroughs, where unemployment rates are the highest and where reliable transportation options are the scarcest.



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This legislation also impacts communities further afield - places like Washington Heights and East New York - where more and more New Yorkers are directly experiencing the benefits that can come from embracing new technologies. New York stands to be the world-class example of what can be achieved for all communities by leaning into the next wave of innovation.

We urge you to oppose this ill-conceived legislation. Twenty-first century problems such as congestion and climate change demand twenty-first century solutions, and leaders from across the New York City technology community are ready and eager to work with you on tech-driven policy solutions to these and other challenges.

Sincerely,

**Internet Association**  
**Consumer Electronics Association**  
**Engine**  
**Expedia, Inc.**  
**GILT**  
**IAC**  
**Quirky**  
**TechNet**  
**TechStars**  
**TravelTech**  
**TripAdvisor**

CC: Members of the New York City Council

