

September 10, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
U.S. Capitol Building, S-230
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing millions of taxpayers and consumers, we ask you to decline any requests to hotline H.R. 4686 (“Sami’s Law”) in the U.S. Senate.¹ However well-intentioned this legislation, which passed the U.S. House with little debate in July, our organizations oppose the bill in its current form and urge Senators to make changes either in Committee or on the floor. None of this can be accomplished if the bill is rushed through the Senate.

In recent years, transportation network companies (TNCs) have changed the way millions of Americans travel, while offering hundreds of thousands of part-time drivers the opportunity to earn extra income. As with any mode of transportation, safety is a legitimate concern for both drivers and riders utilizing TNC platforms. Riders will not use TNCs if they do not feel safe, regardless of the flexibility TNC platforms offer. Drivers, too, will not use TNCs if they cannot guarantee their safety with all passengers, regardless of the money they can earn utilizing TNC platforms.

All of the above reasons are why some of the largest TNCs have invested time, money, and resources in not only making their platforms, drivers, and riders safer,² but also in making these efforts transparent with the public.³ Unfortunately, H.R. 4686 threatens to upend some of this private-sector progress, especially if enacted quickly and without debate in the Senate. Unfunded federal mandates will slow down ongoing safety efforts at large TNCs and create significant barriers to entry for small and mid-sized TNCs looking to compete in this new market.

The imposition of federal mandates also could not come at a worse time for TNC drivers. Significant and unexpected costs could reduce opportunities for drivers, at a time when scores of Americans are looking to substitute a loss of income with gig economy opportunities.

We believe the legislation can be improved, but hotlining H.R. 4686 in the Senate will foreclose all opportunities to do so. This bill, as with most that are introduced in Congress, deserves open, transparent, and public debate. Rushing the process is a disservice to consumers, taxpayers, and the millions of people who drive or ride through TNC platforms. We urge you to slow this process down and oppose a hotline effort.

Sincerely,



¹ Congress.gov. (Introduced October 15, 2019). “H.R.4686 - Sami’s Law.” Retrieved from: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/4686> (Accessed September 3, 2020.)

² See: Uber. “Safety.” Retrieved from: <https://www.uber.com/us/en/safety/> (Accessed September 3, 2020.); Lyft. “Safety.” Retrieved from: <https://www.lyft.com/safety> (Accessed September 3, 2020.)

³ Uber. “Uber’s US Safety Report.” Retrieved from: <https://www.uber.com/us/en/about/reports/us-safety-report/> (Accessed September 3, 2020.)