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20 June 2019

To: Economy and Infrastructure Committee

RE: Parliamentary Inquiry into Commercial Passenger Vehicle Reforms in Victoria

Dear Sir/Madam

Prior to the August 2017 reforms of the Taxi and Car Hire Industry, I had been a taxi owner/driver since the early 1970's, working long hours every day, 6 days in the week. There was a break of 3 years, between 1978 and 1982 as I pursued other employment and resumed driving my own taxi in 1982. Overall, I was in the Taxi Industry for 32 years.

I also served on the Embassy Taxi Board as Vice Chairman for 7 years, and another 7 years as Chairman. Since my retirement in 2005 I decided to lease my taxi licence. As we are self-funded retirees and knowing there would be a steady and regular monthly income of \$2,500, my wife and I allowed ourselves peace of mind – our reward for my hard work, long hours and sacrifice we have made over so many years.

It meant we could plan for our future, with the vision we would be financially secure for the length of time we held the licence – essentially, the rest of our lives.

Our world and plans for our retirement collapsed with the announcement of the Taxi & Hire Car Reforms implemented by the Victorian Government. We were eligible to receive the Transition Assistance payment of \$100,000, but compared to the security of an ongoing monthly income of \$2,500 the taxi licence produced, the once off payment felt shallow and disparaging.

My wife and I now need to refocus on our income and our future. The Reforms made to the Commercial Passenger Vehicle Industry have left us in a vulnerable financial position and the future unknown.

Regards

Panagiotis Alexopoulos
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