

Economy and Infrastructure COMMITTEE.

To the parliamentary Inquiry into Commercial passenger Vehicle Reforms.

Honorary Members of the committee

My name is ANASTASIOS FLITZANIS. I came to Australia in 1974 as a young 18 years ~~old~~ man, doing different jobs working in factories and other jobs. In 1983 I lost my job due to the closure of the factory that I was working.

So in 1983 I decided to try my future with the TAXI industry. After passing all the tests as to become a TAXI driver, I started driving TAXIS nights for 2 years, as a driver. In 1985, I decided that the TAXI industry is going to be my career and future. So early March 14.

1985, I bought ~~my~~ my TAXI licence and started driving as a owner driver and operator, working 70-90 hours a week to be able to repay the loan that I have borrow for the TAXI licence that was \$60,000 at that time 1985, from the old STATE BANK OF VICTORIA, and also to meet the repayment of house mortgage and ~~the~~ looking after my family of 5. It was hard work.

working 12 to 14 hours, days late Fridays and Saturdays ~~the~~ night for 23 years. After 23 years of day and night shift work and driving, I decided to lease the licence with a TAXI operator that was operating 52 TAXIS with his partners. I was driving for him 6 days a week to earn a living. Things were going well earning ~~money~~ ^{money} from the lease of the TAXI licence and also driving the TAXI. The future was looking good. My two daughters

had Finish university and the son TAFE College .
I was looking forward to retirement. After 40 years.
In the TAXI Industry with the TAXI licence a as
supervanation, not having to depend on the Government
for my retirement.

Then. The TAXI Industry went from bad to worst,
with the arrival of uber. that started to operating
illegally for 3 years, until the 2017 reforms, to
the TAXI and Hire car Industry.

The Arrival of uber has destroy the TAXI industry
to the point, that the operator that I use to lease
my TAXI licence, went from operating 52 TAXIS
down to only 2. TAXIS. to the point, that 2 years
ago he could not be able to pay my TAXI licence
leases for 4 months, and we decided to break the
lease agreement, and I took my TAXI licence back,
and started again as a owner driver, with the
Arrival of uber, thing were so bad, I could not be
able to pay my bills, to the point that I had to
borrow money from my children to be able to pay
my bills. one of my daughter felt so sorry for me,
that gave me \$2,000, to pay my visa card, that has
gone up to \$11,000 that was the most embarrassing
situation that I have faced in my life to depend
from my children, to pay my bills. That situation
has affected the family, and After Applying, and
receiving \$50,000 from the Fairness Fund, the money

~~It~~ was not enough, to pay house bills, other loans credit cards and other commitments. Also from that \$50,000 I have to pay myself and my wife \$3,969 to the TAX department, because the TAX department considers that the payment from the Fairness Fund was an earning and not payment for financial support for the difficult financial circumstances that the state Government has created by the reforms to the TAXI and HIRE car industry.

The REFORMS, have affected my business as a TAXI driver and operator very bad. I'm down by 60% on ~~my~~ daily TAKINGS, and 80% on the night, this is because of the 6,000 EXTRA TAXIS on the Road and 54,000 UBER, and HIRE CARS.

I have to work from 5.00 AM TO 7.00 PM, 6 days a week, that 80 hours a week, to be able to survive, I'm working less than the minimum wage. This is what the TAXI REFORMS did to the TAXI Industry they have destroyed the capacity to earn a decent living. But, also have affected my plans for Retirement. The state Government, by cancelling or Revoking my perpetual TAXI licence, has destroyed my Retirement and my SUPERANNUATION. This perpetual TAXI licence was bought in 1985, with money that was not given to me for nothing. This licence was paid for, not given. I had to repay the state BANK for

and IT was cancel or Reroke for a mere \$ 100,000 SO all my Superannuation and retirement, was gone for \$100,000 TAKEN AWAY gone. That's 39 years of hard work and looking forward to retirement was TAKEN away from Me.

In 2. ~~old~~ half year at 66 and half ~~and~~ I have to apply for an old Age pension, or. keep driving TAXIS. so something that I have plan for years was TAKEN by the STATE Government.

Honorary Members of the committee, I can't believe that democratic elected government can TAKE OR cancel or rerake, the property of ~~its~~ ITS CITIZENS such as perpetual TAXI licence with out a proper consultation a proper consideration proper evaluation or a proper buying back of the perpetual TAXI licence.

Why does our Government enforce the law against its own hardworkin citizens and allow the elite to MAKE their own laws and regulation and change existing laws to facilitate the elite and multinationals like Uber. It is supprising how little the people in positions of influence, and decision MAKING know or want to know about the intricacies of the TAXI industry and yet they make decisions that affect the lives of thousands of people. Every single person who has bought a TAXI licence or the business (which includes goodwill and licences) have bought it ~~with~~ with an approval from the TAXI services COMMISSION. (TSC)

(Formally Victoria TAXI Directorate) the buyer of the licences had to declare at all times to the VTD/TSC the cost of each licence.

It seems very odd that even though the government knows what prices have been paid for each licence and business that they only want to compensate a very small amount.

The state Government feels that they can take or cancel or devalue assets in the form of perpetual licences from thousands of hardworking Australians and hand it to big business.

It totally disregards the fact that it was the government of both persuasions who created and promoted the value in perpetual taxi licences over the last 50 years.

1) In 1973 the Government allowed the BANKS to encumber TAXI Licences and no licences were transferred by the Government till the encumbrance was lifted.

2) In 1986 the Government SOLD and financed the sale of licences to qualified TAXI Drivers.

3) In the Kennett years more perpetual licences were sold in the form of M&OS ~~with the~~ TAXIS.

4) A further 50 perpetual M.S.O Licences then sold by the Labor Party and these were the last perpetual Licences sold by the Government of Victoria.

5) In 2000, the Government started to sell the right to ~~operate~~ operate, 600, peak, service, Licence for a yearly fee

6) Further Licences to operate a taxi were sold from 2014 till 2017 for various time periods and money.

7) During all those years TAXI Licences were promoted, as a good investment, where one can run his own business in a Government regulated, Industry. The Government, even went so far, that it enabled, the Bendigo Stock Exchange, as a platform for the sale of TAXI Licences and a Minister of the Crown promoted TAXI Licence as a good, investment for Mums and Dads. I feel that, the Government can not walk away from adequately compensating the Perpetual Licence Holders

At peak a Metropolitan TAXI Licence was Trading upwards of \$50000, Many people still have loans to match, and many struggle ~~to~~ day to day many lost houses, and others are in ~~in~~ very difficult financial circumstances like in my case. Stripping my assets, left me with little income, and ~~no~~ superannuation, + NO FUTURE.

I hope this ~~is~~ submission or letter to the members of the ~~Committee~~, explains the situation that the TAXI Industry is in and as TAXI Licence Holder, Drivers, and operators.

If the Honorary committee wishes for me to appear in person, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

ANASTASIOS FLITZANIS


my address
