

UTCC VOICE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED TAXIDRIVERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL SINCE 2008

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SERVICE

BY FAYEZ KHOZINDAR

NEXT YEAR, THE AMERICAN FRIENDS Service Committee (AFSC) will celebrate its centennial, and commemorate its great accomplishments throughout a century of fighting for peace and justice.

The AFSC is a Quaker organization that includes people of various faiths and origins who are committed to social justice, peace, and humanitarian services. AFSC work is based on the belief in the worth of every person and faith, and in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice.

This is the vision of AFSC which I remember seeing in action for the first time when I was young. It was just after the creation of the state of Israel when thousands upon thousands of Palestinians left their homes and ran for their lives to the nearest safe place they could reach. I grew up in the Gaza Strip, where I saw the newcomers holding unto their children and their modest belongings and settling down wherever they could to rest after their long agonizing trip away from home.

After the shooting stopped and the dust had



settled down the grim picture became more and more obvious and clear. Those people were here to stay and they needed help, so we gave whatever we could to help them out in their miserable time. However, the biggest help came about when some pickup trucks showed up and un-

loaded their shipments near where the refugees were. Later, a tent was pitched out and then the children dragging in a huge bundle of clothes into that tent and some boxes of canned food for the hungry people.

My grandmother was with me looking at that scene, and I remember asking her about the identity of those people who just came from nowhere and gave a helping hand to the refugees. My grandmother simply replied; “the Quakers my son, the Quakers.”

Now, and after all that time, the AFSC is doing exactly what they did before, helping and supporting taxi drivers in Chicago in the creation of a sound organization to represent them and have a meaningful seat at the table when reform issue come up, or when a response is required to negative media coverage.

In 2006, a taxi driver named Haroon Paryani was murdered by a customer. In response, concerned community members contacted the AFSC, who then established a Taxi Worker Organizing Project (TWOP).

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HATE CRIME

Stop the Violence

TWO CHICAGO CAB DRIVERS WERE ATTACKED in August, and in one case it was clearly a hate crime directed at the driver.

In that case, Shuayb Yusuf Hassan picked up a passenger in River North at about 11:30 P.M. August 2nd and dropped him off at the Renaissance Hotel, at State and Wacker.

Hassan believes that perhaps the passenger was irritated that he slowed down and gave a wide berth to a group of bicyclists on Wacker, but in any case he pulled up to the hotel and announced the fare of \$4.25.

“At that moment he put his arm around my neck and said ‘You Arab I will kill you, you terrorist.’” Hassan managed to warn the passenger there was a camera in the cab, and the man sat back, but continued his tirade.

“I will cut your throat and throw you in Lake Michigan, because I love Trump,” the passenger said. While he was finally paying his fare with a credit card Hassan called 911. The police took his statement and arrested the passenger for assault.

The case is scheduled for a hearing at 2:30 P.M. September 23 at the police station at Belmont and Western. The UTCC has asked the Council on American-Islamic Relations to consider push-

ing for hate crime charges against the passenger.

In the second case the driver, who wants to remain anonymous, dropped off a passenger at Wabansia and Mozart in the late afternoon of August 6th and turned South on Mozart when he was passed by a white Toyota which slowed down in front of him, apparently intending to park.

“As the Toyota began to reverse, I noticed that instead of reversing to the right into the parking space it was reversing to the left and headed directly towards my taxicab.

I then honked my horn. The Toyota hit my cab, then went forward and then began reversing toward me again. I honked my horn again and put my cab in reverse and backed away. This time the Toyota hit another parked car.

“The driver of the white Toyota got out of his car and headed towards my cab, then went back to his car and retrieved a gun, and then started to walk towards me again. He cocked the gun and pointed the gun towards me.”

In his panic he backed into two parked cars, and trying to make a U-turn hit a fire hydrant, and one of his wheels came off.

“There were people on the street, a group of

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TIME FOR TAXI CO-OPS ?

There are two new ones this year, and two in Denver. See Page 3

Thank You AFSC

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Realizing the need for an independent organization that would empower taxi drivers for the long-term, the diverse group of TWOP taxi drivers decided to establish the United Taxid-
rivers Community Council (UTCC) in January 2008.

Since then, UTCC has im-
pacted positive change in the
transportation industry of
greater Chicago for both
taxi drivers and consumers.
This includes improving the
wages and working condi-
tions of taxi drivers and safe-
ty standards for both workers
and customers.

In April 2014, AFSC conduct-
ed an assessment of UTCC which
was incubated by the Midwest Region
of AFSC.

The purpose of the assessment was to under-
stand how healthy UTCC is in regards to vari-
ous organizational domains; understand better
the type of impacts that UTCC is having as an
organization; and determine the best plan for
AFSC to support UTCC becoming an indepen-
dent Organization.



UTCC was counting on AFSC to continue
to advance the infrastructure and resources
of UTCC with a long-term goal of sustainabil-
ity for the organization. Believing in the over-
all goal for the taxi workers in Chicago which
is; to have a self-sustaining association/union
that represents and negotiates for their inter-
est. UTCC is well on the path toward
meeting that goal.

By the end of 2015, we received
the news that AFSC was termi-
nating this program because of
financial hardship the orga-
nization was going through.

In April 2016, UTCC had
hired a consultant to help us
decide what to do; to contin-
ue as an independent organi-
zation, or to be a project of a
larger organization, or merge
with another organization, or
to form a non-traditional structure
such as a taxi cooperative.

After three months in research, interviews
and meetings, we decided to continue as an inde-
pendent organization.

The staff of UTCC, their volunteers, supporters,
and the taxi drivers at large would like to extend
their thanks and gratitude to AFSC for its generous
support throughout the last ten years. ■

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

ROCKY OROK IN A UTCC ARTICLE AUGUST
2016 says “The taxi industry will never be
the same. How little he knows. The gold-
en years were from 1942 to 1974. In 1975
oil went from \$10. A barrel to \$30. In 12 months.
The cab industry has never recovered.

It led to all lease cabs. No more 45 % commis-
sion. No more matching Social Security 50/50.
123 hour days were a necessity. 7 day weeks too.
Now the drivers had to pay for the gas. In spite
of all the extra money in Yellow and Checkers
pocket they still had to close their plant in Ka-
lamazoo Michigan.

There is an expression “Beware of the Unex-
pected Consequences of your Actions” With the
best of intentions Mayor Washington started the
process of deregulating Yellow and Checker. We
went from 4,500 medallions to almost 7,000.

People like Mr. Orok were oblivious to what the
extra cabs were doing to their income. Yes, Yellow
and Checker were hurt too. Many of their medal-

lions were returned to the city. Mr. Orok wants to
put all the blame for the price collapse on Uber,
he is wrong.

A decade ago the price of a medallion was \$
60,000. When it passed 100,000 in a year it was
obviously a bubble. Sadly, many drivers decided
to get on the gravy train. The cabs have “Never”
produced enough revenue to justify that price.
Even the banks drew a line at \$175,000.

That didn’t stop the drivers. Uber entered the
market in 2011 but the bubble didn’t burst until
about 1.5 years ago. Uber was not the most impor-
tant reason the bubble burst. Mr. Orok obviously
doesn’t understand the weakness in computer-
ized dispatching. He is right about to many sys-
tems dilute the market place.

We desperately need to go back to two-way ra-
dio dispatch. Let machines do what machines do
best. Let people do what people do best.

—PAUL JOHNSON, 5-10-1963,
PUBLIC CHAUFFEUR NO. 7665

**GET INVOLVED IN THE STRUGGLE
AGAINST UNJUST FEES & TAXES!**

Join the fight for rights, respect & human dignity!

CALL UTCC: 773-342-8822

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UTCC

**UNITED TAXIDRIVERS
COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

OUR VISION

*To organize and unify all licensed
chauffeurs in the Chicago area, so we
can collectively overcome oppression and
achieve economic and social justice.*

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**We welcome your contributions
feedback and letters!**

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CHICAGO**

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Taxi Co-ops

THERE ARE A GROWING NUMBER OF CAB companies that are owned and operated by the cab drivers themselves. These “co-operatives” elect officers, vote on important issues, and share the profits,

The most recent is ATX Coop Taxi in Austin Texas, which was quickly approved by the city council as a response to Uber leaving the city rather than submit to fingerprinting require-

ments. Another new cooperative is the Alliance Taxi Coop in Philadelphia, created with the help of The Taxi Workers Alliance of Pennsylvania.

Among the oldest taxi cooperatives is Union Cab in Madison, Wisconsin, established in 1979, and the California Co-Op Cab company of Sacramento, which started business in 1982.

Other cab cooperatives include Union Cab in Portland, Coast Yellow Cab Cooperative of Foun-

tain Valley, California and the Alexandria Union Taxicab Company in Virginia.

There are two taxi driver coops in Denver, Green Taxi and Union Taxi Cooperative, both organized by the Communications Workers of America. The accompanying article, from *Shareable* magazine describes just how these two coops were formed.

—CHRIS CHANDLER

Cabby-Owned Taxi Cooperatives on the Rise

BY KYLE HARRIS, SHAREABLE MAGAZINE

WHILE THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN TAXI companies and ridesharing start-ups like Uber grab all the headlines, a pioneering group of cabbies are combining the best of traditional taxi service and new ridesharing systems, but with an important twist. These cabbies are creating cabby-owned taxi cooperatives, sometimes with the help of unions, and offering smartphone taxi hailing on top of a traditional service. This new setup gives drivers more job security, better pay, ownership of and a say in their company as well as the ability to offer more convenient smartphone hailing taxi service to customers. This is part of a surge of experimentation in democratizing ownership in enterprises, including, appropriately, in the sharing economy.

In 2007, Denver taxi drivers joined Communications Workers of America Local 7777. In 2009, they launched the city’s first taxi driver-owned worker’s cooperative: Union Taxi. Five years down the road, a new bunch taxi drivers, tired of the high cab leasing fees and poor working conditions at traditional cab companies, started clamoring to organize another cooperative in Denver. They joined CWA Local 7777 and are in the process of launching a new worker-led company.

These are just two examples of new taxi cooperatives, part a larger trend toward community ownership of all kinds of enterprises. In addition, taxi cooperatives represents an important, yet little-known option for cabbies and ridesharing drivers who face deteriorating pay and working conditions. In fact, Lyft and Uber are arguably partly responsible for creating the market conditions that lead to the formation of taxi cooperatives.

To learn more about the trend toward driver-run cooperatives, Shareable spoke with Lisa Bolton, president of CWA Local 7777, who is helping to organize the second cabby-owned taxi cooperative in Denver, Colorado.

Shareable: What’s your role in the union?

Lisa Bolton: I am the president of CWA Local 7777 [in Denver, Colorado], which stands for Communications Workers of America. That’s what’s called an amalgamated local. We have all different bargaining units and all different kinds of members in our local.

Traditionally, the CWA was mostly phone company workers. As time’s gone on, we’ve organized all different areas. So we have all different types of people. In my local, we have telephone workers. We have the public sector — Denver Public School Custodians. We have some caterers. We have 11 different industries. We have approximately 3,000 members right now.

What’s the history of Local 7777’s work with taxi drivers?

Back in 2007, I wasn’t president. I was the executive vice-president. We did an affiliation agreement with a nonprofit called ProTaxi. That was a group of taxi drivers that were looking to



organize to deal with some of their issues on the job: discrimination, being treated poorly, etc.

The CWA 7777 president, in 2007, signed an affiliation agreement with the drivers and they became CWA members. After that, the taxi drivers wanted to start their own company, which would be a co-op. And so we supported them by helping them lobby at the state capitol, going to hearings at the PUC (the Public Utilities Commission), coalition-building, things like that. It took until 2009, when they [the drivers] finally got granted permission or granted authority from the PUC to start their own company.

In May of 2009, Union Taxi opened its doors for business. There were 262 taxi drivers that were part of a worker owned cooperative, and they were also CWA members. They have been up and running since May of 2009.

Recently, we had heard that other drivers wanted to organize because of their working conditions. They also wanted to start another cooperative. On September 20, we held a meeting here at the union hall. We asked any interested drivers that wanted to join CWA to come meet with us to talk. We had a few people show up. I think we signed up with 49 people that day. And then the word started getting out that Quad-7 — that is what we’re known as, because of 7777, four sevens — was having a membership drive. People started coming in droves. Drivers just started coming like crazy. Right now there’s about 1020 new members.

Wow.

Yeah. In a very short time. We knew that the drivers were also interested in starting their own co-op. We held a meeting at South High School [in South Denver], because we knew we had to accommodate a lot of people, and we didn’t have the facility here at the Union Hall. So, we held the meeting at South High School and about 350 peo-

ple came, all drivers, and they elected a temporary board of directors so they could start working on their co-op. They also decided that they would give people 30 days to come up with \$500 as their first commitment to see who was serious about starting the co-op.

One really big thing I need to make sure is clear in the article is that CWA has nothing to do with the actual business of the co-op. We’re completely separate from the co-op. We aren’t in business to do business. We are a representative of people. So, we’re just helping guide them in reinventing what we supported for Union Taxi.

They will have to make all their own business decisions, hire their own attorneys to go to the PUC and stuff like that. We will help them lobby. We’ll help them fight for their cause. We’ll help with support as needed.

At this point, there are about 490 people as of yesterday [November 17] that have pledged their first \$500 to get the business started. That will be managed by three people, out of seven, on their board of directors. They [the company] will be bonded and insured. They’ll start looking for a regulatory attorney. They’ll start drafting bylaws. The temporary board of directors is for 90 days. We will probably assist them, if they want us to, in the election process to elect their first permanent board of directors. They’ll be able to do it however they want. We’re basically support for them.

What is the relationship between taxi drivers and the traditional taxi companies? Do the drivers have representation through the union?

See, taxi drivers are independent contractors. They can’t formally vote in the union for me to go bargain with, let’s say, Yellow Cab, one of the cab companies here. Yellow Cab wouldn’t have to recognize us legally, because they [the driv-

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This is a new sign at O'Hare. Is it Working? Shared-Ride Taxis provide the lowest fares from the airport. Are the starters arranging them? Let us know. E-mail Fayez at utccchicago@gmail.com

Hate Crimes

Continued from Page 1

young men on bicycles in white T-shirts were milling around, and a couple who were walking down the street. The male in the couple yelled at me to get out of my cab, which I did, and then we ran away from the man with the gun together. We made it over to Wabansia and Francisco, where we called the police.”

The man was arrested, and the cab driver came to UTCC because he was fearful about testifying in court. We joined him for his court appearance at the courthouse at 5555 West Grand on August 12th , and the State’s attorney assured him he had nothing to fear. The driver of the Toyota remains in custody.

In a third assault case, dating from July of last year, cab driver Mohamud Mahamed was finally compensated for his injuries suffered in Wrigleyville when the driver of a private car backed into his cab, then got out and punched him in the left eye. Since that day he has been unable to work, and surrendered his chauffeur’s license. He then enrolled at Illinois State University at Bloomington, where he applied for disability.

UTCC’s representatives attended the last two court dates on Aug. 10th and Aug. 24th of this year and advocated for Mr. Mohamed rights for compensation for his time and suffering, and he was satisfied with the outcome of his case. ■

Petition Progress

FORMER GOVERNOR PAT QUINN’S PETITION drive for term limits on Chicago’s mayor has now reached over 20,000 signatures, and a spokesman for the campaign praised our cab drivers for helping make it happen.

Last issue we carried stories about the campaign and a Q&A with Quinn. The petition drive seeks to put a binding referendum on the ballot that would limit Chicago mayors to two terms, meaning Rahm Emanuel could not run again in 2019. A total of 100,000 signatures are required.

The referendum would also require the Consumer Affairs Commissioner be an elective office. At present the mayor appoints the Commissioner of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection.

Petitions sheets can be obtained by contacting TakeChargeChicago.org, or calling 773 999 2016. ■



As a result of UTCC advocacy work for two years. Mr. G G., has been awarded \$4,655.83 for his lease overcharge case against Chicago Medallion Management Corp. As a token of appreciation, Mr. G. has donated \$200.00 to UTCC.

GET
INVOLVED
IN THE
STRUGGLE!

Join the fight for
rights, respect and
human dignity!

Call UTCC Today!
773-342-8822

ARE YOU A MEMBER YET?

In its seven and a half years of existence, the UTCC has developed official and professional relationships with: BACP, the DOF, AH (400 W. Superior), the Depts. of Aviation at O'Hare and Midway, the CPD, lawyers and law firms, taxi organizations around the country and others. These are relationships that we have the experience and track record for addressing and resolving issues for the benefit of the cabdriver community here in Chicago. **This is why YOU need to join YOUR TAXI UNION—the UTCC. ARE YOU A MEMBER YET?**

Call (773) 342-8822 or visit GOUTCC.org for more information

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

VICTORY! From the union that made it happen

BY THE NEW YORK TAXI WORKERS ALLIANCE

WHAT A VICTORY! WE WORKED WITH a group of Uber drivers in California to file objections to this lousy settlement. And today, the settlement was officially rejected by the Judge.

Under the settlement, the attorney agreed to no longer fight Uber on misclassification of drivers as independent contractors, denying them basic employee rights such as minimum wage and reimbursement for expenses under California law. Uber also had to pay only \$84 million - a fraction of what it owed to the drivers - AND hold off on paying another \$16 million until and only if it became a publicly traded company.

Can you imagine a \$64-billion valuated Wall Street baby got to put a condition on paying back workers until it got richer.

The settlement was also the blueprint for the sham company union announced just after this settlement, between Uber and its new bidding



partner - the Independent Drivers Guild in NYC.

An organization of 200 Uber drivers in Silicon Valley, California talked to their Taxi Worker friends about the union helping to challenge the settlement. Drivers felt deeply betrayed and wanted to fight. They were amazing. At a time when Uber and its deep-pocketed friends thought workers had been squashed and unions had been bought, courageous Uber drivers across California stood up, fought back and today, they see the fruits of their courage. For us, there is an undeniable beauty that the largest group of Uber drivers to stand up, leaned on Taxi Workers for solidarity and together, we organized. In a state where Uber-nomics and the share-the-scrap economy have destroyed full-time work, have left taxi workers in deeper poverty and despair than anywhere else, the Silicon Valley Taxi Workers Alliance thought only of driver solidarity. Anyone who thinks Uber can defeat that solidarity doesn't know the power of the workers. ■

Judge rules Uber Must Pay More

BY MIKE ISAAC, REPRINTED FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES

SAN FRANCISCO — A FEDERAL JUDGE ON Thursday struck down a proposed class-action settlement between Uber and a group of its current and former drivers, potentially continuing a protracted lawsuit that questioned a key tenet of the ride-hailing company's business.

Under a settlement forged in April, Uber had been set to pay up to \$100 million in reimbursement damages to nearly 400,000 drivers. The drivers first sued Uber in 2013, claiming that they should have been classified as employees rather than independent contractors of the company. Uber has opposed having its drivers be categorized as employees, a more costly designation that would require the company to pay payroll taxes and ensure that drivers earn at least the minimum wage.

In documents filed in Federal District Court for Northern California on Thursday, Judge Edward M. Chen ruled that the April settlement was "not fair, adequate, and reasonable" as grounds for denial. He also said a small portion of the \$100 million amount reflects only 0.1 percent of the potential full verdict value of the case.

The decision is a blow to Uber in a longstand-

ing battle with its drivers, many of whom have argued that the type of control Uber exerts over them constitutes conditions of employment. As employees, Uber drivers would be entitled to reimbursement for expenses and vehicle maintenance, costs that as independent contractors they now pay themselves.

As part of the settlement agreement, Uber also made other concessions, like recognizing and speaking with quasi-unions of its drivers in California and Massachusetts. It also allowed drivers to accept tips at the end of each ride.

Uber had hailed the settlement as a victory for drivers who wanted to maintain flexibility in their roles. But others said the reimbursement amount was far too low. Uber is valued at \$62.5 billion, and in June it raised \$3.5 billion from Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund; the company also recently agreed to sell off its China operations to the Chinese ride-hailing company Didi Chuxing.

"The settlement, mutually agreed by both sides, was fair and reasonable," Matt Kallman, an Uber spokesman, said in a statement. "We're disappointed in this decision and are taking a look at our options."

Shannon Liss-Riordan, the lawyer who filed

the driver lawsuits, said in an email that she was disappointed by the judge's decision on the settlement "but I understand and I have heard him." She said it was possible that both sides could reach a revised agreement, but that if not, she planned to take the case to trial "and fight my hardest for the Uber drivers."

Bhairavi Desai, he president of the National Taxi Workers Alliance, a union of drivers with chapters in New York and California, which helped a group of 200 Uber drivers formally object to the settlement, said her group was "pretty elated" by the judge's overturning of the agreement.

Ms. Desai said that because the California case was one of the earliest prominent cases against Uber involving misclassification, the settlement "could have slowed down the process for everyone else" intent on challenging their status and leave drivers to wonder whether there was any real upside in bringing cases.

She added that while the initial lawsuit did not seem to attract much interest from the Uber drivers her members were in contact with, the settlement terms provoked widespread outrage. "The drivers felt so scorned by the settlement that many came forward at that point," she said. ■



THE CAB DRIVER MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE WORKED LONG AND HARD TO BRING ABOUT THESE CHANGES TO THE REGULATIONS. THEY INCLUDE LIMITING THE NUMBER OF TICKETABLE OFFENSES, AND REQUIRING THREE CONVICTIONS FOR LICENSE SUSPENSIONS, NOT TWO VIOLATIONS.



City of Chicago
Business Affairs and Consumer Protection
PUBLIC VEHICLE INDUSTRY NOTICE

August 29, 2016Notice No. 16-056

NEW Public Chauffeur Rules and Regulations
And
AMENDED Taxicab Medallion License Holder Rules

The Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) has promulgated NEW Public Chauffeur Rules and Regulations and amended the Taxicab Medallion License Holder Rules.

The effective date of these rules is September 12, 2016.

The NEW Public Chauffeur Rules and Regulations and the Amended Taxicab Medallion License Holder Rules are posted at BACP’s Web page:

[New Public Chauffeur Rules & Regs](#)

[Amended Taxicab Medallion License Holders Rules](#)

- ▶ For questions, comments, or to join the City of Chicago's Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection-Public Vehicle Operations (BACPPV) e-mail list to receive industry notices and other news, send an email to BACPPV@cityofchicago.org.
- ▶ Rules and Regulations governing City of Chicago licensed public vehicles and public chauffeurs are available at www.cityofchicago.org/bacp.
- ▶ The Municipal Code of Chicago is available at www.amlegal.com.

Public Vehicle Operations Division • 2350 W. Ogden, First Floor, Chicago, IL 60608
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FROM THE ILLINOIS COALITION FOR IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE RIGHTS

New Americans Democracy Project Launch



American Community Services, Erie Neighborhood House, Chinese Mutual Aid Association, Instituto del Progreso Latino and Red Mexicana will host a CITIZENSHIP WORKSHOP to assist 125 community members with the citizenship process:

Citizenship Workshop
Saturday, September 17, 9 AM to 1 PM
Harry S Truman College (cafeteria)
145 W. Wilson Ave, Chicago, IL 60640

None of this work would be possible without the contributions of the amazing volunteers from our partner organizations. During the workshop we will host a Citizenship Volunteer Celebration to recognize their tireless work. The celebration will take place at 10AM in the Truman College cafeteria.

If you would like to nominate a volunteer from your organization for recognition please submit your responses by September 14 HERE.

For more information please contact Luis Huerta-Silva at lh-silva@icirr.org.

SIGN ON TO STOP ICE USE OF FOR-PROFIT PRISONS

Detention Watch Network is circulating a sign-on letter calling on the Department of Homeland Security to end its use of for-profit prisons for immigration detention. Many recent reports have detailed the horrible conditions and abuses at the prisons and their harmful impact on detainees, workers, and host communities. Last month, the Justice Department announced it will end its contracts with private prison companies, and DHS is launching a review of its own contracts. Locally, ICIRR has worked with residents in Crete and Joliet, Illinois, and Hobart and Gary, Indiana, and most recently in Pembroke Township, Illinois, to fight off proposed for-profit immigration prisons in those communities.

SAVE THE DATE: SCREENING OF "MY AMERICAN DREAMS"

ICIRR is joining the Chicago Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, Advocacy Committee for the first public screening of "My American Dreams" on September 29.

"My American Dreams"—DACA, Immigration Reform, and the Importance of the Upcoming Elections

The 1st Public Screening in Chicago of these powerful DACA stories followed by a panel discussion by AILA Loyola University Chicago Alumni and Local Activists

September 29, 2016 from 5:30PM—7:30PM

Loyola University Chicago School of Law

Power Rogers & Smith Ceremonial Courtroom, Corboy Law Center, 10th floor (room 1040), 25 E. Pearson, Chicago, IL

Summary: The mission of "My American Dreams" is to share the powerful story of some of the 750,000 young people whose lives have been transformed by the DACA program. The goal is to reach the hearts and minds of Americans by providing insight into the lives and struggles of immigrants who survive, thrive and contribute despite their undocumented status. This is your chance to hear a first-hand account from undocumented community members and learn about our country's broken immigration system. In such a heated political season, immigration is at the forefront of the presidential campaigns. Given this political climate, there will also be a discussion of the some of the advocacy efforts and ways to help make a change.

For questions, please contact Katie Vannucci (KVannucci@ahlgrenlaw.com) or Kelli Fennell (kfennell@slawus.com).



On August 20, ICIRR launched the 2016 class of our New Americans Democracy Project at Erie Neighborhood House.

Joining in the event were many of our organizations that will be taking part in a historic campaign to register and turn out ten of thousands of New American voters in Chicago and the surrounding suburbs.

The New Americans Democracy Project (NADP) is our non-partisan voter registration and mobilization campaign aimed to fully integrate the immigrant community into this country's democratic process. Over the past 10 years, it has become a national model for immigrant empowerment through civic engagement, registering close to 200,000 New American voters throughout the state of Illinois.

This year we will be working with 20 NADP Fellows who will work with host organizations, ICIRR staff, members, and allies to accomplish NADP's goals for 2016:

- Register 25,000 new immigrant voters
- Mobilize 50,000 immigrant voters to the polls on Election Day

Thank you to all of those who joined us to kick off this campaign!

For more information please contact Celina Villanueva at cvillanueva@icirr.org.

FIGHT FOR 15 ACTION—SEPT. 12

Governor Rauner is killing us! Join us to save Illinois!

- Raise the minimum wage to \$15
- Support voter rights
- Pass a fair and fully funded budget

Our immigrant communities cannot stand on the

sidelines as Governor Rauner places his agendas over people.

Join us Monday, September 12, at 12:30PM at Chicago Temple (77 W. Washington) to fight back against these political games.

Governor Rauner's policies have made things worse for Black and Brown, poor, and rural Illinois communities. He has cut funding for dozens of life-saving social services like child care, and community programs like Ceasefire. He refused to increase the minimum wage, even though 62% of voters said to raise it; vetoed \$15 for home care workers; and most recently vetoed an automatic voter registration bill that would have added 2 million new voters to Illinois.

Governor Rauner needs to stop protecting the rich and corporations and start working for our families. We will stand against anyone making decisions that harm working class families, communities of color, immigrants, children, and mothers. Join us to save Illinois.

ILLINOIS IS READY MEETING—SEPT. 14

The next Illinois is Ready Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 14 at 10:30am at ICIRR.

For more information or to RSVP, please contact Luis Huerta-Silva at lh-silva@icirr.org.

CELEBRATE CITIZENSHIP!

Please join ICIRR and our partners on September 17 to celebrate CITIZENSHIP DAY 2016!

ICIRR members and partners PASO - West Suburban Action Project, Hanul Family Alliance, Family Focus Aurora, Indo-American Center, Korean

Cabby-Owned Co-ops

Continued from Page 3

ers] are independent contractors. However, if our Union Taxi members are having an issue at the airport, like ground transportation is doing something that they [the drivers] have a problem with, we will step in and make calls and set meetings and bring it to the Mayor's attention and go to city council. We are really kind of a liaison without a formal bargaining agreement.

With this new co-op, I am really going to push that they have a collective bargaining agreement, because then we're the legal representative, and we could go on their behalf and say, "Look these are our members. We have a collective bargaining agreement with them, and these are the issues that we're facing." So, the collective bargaining agreement also helps the co-op with internal problems. It protects the one worker in the process of the company.

Talk about some of the issues taxi drivers have been facing and the need for the union?

Last year, Uber and Lyft, known as Transportation Network Companies or TNCs, came in and wanted to break into the Denver market, so they ran some legislation that could have really hurt our taxi driver members as well as any taxi drivers. So we were concerned about the people issues: the background checks, the treating everybody fairly, being available for disabled customers and low-income customers. There is a lot of controversy over how the insurance works.

If you're an Uber driver, there is what's called a gap between when you don't have a customer in your car and you're going to get a customer; or you're dropping a customer off and you're still working but you don't have a client in your car.

There is this gap in coverage where your personal insurance won't cover you, and possibly your Uber insurance won't cover you.

What happened last year is that we had a really interesting coalition at the [state] Capitol. We had the banking industry, the insurance industry, the PUC and all the existing taxi companies all opposed to this TNC legislation, all for different reasons, but nonetheless, we were all opposed. So we formed a coalition together and we tried to get in amendments that we wanted to see to make it more of a fair playing field. And we were successful in getting some of the amendments in. But the big thing was that most of the rule making did get put onto the PUC's hands. The PUC understands the industry and public safety and things like that. That was one of the biggest things that's happening right now is this Uber and Lyft thing.

Also, for example, the airport is one of the highest revenue fares for drivers, because our airport is pretty far away. We were instrumental in trying to get a system together that would be more fair for all the companies and our members from Union Taxi. We talked to Denver City Council, Airport Authority, the Mayor's Office, and they formed a taxi-limo commission for taxis and limousine companies to deal with the issues that they're having. I believe we were instrumental in getting that done. Then they don't have to go through all of the red tape with the PUC. They meet monthly, I believe, and they can discuss the issues that they're having with ground transportation, the airport, the city, excise and license, parking meters, you name it. They have a venue to discuss their issues.

It's such an interesting industry. People that don't work for Union Taxi, they work for the other companies. Some of these folks, their leasing fee to the other taxi companies is like \$125-\$150

a day. We can't even imagine that. It's like waking up and having to make 125 or more dollars before you even start making money. We can't fathom it. So they have to work really, really hard and really long hours. It's a really unfair system.

When Union Taxi came into play and got their company running, their fees are basically one-third the amount of fees that the other people pay. That gives them more time with their families. It gives a safer service to the public. It gives more quality of work-life for the job. And they get a piece of the American Dream.

Most of these people are immigrants, definitely, mostly African immigrants, but not all. Some are from Romania and European, but most of them are African immigrants. We see that they can be easily taken advantage of because of cultural and language barriers. They just want to feed their families and have a decent life here.

It's [worker cooperatives] kind of spreading throughout the country. CWA has the taxi group in Portland with 50 drivers that started their own company. We also have one in San Jose, California, and now New Jersey is starting up something. There is a really large group that just got affiliated with the AFL-CIO in New York and around some other cities. They have like 18,000 taxi drivers who are part of the Taxi Workers Alliance, the TWA. They're helping them [drivers] with legal assistance and really trying to fight Uber and Lyft and Sidecar and all the other transportation companies that are coming in, you know, just fighting for people to have a better way of life and better living conditions.

Talk about how a recruitment drive works? How do you get folks to the meetings and get folks to sign up for the union?

I have an organizer here named Abdi Buni. He was a taxi driver and worked as the ProTaxi presi-


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Attorney at Law
312.505.5222

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dent years ago. He is also an organizer for us, and he knows a lot of people. He was telling me that there is a lot of interest in starting another co-op, and he thought we should do a membership drive. We put out some flyers to some key people and spread the word that CWA is opening its doors to anybody who would like to come join. They started coming in droves.

It was unbelievably perfect timing. They were trying to organize themselves to start another co-op. There were different groups out there. But they knew that if they came to CWA, that we had already been successful in helping Union Taxi, so they see us as a huge asset into the political arena, legislative allies, community allies. We have resources, and they [the drivers] definitely need some rights on the job.

London cabbies on strike against Uber. Photo credit: David Holt London / Foter / CC BY-SA.

Do Uber and Lyft set their own rates? What are the tensions that come up between traditional drivers and Uber and Lyft drivers?

One of the biggest problems that I personally have with Uber and Lyft, one of the problems — and this is what they're getting a lot of grief about in the newspaper as well as the Better Business Bureau — they have what's called surge pricing. Taxicabs are regulated under the PUC, and their rates are set. You can't charge more, but I don't think you can charge less. Your rates are set by the PUC.

So, Uber and Lyft, you download an app to your phone. That was one of the first problems. It's like, okay that's going to discriminate right away against people who don't have a smart-phone: poor people, disabled people, older people, whatever. Anyway, you download an app and then you have to put in your credit card information and personal information when you sign up, because no money changes hands between the driver and the customer. So, if you're downtown or wherever and you want a ride, you pull up an app and you request a ride. You can see if there is an Uber or Lyft driver in the area. Then, they would accept your ride and come pick you up. You can get an estimate on how much your ride will cost, but it's just an estimate, and you've already agreed to pay whatever they say you're going to pay.

So, here are the problems that have been happening around here. Let's say it's Halloween night. Someone might pay \$100 to get downtown, but when you're trying to get home, it could be \$400. You don't get to say, "No, I'm not going to pay this," because your credit card is charged as soon as you accept. So, it's the surge pricing, which I call price gouging. It's nothing more than price gouging, which should be illegal. Price gouging is illegal. But that's their model. They call it surge pricing.

That's a huge problem for the public, I think. The other one is safety. I know there's been articles lately, I don't think in Denver, but articles around the country where women have been sexually assaulted. Someone just drives up in a black SUV and says, either, do you want a ride, or I'm your driver. Someone gets in the car, and they're supposed to have a picture posted and all of that. But if you've been out partying, you've not been paying attention to what's going on, and a black SUV drives up and says, "I'm your ride," you're going to get in. The safety issue is huge. They have to do background checks, but you can have somebody that's not really even a driver acting like they're an Uber driver.

What are the benefits of a driver-owned cooperative?

In a co-op, for one, everybody has a vote: one worker, one vote. You get a say-so in the business. You get a say-so in who your boss is by electing them. You get a say-so in the day-to-day business operations, if it's in your bylaws as things you have to have a vote on. Also, there are times



you're obviously going to let the board of directors take care of a lot of the business operations, but there are things that they have to pass votes on. By far, the biggest advantage was the lease rate. It was cut by two-thirds almost, at least. So they were working less hours, which gives them more time at home. They were taking home a lot more of their money that they were making, and everybody was contributing the same amount to the business.

How do you think that impacts consumers?

Well, personally, I think that it helps consumers because: 1) The drivers are going to be very safe because they're working less hours; 2) They're going to be invested in customer service because they know it's not just "I'm working for another company. It doesn't matter. It's that every customer that I lose is going to effect my business, because I'm part owner." And there is the pride of having your own piece of a company.

This seems like an ideal outcome: the worker-controlled business versus the boss controlled business. Do you see this as a step beyond collective bargaining? How does it relate to the union's other work?

What I see is that it certainly levels the playing field between this huge gap between CEOs or the top executives and the average worker. Right now, the average CEO makes 342 times what the average worker makes. That doesn't happen in a co-op.

I just see that it spreads the wealth much more equitably than a normal employer-employee based system. You have a say-so. Instead of just being told, "We're going to do it this way today no matter what you think," you actually have a vested interest in the business decisions. Your opinion counts.

Does the new company have a name?

I can't really say, because they only have a temporary name, and the group hasn't voted at all. They just assigned a temporary name so they could start to get bonded and insured, and they could get their bank account open. I can't really say. They do, but I don't know if the group will agree, so I'll say "no name" at this point. [Laughs].

Like I said, we've had our first meeting, and then once the 30 days is over on November 25,

we'll have to have another meeting with the board of directors. We'll see how many people have joined up with their \$500. They'll be able to start looking for a regulatory attorney and someone to draft some bylaws. They'll get a bank account. We're getting the paperwork together for them to be bonded and insured so that people's money will be safe.

It is such an exciting project.

It really is. I'm so excited about it now. I don't know if you've heard about Mondragon. If you go on their website, Iworker1vote.org, it's all about worker co-ops. There is a place where they teamed up with the Steelworkers Union on union co-ops.

Quad - 7, we're kind of lucky because we were ahead of the game. We did this in 2009, and it's starting to get popular right now. I hope to see a lot more of them. I think it could be a new wave of organized labor, if people made their own co-ops, having a say and having a collective bargaining agreement at the same time that deals with benefits, wages, working conditions, that type of thing. It could change our whole economic system.

With this shift toward more contract labor, these taxi-drivers are setting an amazing precedent in the U.S.

Right? What I've heard proponents of this union-worker co-op say is that you find a product that people need and you get a business plan and figure out how to get the capital and things like that, because you have a vested interest in it. They're making very successful companies out of this kind of stuff. A lot of things are happening around this in food, grocery stores, farms, stuff like that. Green energy is another big thing where worker-union co-ops or just worker co-ops are cropping up.

There is a Cincinnati Union Co-Op Initiative. I think there is one in Pittsburgh. I'm just trying to get my feet wet on some of the other things going on outside our own little world. And now people are starting to contact us, which is really exciting. We're sharing information about what we're doing. I believe workers' rights are human rights, and union co-ops are perfectly aligned with that belief. ■

Convention Schedule

EVENT NAME	VENUE	START	END	ATTENDEES
2016 FARM CREDIT SYSTEM ATTORNEY’S CONFERENCE	Hotel Palomar Chicago, a Kimpton Hotel	09/26/2016	09/28/2016	65
FALL NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE	Hyatt Regency Chicago	09/28/2016	10/01/2016	700
AMERICAN RAILWAY ENGINEERING AND MAINTENANCE OF WAY ASSOCIATION - 2016 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION	Hilton Chicago	10/02/2016	10/05/2016	1500
HR TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE AND EXPOSITION®	McCormick Place North	10/04/2016	10/07/2016	9000
BAI BEACON	McCormick Place West	10/05/2016	10/06/2016	1500
KIDMIN CONFERENCE 2016	Hyatt Regency O’Hare	10/05/2016	10/09/2016	1500
BANK OF AMERICA CHICAGO MARATHON - ABBOTT HEALTH & FITNESS EXPO 2016	Lakeside Center at McCormick Place	10/07/2016	10/09/2016	140000
PENTON 2016 CLUB INDUSTRY SHOW	Hyatt Regency Chicago	10/12/2016	10/14/2016	4000
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY - 2016 ANNUAL MEETING	McCormick Place North, McCormick Place South	10/15/2016	10/18/2016	25000
IRI 2016 ANNUAL MEMBER SUMMIT	JW Marriott Chicago	10/16/2016	10/19/2016	225
NATIONAL SHARED MOBILITY SUMMIT 2016 - ADDED MEETING SPACE	Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel, Chicago	10/17/2016	10/19/2016	500
COLLEGE BOARD FORUM 2016	Sheraton Grand Chicago	10/17/2016	10/21/2016	1500
CHICAGO DEAL MAKING 2016	Navy Pier	10/19/2016	10/20/2016	2300
HIDA’s 2016 STREAMLINING HEALTHCARE CONFERENCE	Hyatt Regency Chicago	10/20/2016	10/22/2016	5000
ANESTHESIOLOGY® 2016	McCormick Place West	10/22/2016	10/26/2016	17000
NETWORK SERVICES ROOMB BLOCK	Renaissance Chicago Downtown Hotel	10/23/2016	10/28/2016	75
2016 NMSDC CONFERENCE AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY EXCHANGE	Lakeside Center at McCormick Place	10/23/2016	10/26/2016	3000
AAMVA 2016 ANNUAL REGION III INFORMATION EXCHANGE CONFERENCE	DoubleTree by Hilton Chicago - Oak Brook	10/24/2016	10/27/2016	120
INTEGER EMISSIONS SUMMIT USA 2016	Hilton Chicago	10/24/2016	10/27/2016	250
ISSA/INTERCLEAN® NORTH AMERICA 2016	McCormick Place South	10/25/2016	10/28/2016	16000

Glossary of Terms

In our efforts to educate our readers about the legal process, the UTCC VOICE will republish the Glossary of Administrative Adjudication Terms from the Department of Administrative Hearings in parts. In all, there will be 42 terms and following is the first batch of these terms:

Administrative Adjudication

The legal Process by which an Administrative Law Judge decides whether a municipal code violation has occurred after conducting an administrative hearing.

Administrative Hearing

A hearing in which a City agency such as the Department of Buildings and one or more private parties (called the “respondent”) present testimony, photographs, documents or other evidence and make legal arguments pertaining to whether the respondent has violated a section of the Chicago municipal code.

Administrative Law Judge (“ALJ”)

This is the person who conducts the administrative hearing and decides whether a municipal code violation has occurred and, if so, what penalty should be imposed. The Department of Administrative Hearings contracts with approximately 80 Administrative Law Judges to conduct hearings in three hearing facilities located throughout the City of Chicago. Administrative Law Judges are private attorneys who have been licensed to practice law in the State of Illinois for a minimum of 3 years.

Administrative Record

The official record of an administrative hearing. This will usually consist of the pleadings (such as notice of hearing or notice of violation often referred to as the “ticket”, the request for hearing, the motion to sit-aside the default), the hearing exhibits, the testimony given under oath, and the arguments of the parties. The Administrative Law Judge is permitted to consider only the administrative record, as well

as the law applicable to the case.

Appeal

A request to review the decision or order of the Administrative law judge. A party may appeal the administrative decision to the Circuit Court of Cook County. The rules governing appeals vary depending on the decision being appealed and usually involve strict deadlines.

ANOV (Administrative Notice of Violation)

A citation/ticket issued by a Chicago police officer, inspector or investigator from a City department which cites the ordinance allegedly violated. The ANOV also includes the date, time, and location of the offense, identity of person named, with details to support the allegation.

Burden of Proof

This the obligation of a party (the City or the Respondent) to prove a fact or facts in dispute.

Coordinated Advice & Referral Program for Legal Services (CARPLS)

This is an independent legal assistance agency that provides legal advice, information and referral services to low income residents of Cook County. Among other services. CARPLS operates a legal assistance help desk at the Central Hearing Facility, 400 W. Superior St.. The CARPLS hot line number is 312-738-9200.

Complaint

This is the initial pleading which initiates a case. In an administrative Adjudication this is usually in the form of a notice of ordinance violation, ticket or citation that is written by a police officer, City inspector or other City employee. The ticket alleges that the respondent named in the ticket has violated a section of the municipal code. The ticket will usually contain a brief description of the supporting facts and state what the City is asking for, such as fine, repairs to property, or some other penalty to be imposed against the respondent.

Continuance

This is a request to postpone the hearing to a later date.

Default

The failure of the respondent to appear at a hearing. The maximum fine may be assessed for default judgment as allowed by City ordinance.

Evidence

Exhibits, pictures, documents, receipts, or witness testimony presented during an administrative hearing to prove a fact or facts. The Administrative Law Judge will consider evidence in the hearing record in order to decide the case.

Filing

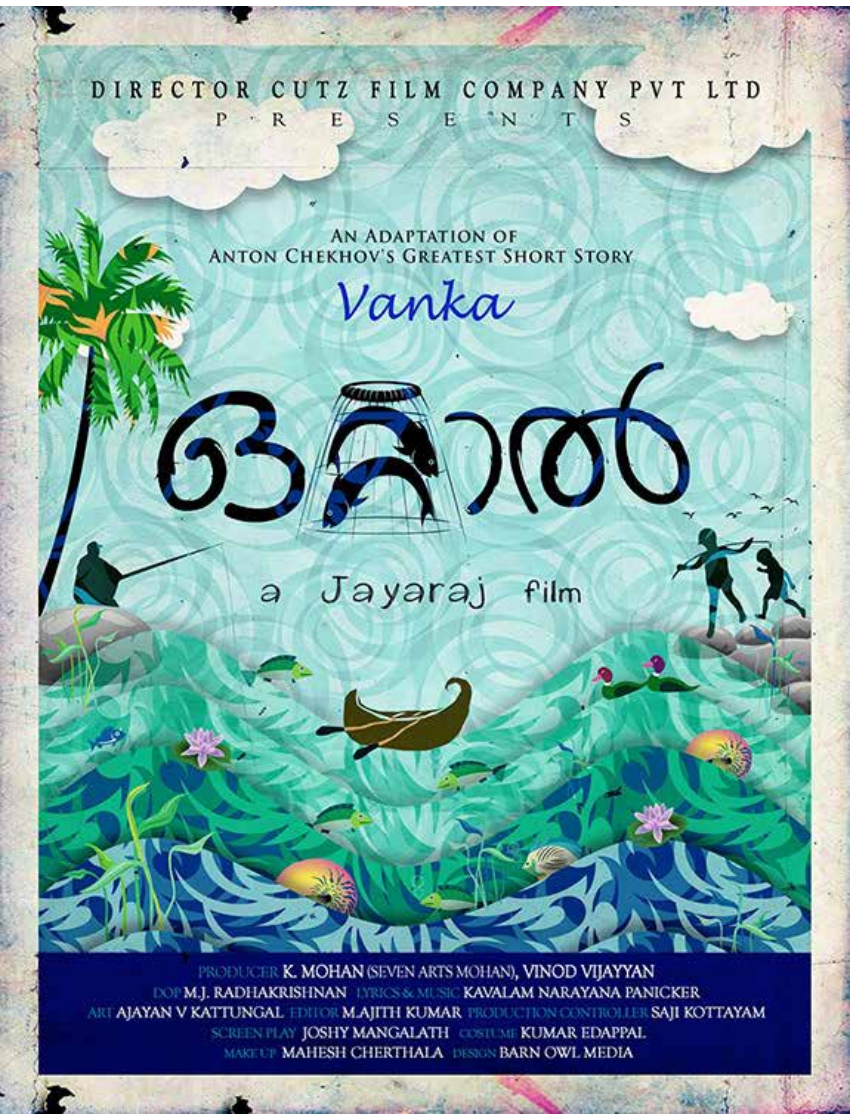
A City agency must file a case against a party with the Department of Administrative Hearings in order for the case to be heard. During the course of a case, either the City or the respondent may file other documents with the Department of Administrative Hearings or with the Administrative law judge.

Final Order

The final decision in the case issued by Administrative law judge. A final order may be appealed to the Circuit Court of Cook County by either the City or the respondent.

Freedom of Information (FOIA)

The public records and case files maintained by the Department of Administrative Hearings may be viewed during normal business hours (Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. To 4:30 p.m.). No records or file items may be removed from the premises. You have the right to request paper and audio copies of public records and files. The Department reserves the right to require that request be made in writing and that extensive or multiple request be made by appointment. Written requests must be directed to 2nd Floor receptionist, Department of Administrative Hearings, 740 N. Sedgwick, Chicago, Illinois 60654.



Chicago South Asia Film Festival

The Festival runs from October 5th to 10th at Showplace ICON theaters in Chicago. For times and locations contact www.CSAFF.org, or just google CSAFF Chicago.

AMONG THE FILMS TO BE SHOWN:

OTTAAL (THE TRAP)

Director: Jayaraj, Country: India

MOH MAYA MONEY

Director: Munish Bhardwaj, Country: United States

PREMAYA NAM (DIRTY, YELLOW, DARKNESS)

Director: Kalpana Ariyawansa and Vindana Ariyawansa, Country : Sri Lanka

MATIR PROJAR DESHE (KINGDOM OF CLAY SUBJECTS)

Director: Imtiaz (Bijon) Ahmed, Country: Bangladesh

LYARI NOTES

Director: Miriam Chandy Menacherry and Maheen Zia, Country : Pakistan

(Left) Poster for OTTAAL (The Trap)

WAVE Shortage



This is the driver of a Wave cab who has faced criticism from other drivers because he is in the short line so much at O'Hare, He wants people to know it's because there is such a shortage of wheelchair accessible cabs and the ride share companies don't serve the disabled at all.

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Coming Soon



At Long Last.

BENEFITS AND SERVICES

The UTCC provides a range of services to our members as part of our mission to Protect Your License. We offer discount legal representation for Business and Consumer Protection tickets written on Chauffeur's Licenses, advocacy to resolve issues with the BACP, Departments of Finance and Aviation, affiliations and references to where to obtain Free Legal Advice. More than this, we assist you to resolve individual complaints against garages, the BACP, CPD and other Industry Grievances. We organize campaigns for change at the city, state, and federal levels which seek to protect the long-term interests of Taxi Drivers. We strive to empower drivers to fight back against corruption and exploitation, financial or otherwise. **VISIT: WWW.GOUTCC.ORG FOR MEMBERSHIP DETAILS**

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