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**Statement of Ron Sherman, President of the Metropolitan Taxicab Board of Trade,
On the State Budget and Taxi Surcharges
March 30, 2018**

The final budget announcement out of Albany deals a tremendous blow to a taxi industry already in crisis. The \$2.50 surcharge could devastate an industry that provides an affordable and reliable service to New Yorkers and that has historically contributed hundreds of millions of dollars to the MTA and billions to the City and State over the last several decades.

While we have been open to a workable and fair surcharge solution, we are firmly opposed to this decision. Uber and Lyft and other ridesharing services are undeniably the leading causes of congestion in New York City and should be reasonably expected to shoulder a proportion of the responsibility equal to the amount of congestion which they create – which has been shown to be much greater than taxicabs. We are deeply disappointed that the budget treats the much less efficient for-hire, app-based vehicles that transport far fewer passengers the same as yellow taxis which are essentially an extension of mass transit. Yellow taxis average 26 fares per day while other for-hire-vehicles like Uber and Lyft average only 5 trips a day, far less than yellow taxis.

Taxi companies cannot simply absorb congestion fees as many of the app companies do. With a highly regulated fixed meter, the yellow taxicab industry has no such flexibility.

It is deeply concerning and disappointing that the State is piling on costs on the yellow taxi industry when it is well know that the yellow taxi industry and its mainly immigrant medallion owners and drivers are struggling.

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