



**Remarks of Mayor Martin J. Walsh
Joint Committee on Financial Services
July 23, 2019**

As prepared for delivery

Thank you, Chairman **James Welch**, Chairman **Jamie Murphy**, and members of the committee. My name is **Martin J. Walsh** and I'm the Mayor of Boston. I'm here to testify in support of H.1067/S.102: An Act Relative to Transportation Network Company Rider Assessments, sponsored by Representative **Michael Moran** and Senator **Joseph Boncore**.

This legislation would help us build a transportation system that works for everyone--- for residents, for our economy, and for our environment. I welcome the opportunity to talk about why these changes are necessary.

Transportation network companies have changed the way people travel. In some ways, they've made things more convenient. But they've also increased congestion, especially during rush hour. And they're adding to the emissions that harm air quality and cause climate change. We have to find ways to make rideshares part of a sustainable and equitable transportation system. This bill would help us do that.

This legislation would improve upon the TNC regulations already in place. It would adjust the assessment to better reflect and mitigate the impact on our streets and our environment. Right now, 20 cents per ride is collected and split between cities and towns, MassDevelopment, and the Commonwealth Transportation Fund. Last year, the City of Boston took in \$3.4 million from TNC assessments. We are re-investing this money directly into things that make our entire transportation system better, whether you walk, bike, drive, take the T, or use ride shares. This is a good start. But honestly, it doesn't go far enough.

TNC's should be contributing more to the public good, given the major impact they're having on our streets. Look at the numbers: 42 million TNC rides started in Boston last year. That's 115,000 every day. That's more than one every second. Many of these rides happen during rush hour. And oftentimes, the pick-ups and drop-offs happen in a travel lane, including bus stops, bike lanes, and emergency vehicle areas. Increasing the assessment will help us ensure that the positives of this growing industry outweigh the negatives.

As we increase the assessment, we also want to encourage more shared trips and fewer solo trips. This bill proposes an assessment of about \$1 per solo trip, or 6.25% of the cost of

the ride. For shared trips, the assessment is cut in half, to three percent.

This bill also supports our efforts to make Boston carbon neutral by 2050. Of course, more carpooling is better for the environment. Our bill also provides a financial incentive for zero-emission vehicles, such as electric vehicles. Zero-emission vehicles will automatically get the lower three percent assessment, whether or not it's a shared trip.

Finally, this bill discourages empty trips during rush hour. How many of you have been sitting in traffic behind an Uber or a Lyft with no passengers in it? I'm sure we all have. We want to address this by introducing a 20 cent per mile charge if you're driving around without a passenger during peak commuting hours.

This legislation builds on the good work we're already doing at the City level. We've got dedicated pick-up/drop-off zones for rideshares. We're installing dedicated bus- and bike-only lanes. We've made historic capital investments in bike infrastructure, in electric vehicle infrastructure, and in road safety measures. And we created a Transit Team at City Hall to support the State's work on the T. Making TNC's work better for our city is the next logical and necessary step.

This is one of several current bills that aim to improve the TNC situation in Boston and Massachusetts. I thank all of the advocates, the lawmakers, the Governor, and everyone who is also putting forward solutions. Together, we're showing that there's a growing demand for a better system--- one that works for residents, for our economy, and for our environment.

I respectfully ask you to move forward those bills that best improve TNC regulations. I welcome conversation on how to achieve their goals. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I'm happy to answer any questions you have.