



Chugiak-Eagle River Chamber of Commerce
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January 24, 2017

Senator Anna MacKinnon
Senator Mia Costello

RE: "Transportation Network Companies & Transportation Network Drivers"

Dear Senators MacKinnon and Costello,

The Chugiak-Eagle River Chamber would like to be on record noting the difficulty faced with community transportation. We are strongly encouraging you and the Alaska legislature to address the issue and support a solution that would provide assistance to our communities.

The taxi industry does not serve the residents of Chugiak-Eagle River well. Most taxis choose to stay in the Anchorage bowl, where they can rely on consistent and lucrative fares to the airport. With a population of just over 35,000 and no reliable or convenient intra-community or inter-community transportation, Eagle River and Chugiak are challenged by this lack of services.

Limited public transportation options and population growth continue to worsen the situation. The inability to find reliable service in and out of Anchorage will also unfavorably impact Anchorage small businesses. As a potential solution, we highly recommend consideration of additional transportation network companies including utilizing digital platforms such as Uber or Lyft.

Both of these types of transportation services bring efficiency to a market that is sorely lacking. When demand exists for a ride, Uber or Lyft can help find it and link nearby drivers to respond to the call. As new drivers come on board, people looking for transportation solutions can reliably find a ride whenever and wherever needed. With more choice and competition comes more opportunities to start and grow a small business. Uber and Lyft offer their approved drivers the freedom and flexibility to partner with the platform, but only after passing a rigorous background check (folks with DUI's need not apply) and a 19-point vehicle inspection that ensures only the safest rides are on the road.

Transportation network companies mean more choice, more competition and more economic opportunity in Anchorage. It also meets a long-neglected need of folks in places like Chugiak-Eagle River, Turnagain Arm, and Girdwood for safe, reliable and affordable transportation options.

The Chugiak Eagle River Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests that current transportation issues be seriously considered while looking for realistic solutions - to integrate transportation network companies with new options that could be available in Alaska.

Best regards,

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