

Dear Representative Wool,

My name is Cheri Zepp, and I'm a life long Alaska resident who has for many years relied on taxi/cabs to get to and from work, or to get a ride after having a few drinks and knew a taxi was my best option. I was in Vegas, and Seattle when I discovered Uber, and it was amazing! The cars were clean, the driver was polite and they were on time! It was also very inexpensive compared to a taxi. I was also able to see my driver on my smartphone, so I knew he/she were very close by. We could also communicate via text or call. It streamlined the process and you knew you had your ride. Unlike my experiences with the cabs here in Juneau where I waited for TWO hours after the dispatch told us a cab was coming, and we called back multiple times after the clock struck 1:00 am. We had no idea where our taxi was and it was frustrating because the friends who had us over were tired and ready for bed. This has happened multiple times.

Good luck getting a taxi/cab at the airport as they get taken up fast! If your bags are late getting off loaded you get not taxi/cab - they take off and don't come back because they are taking their fares and then heading off to other fares. We've had this issue as well. Now we just park at the airport, and that's expensive if you're gone too long.

I think of the opportunity for folks who might enjoy making extra money on the weekends using their own car to provide rides for others who may not be able to drive. This would be a good thing for the town of Juneau.

The taxi/cab company graciously provides free rides to Juneau residents on January 1 after drinking, so to help cut down on DWIs but they can't keep up and I did notice a few DWIs in the paper anyway. I myself would pay to get a ride home, rather than wait for a free taxi/cab ride that will take hours to get.

Many years ago, the cab/taxi companies were split up so I do recall the service being better, but it is my understanding they are owned by one company now. The tardiness and unclean taxi/cabs may be because of this monopoly, so I think a little competition would be great for Juneau and folks like myself who need to get home before 1:00 am.

I support HB 132, and I respectfully request you pass this bill out of your committee.

Cheri Zepp

Juneau, Alaska

I strongly support ride sharing companies in Alaska. Let the market dictate supply & demand.

-Paul Davis

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I strongly support allowing ride share companies to operate in Alaska. It is important that we continue to grow as a state and this is an excellent way to do so.

Thank you,  
Emily Davis

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March 1, 2017

House Transportation Committee  
RE: House Bill 132 – Transportation Network Companies

Hello,

My name is Nicholas DeHart and I am a resident of Down Town Juneau. I am writing you today regarding HB 132. After reading HB 132 in its entirety I am in favor of transportation network companies being allowed to do business in Alaska as the bill is written.

Although I cannot speak for the rest of the state, Juneau has a taxi problem. More than once I have had to wait over an hour to get a taxi from Down Town Juneau or Douglas. Twice in the last few months I have prearranged a pickup for a ride to the airport early in the morning only to be told 20 minutes past the prearranged pick up time that they would be on their way soon. I have heard comments and concerns about the taxi summer tourism season being negatively affected by ride sharing companies, although understandable, taxi companies (like all business) are on their own to make their business better and desirable to consumers. There are more taxis available in the summer than in the winter and the summer drivers prefer catering to tourists vs. locals. Additionally, the majority of the vehicles commissioned to be used are old and unsafe. It is hard to be sympathetic for the failing taxi system when they have not invested the funds or time to provide a good service. I believe competition is good for all business. It has become apparent to me that the taxi companies in Juneau are mishandling their monopoly of the current system.

A major plus for the ride sharing companies is that they are being tracked, customers can pay online and know who their driver is before being picked up; this equals safer rides and transactions. A free market can elevate some businesses and sink others. There is no reason the taxi services could not upgrade their businesses in the same way. By not letting transportation network companies do business in Juneau, and all of Alaska, a disservice is being done not only to the residents but to the taxi companies themselves. Holding the taxi companies hands and saying no to new things is no way to do business or regulate an industry.

The legislature has the very hard and often not rewarding job of managing budgets, laws, and regulations. In this current low revenue environment, it is imperative that Alaska as a whole be open to new businesses and industries. I believe that the community of Juneau could support both the taxi services and transportation network companies. Please let consumers decide what works best for them and move HB 132 out of committee.

Thank you for your time and your service to Alaska.

Nicholas DeHart  
Juneau Resident

Hello Rep. Wool,

Thank you so much for reaching out for input about ride-sharing. I am completely in support of it. Not only is it super convenient (can you imagine not having to run out to start your car at -35?!), but it also seems like ride-sharing could only have a positive impact on the environment.

Thanks for asking!

Rachel Reilly  
99709

I fully support HB 132, and am so happy to hear that you are a driving force behind this legislation. I will do my best to testify on behalf of this bill. And if there is anything else I can do to drum up support please let me know. It's long past time for action on this.

Thanks and take care,  
Evan Eads