925-3131 Unicity Taxi
COMPUTERIZED DISPATCH

E-MAIL: admin@unicitytaxi.mb.ca
WEB SITE: www.unicitytaxi.mb.ca
MANAGER: (204) 925-3030
FAX: (204) 957-5299
ADMINISTRATION: Ph: (204) 925-3110
Fax: (204) 956-5736

My name is Tarlochan Gill and I'm pleased to speak today on behalf of Unicity Taxi.

Our company is the largest dispatch company in Winnipeg and has been in business since 1971.

I want to stress one thing that people often don't realize. Uncity taxi is actually a company of local independent shareholders and operators. We are your neighbours, your family, your friends.

In the city of Winnipeg many people work very hard but I honestly believe that our industry is one of the hardest working. We provide service throughout the city 24 hours a day 365 days a year. We operate when it's +35 and when it's -35. At Unicity we serve the airport to downtown business district but we also serve every community in the broader community of Winnipeg.

I want to express today our frustration about what is happening with taxi regulations in this province.

The province is bringing in Bill 30 that wipes out the existing licensing structure and paves the way for a multinational corporation that has broken laws and regulations around the world and set a new low standard in the taxi a standard that has put back taxi service decades around the world.
What is very frustrating is the provincial government did not have the courtesy to consult the taxi industry.

But to add to that I want to point out that the city has not had meaningful consultations with the industry. In it's rush to push through changes to the taxi industry it has not even waited for the province to pass the legislate. The city has been developing regulations without input from the people. We know the industry. Our drivers, our owners, our company should be heard.

Mayor Bowman you have met with Uber but you have not met with the taxi industry despite a request to do so.

We want input. We want to be heard. We want justice. Mayor Bowman and the councillors on the EPC, I want to say to you we will be heard.

It starts with recognizing what is at stake. People in the taxi industry have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in their license, their vehicle and much more. They follow the rules. They are taxpayers in our community. But what you were doing is threatening to wipe out their license, and wipe out their livelihood. That is shameful.

What is particularly frustrating to the industry is the degree to which this is happening through one of the worst violations of property rights and legal rights we have seen in this province in many years. The

province is taking away our legal rights with Bill 30. Taking away our property rights. Now at the city you haven't even given us the courtesy of being involved in the development of taxi regulations.

I want to put forward what Uncity's position is. First of all safety must be key. Taxi driving is one of the most dangerous occupations in Canada . In Winnipeg we now have one of the safest in industries because of shields, cameras and training. We cannot and we must not go back to the days when taxi drivers were murdered in the city in a regular basis. This is what will happen if you water down the safety protection for drivers.

I also want to stress what we do in terms of passenger service and safety. Our drivers have to go through a rigourous training program. We support this because it means that they are better trained for customer service and for their own safety as well as their passenger's safety. Our drivers have to pass an English-language proficiency test. That makes sense but we note that the MNP reports suggest doing away with that.

We also believe that their needs to be fairness. We serve the entire city. Uber cherry picks passengers and does not serve all areas of the city and in particular has repeatedly ignored the needs of the disabled. We believe that there should be the same requirement for service for all vehicles for hire.

Insurance is an issue. We pay more than $10,000 a year for insurance. You cannot allow another vehicle for hire operation to come in and not have the same insurance requirement.

We have a regulated prices. It doesn't matter if it's the middle of summer or New Year's Eve when you get in a Winnipeg taxi you know the rate you will be charged is standard . Uber uses models of surge pricing that can result in dramatically higher prices during certain periods.

I often hear people talking about Uber having an app. We have an app too and it's proving to be success here in Winnipeg.

In fact we have made a real effort's to modernize our taxi service. We are very proud of the fact that virtually all of our fleet uses environmentally friendly, hybrid vehicles. We are doing our best to flight climate change.

We believe what the city is doing is not modernizing the industry. It is going to put us back in time. The time before the top level of safety standards we have today. Before the kind of regulations that provide service to all areas and all people in the city. Before we had vigourous training to ensure passenger and driver safety and responsibilities.

We want to say to you we oppose what is happening right now. We have not been consulted. We support the motion for the establishment of a working group

Safety, Fairness, community
That is what Uncity taxi is all about. That is what our fight is all about.