



New York City Comptroller
John C. Liu

NEWS RELEASE

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LIU UNVEILS ‘TAXI FOR ALL NEW YORKERS’

Calls on Mayor Bloomberg to Abandon Failed ‘Taxi of Tomorrow’

NEW YORK, N.Y. — City Comptroller John C. Liu today unveiled “Taxis for All New Yorkers” and called on Mayor Bloomberg to abandon his failed “Taxi of Tomorrow,” which the Comptroller’s office rejected for a second time earlier this week when its contract was resubmitted for registration.

“‘Taxis for All New Yorkers’ offers choices for medallion owners as well as full wheelchair-accessibility, unlike the Mayor’s failed plan, which provides neither,” Comptroller Liu said. “The introduction of a new taxi fleet should be an opportunity to create a better experience for all, and that means listening to taxi owners and drivers – and protecting the civil rights of disabled New Yorkers.”

Liu’s “Taxis for All New Yorkers” allows medallion owners to purchase any taxicab that is fully wheelchair-accessible, provides pre-paid debit cards for Access-A-Ride customers to use with taxi and livery cabs in all five boroughs, and incentivizes drivers and owners to use accessible vehicles.

Taxis for All New Yorkers

The plan increases competition by allowing multiple firms, including Nissan, to offer purpose-built wheelchair-accessible taxicabs, or modified accessible taxis with intact factory warranties. Purchase grants, financed by medallion revenues, would be available for five years to encourage early adopters to buy accessible vehicles.

The plan would expand an MTA pilot program that allows Access-A-Ride users to use pre-paid debit cards for regularly scheduled pick-ups, saving the City an average of \$45 per ride over traditional dispatch systems. Given Access-A-Ride’s huge costs – nearly \$700 million by 2017 – potential savings are substantial.

During the transition, the plan would provide incentive fees for all drivers and owners who use accessible vehicles – as opposed to the current method in which only taxis participating in the City’s dispatch systems for disabled passengers are eligible for incentives and are severely penalized for delays. This would streamline and standardize the incentives.

The plan also calls for the creation of a committee to determine if additional incentives are needed for the transition to a fully accessible fleet.

The Mayor's "Taxi of Tomorrow" plan, by contrast, limits competition and choices. It mandates that medallion owners purchase the Nissan NV200. Taxi owners have filed suit, saying the plan forces them to buy a vehicle they don't want. Already, a court has ruled that the administration must also provide a hybrid option.

Further, advocates for the disabled charge the new taxi fleet should be wheelchair-accessible. With the Nissan NV200, medallion owners interested in a wheelchair-accessible version would have to pay an extra \$15,000 for extensive retrofitting – a steep disincentive. By contrast, "Taxis for All New Yorkers" would offer a grant of \$15,000 per vehicle for up to five years, which will incentivize early adoption of vehicles and promote accessibility.

Background:

In May 2012, Comptroller Liu called on Mayor Bloomberg to modify the proposed "Taxi of Tomorrow" to make all new taxis wheelchair-accessible:

<http://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/liu-puts-brakes-on-taxi-of-tomorrow-until-vehicles-are-wheelchair-accessible/>

In December 2012, Liu rejected the "Taxi of Tomorrow" contract on the grounds that it violated the Americans with Disabilities Act and would expose the City to costly lawsuits:

<http://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/liu-grounds-taxi-of-tomorrow/>

In April 2013, Liu testified before the City Council in favor of Intro 433-A, a bill that would mandate that the entire City taxi fleet be wheelchair-accessible:

<http://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/liu-testimony-on-city-council-taxi-bill/>

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johncliu" to 40404. View the latest Comptroller's office videos on [YouTube](#).*

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