



November 12, 2014

Salt Lake City Council
451 South State Street, Room 304
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Salt Lake City, UT
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Dear Members of the Salt Lake City Council,

The Internet Association is dedicated to advancing public policy solutions that strengthen and protect Internet freedom, foster innovation and economic growth, and empower users. We represent the interests and shared fundamental values and principles of nearly 30 companies that make up the backbone of the Internet economy, including Uber, Lyft, and Sidecar.

As the unified voice of the Internet economy, we write to express our strong opposition to the Salt Lake City Council's proposed ground transportation ordinance, which is scheduled for a vote in the near future. Typically, measures designed to specifically allow ridesharing in a community are a cause for celebration. Ridesharing services have won the hearts and minds of their users, and have changed the way we move around our communities for the better. The adoption of the proposed ordinance, however, would seriously undermine ongoing, good faith efforts to create a permanent home for ridesharing in Salt Lake City.

Utah is often held up as *the* best in the nation to do business. Indeed, its reputation as a place that embraces innovation, competition, and consumer choice is a significant reason why ridesharing platforms like Lyft, Uber, and Sidecar believed they would be welcomed in Salt Lake City. The high expectations turned to disappointment when the Salt Lake City Council greeted ridesharing with onerous, duplicative, and costly regulations that provide no additional benefit or safety for consumers.

There is broad agreement on the type of protections necessary for riders and drivers. Insurance should cover riders and drivers at every moment of their trip. Those who partner with ridesharing platforms must complete a rigorous screening process that includes stringent background checks and extensive vehicle inspections.

However, the current proposal codifies outdated and redundant provisions that have the effect – intended or not – of restricting choice and competition for the citizens of Salt Lake City. Rules that create duplicative or unnecessary processes – particularly when they do nothing to enhance public safety – are of particular concern to the Internet community. The Council's proposed ordinance fails to create a regulatory framework that allows ridesharing to serve the people of Salt Lake. In fact, no ridesharing platforms intend to apply for a ground transportation license under the proposed terms.

Ridesharing platforms like Uber, Lyft, and Sidecar flourish in communities around the country, like Washington, D.C., where reasonable regulations that recognize the unique nature of ridesharing are in place. Regulations must support choice and competition, while putting the safety of consumers ahead of bureaucracies.



The Internet Association

The City Council is missing a tremendous opportunity to boost Utah's reputation as the best place in the nation to do business. Approval of this anti-ridesharing measure would send a perilous message that Salt Lake City is closed to innovation.

The Internet Association urges the council to reject this misguided ordinance and, in doing so, reaffirm Utah's reputation as a place that embraces economic growth, consumer choice, and innovation.

Sincerely,

Michael Beckerman
President and CEO, The Internet Association