



September 14, 2015

The Honorable James B. Eldridge  
Senate Chair  
Joint Committee on Financial Services  
Massachusetts State House  
Boston, MA 01233

The Honorable Aaron Michlewitz  
House Chair  
Joint Committee on Financial Services  
Massachusetts State House  
Boston, MA 01233

## **Re: Hearing regarding Transportation Network Companies**

Dear Chairman Eldridge and Chairman Michlewitz,

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 values of the companies that make up the backbone of the Internet economy, including Uber, Lyft, and Sidecar.<sup>1</sup>

Ridesharing fundamentally changed the way voters move around their communities for the better. Massachusetts residents from Springfield to Provincetown have embraced ridesharing with open arms, hailing safe and cost-effective rides from the convenience of their smartphones.

The Internet community is encouraged by the efforts of Governor Baker and the legislature to officially welcome ridesharing to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Concerns arise, however, when some legislative proposals being considered require duplicative and expensive procedures that add bureaucracy at the expense of innovation.

It is not surprising that increased competition creates anxiety for incumbent industries. As our members have experienced since the early days of the Internet, disrupted industries often look to create specious consumer protection concerns as a pretext for limiting competition and choice. We hope the legislature will look beyond this predictable behavior and follow the will of the voters. The reality is that since ridesharing has come to Massachusetts, prices have gone down and quality has gone up – exactly the outcome policymakers should support.

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

---

<sup>1</sup> Internet Association members include Airbnb, Amazon, Auction.com, Coinbase, Dropbox, eBay, Etsy, Expedia, Facebook, FanDuel, Gilt, Google, Groupon, IAC, Intuit, LinkedIn, Lyft, Monster Worldwide, Netflix, Pandora, PayPal, Pinterest, Practice Fusion, Rackspace, reddit, Salesforce.com, Sidecar, Snapchat, SurveyMonkey, TripAdvisor, Twitter, Uber Technologies, Inc., Yahoo!, Yelp, Zenefits, and Zynga.



# Internet Association

Historically, Massachusetts is a state that embraces innovation, competition, and consumer choice. In fact, the state has historically welcomed new technologies, like the Internet, that have transformed all our lives for the better. The state now faces an important choice about the future of innovation in the state, and we look forward to working with you to ensure that Massachusetts remains a technology leader.

Sincerely,

Michael Beckerman  
President and CEO

cc:

Representative James M. Cantwell  
Representative Danielle W. Gregoire  
Representative Timothy R. Madden  
Representative Russell E. Holmes  
Representative Chris Walsh  
Representative Daniel Cullinane  
Representative Jose F. Tosado  
Representative Donald H. Wong  
Representative Shawn Dooley  
Senator John F. Keenan  
Senator Kathleen O'Connor Ives  
Senator Michael J. Rodrigues  
Senator Viriato M. deMacedo