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PA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF
COMMISSIONER ANDREW G. PLACE

May 4, 2016

The Honorable Andrew G. Place
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
400 North Street
Keystone Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Vice Chairman Place:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry, the largest, broad-based business advocacy association in the Commonwealth, to urge you to reconsider the \$11 million penalty against Uber. Such an amount, well in excess of any previous penalty issued by the PUC and significantly greater than the fine levied against Lyft for similar infractions, sends the wrong message about Pennsylvania's willingness to welcome innovation and technology, and I urge you to consider the impacts on our economy and business climate if this penalty stands.

As former Commissioner Witmer (one of two Commissioners who voted against the penalty at the PUC's public meeting last month) noted, Uber provided a benefit to consumers with little actual harm. Its services were – and continue to be – welcomed strongly by the public who are benefitting from the company.

It is clear that ridesharing and transportation network companies do not fit squarely into the existing regulatory framework, so it was a welcome step for the PUC to grant Lyft and Uber a two-year, experimental operating license. Regulators should take care to provide flexibility to businesses and, when enforcement is appropriate, do so in a clear and predictable manner. It is also apparent that a statewide regulatory framework is needed. Senate Bill 984 would provide such a framework, which is now awaiting a floor vote in the House.

We should embrace opportunities that provide more competition in the marketplace, allow Pennsylvanians more economic growth and better connect residents to their communities. I also urge you to recognize the significant investments Uber has made into the education, technology and workforce development sectors in western Pennsylvania, and it is our hope that those investments yield a more dynamic economy for Pennsylvania moving forward.

In closing, please reconsider the penalty against Uber and settle this issue in a fair and equitable manner that allows our economy to move forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gene Barr".

Gene Barr
President and CEO

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