* Alex Friedman representing Pennsylvania Taxi Association, a group of thousands of taxicab drivers and medallion owners in Philadelphia
* I would like to emphasize that the taxicab industry is not anti-technology or anti-innovation
* To the contrary, digital dispatching was introduced in Philadelphia back in 2005 under the Philadelphia Parking Authority’s Hospitality Initiative.
* Communication modems were installed in taxis to allow the closest taxi to be dispatched to the nearest customer, significantly reducing customer wait times
* Customers were able to contact taxi dispatchers by phone, e-mail and online ordering.
* Later on, smartphone apps like 215GetACabwere introduced to improve customer experiences even more
* We like innovation and have embraced it
* We feel that the smartphone application we use in Philadelphia is superior to those used by Uber and Lyft
* The users of 215GetACa**b** havea variety of payment options: Cash, Credit Card or E-payment through Way2Ride
* Customers pay at the end of the ride according to the approved meter rates—there is no guess work involved
* At the end of each ride customers get a printed receipt with the ID of the cab
* Our customers have the option to order wheelchair accessible vehicles, sedans or minivans.
* Our customers can order vehicles on the spot or as far in advance as they like and they are never charged cancellation fees.
* On average, our cabs are delivered within 3 to 4 minutes of ordering within downtown Philadelphia.
* Many of these aforementioned options are not available for Uber and Lyft users
* We provide transportation services within the confines of the law, without discriminating against low-income and handicapped riders and without jeopardizing public safety
* 215GetACab has lots of positive reviews and is available for download on Google Play and the Apple App Store
* In addition to improving customer ordering, we’re improving vehicles and introducing more hybrid and wheelchair accessible vehicles (the same cannot be said of Uber and Lyft)
* We believe that new players in this industry should have to play by the rules and that nobody is above the law, even multi-billion dollar companies.
* TNCs must accept that they are Common Carriers and are no different from others in the transportation industry
* No one should be allowed to simply come into the state and provide transportation to the public without any regulatory oversight
* The taxicab industry is pro-technology without putting passengers safety at risk
* We carry the proper commercial insurance for every single vehicle
* All taxis are registered with PennDOT and have special license plates
* Vehicles are marked to distinguish them from regular passenger cars so no one can falsely solicit passengers claiming they’re a taxicab
* Drivers are licensed and trained by a regulated state agency
* Criminal background checks are also conducted annually by a regulated state agency.\
* What is so difficult about meeting these requirements?: register vehicles into the TNC's name, provide primary commercial insurance with ID cards for each vehicle, inspect cars on semi-annual basis, license drivers, etc.
* Why are TNCs determined to jeopardize public safety and avoid financial responsibilities?
* We support new technology but not at the cost of the public’s safety
* There’s something fundamentally wrong with the TNCs’ business models if they can’t operate successfully unless they break the rules
* Taxicab drivers and industry operators are not entitled and we are certainly not a cartel. Over the years we’ve butted heads with regulators too, but at the end of the day we work hard *and* play by the rules and it’s not unreasonable to expect other public transportation providers to do the same.