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letter
TAXICAB SERVICES
646 South Second Street
Milwaukee, WI 53204
(414) 220-5010 • (414) 220-5016

October 23, 2014

Mr. Jim Owczarski
Milwaukee City Clerk
200 E. Wells St. Room 205
Milwaukee, WI 53202

RE: Milwaukee Code of Ordinances
Section 100-51.5-3

CITY OF MILWAUKEE
2014 OCT 24 P 1:29
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

Dear Mr. Owczarski;

I am writing to notify you of problems we are encountering related to the above Section in the Chapter 100 Ordinance, to get clarification of how the City is enforcing the rules promulgated under this section and to inquire why certain permit holder are allowed to operate without conforming to the law.

As you know the Common Council intended and current law requires that all new taxicabs placed into service on or after July 1, 2014:

- 1) Accept non-cash payment (credit and debit cards) for payment of fares.
- 2) Cannot charge a surcharge to passengers utilizing a non-cash payment method.
- 3) May not require a minimum distance or fare in exchange for non-cash payments of fares.
- 4) Installation of rear seat payment devices operated solely by the passengers.
- 5) Furnish a receipt containing specific information upon request.
- 6) Notify the License Division of inoperative equipment.
- 7) Post Passenger Rights in all vehicles including the "Non-cash Payment Passenger Usage Guide".
- 8) Incur penalties for failure to follow these rules of this section.

American United Taxicab has incurred considerable expense purchasing and installing rear seat credit card payment devices in all affiliated vehicles in order to comply with the current law. We also require every driver of a taxicab affiliated with our company to comply with the Ordinance and accept non-cash payment for fares as required.

We are receiving an increasing amount of complaints from our drivers that American United is the only company in compliance with the law. Furthermore it appears the City is taking no enforcement action for those who chose to violate the ordinance. As a result, nearly all of the new taxicabs placed into service under the revised Ordinance are operating without rear seat payment devices. This lack of enforcement is causing many problems.

Independent and Yellow Cab operators are refusing to accept non-cash payment for fares. This problem is most severe with short rides. In many instances customers desiring to pay with credit or debit cards are getting bounced from cab to cab in the taxi stands downtown. Our drivers are at a disadvantage simply for following the law. Because we have rear-seat payment devices, our drivers cannot "claim" they do not accept credit cards like those without the devices do, and end up with a disproportionate number of short rides.

Without the rear seat payment devices drivers are still adding surcharges and minimum fare requirements to passengers using non-cash payment methods. Without electronic receipts from the transaction, customers are not aware of the extra charges until they get their credit card bill making it extremely difficult to get reimbursed for the overpayment.

Our drivers are asking me why they have to follow the rules and others do not and I cannot answer that. Why is that the case? There is no reason why every new cab does not follow the law. The rear-seat payment devices are readily available to anyone who wants one. I know for a fact that the company we work with has tried to work with many of these new owners but they just do not want to put the devices in simply because they do not want to accept credit and debit cards.

There have been multiple incidences of altercations between drivers over these and other problems since the additional taxicabs have been put on the road. These incidences will only increase in frequency and severity as long as there are double standards and no enforcement of the law.

I would appreciate a response indicating whether the City is going to enforce the rules in Chapter 100 equally to all permit holders and drivers and if so, how? It is difficult and frankly not fair for me to require owners and drivers affiliated with American United to follow the law if no one else has to.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael L. Sanfelippo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "Sanfelippo" clearly legible.

Michael L Sanfelippo
President

Cc; Atty. Dean Lang
Mayor Barrett
Grant Langley
Common Council