

P E T I T I O N

As we approach the termination of the pilot period set by the memorandum order of the Department of Transportation (DOTr) for motorcycle taxis to operate in Metro Manila and Metro Cebu, we call greater transparency and inclusivity in the next steps being taken by the government.

Last December 2018, the DOTr convened a multi-stakeholder technical working group (TWG) to look into the possibility of allowing motorcycle taxis to operate. In May 2019, the guidelines were laid out to the public and the TWG was constituted composed of Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) Board Member P/Maj. Gen. Antonio Gardiola Jr. (ret.) as head, together with Land Transportation Office (LTO), the Inter-Agency Council for Traffic (i-ACT), consumers, advocacy groups and other stakeholders, under the strict supervision of the DOTr. This TWG is tasked to ensure efficiency in the pilot implementation, and present the final report to the House of Representatives and the Senate. The TWG is supposed to monitor the safety of the riders and the riding public using data collected, by Angkas, within a 6-month period.

Despite repeated requests from the sector for the TWG to convene, a secret meeting was conducted, last November 2019, with solely government agencies in attendance, to make an assessment. Hence, the consumers, advocacy groups and other stakeholders, were excluded from decision making. This prompted us to ask for updates from those who were present and pleaded that the complete TWG be convened in the future.

In the said secret meeting, the government members of the TWG decided to extend the pilot period for another six (6) months and allowed the inclusion of other motorcycle taxi applications into the pilot program.

Once again, on December 12, 2019, the government members of the TWG proceeded with another meeting without the consumers, advocacy groups and other stakeholders. Aside from the meeting, they conducted site visits and evaluations of new players into the pilot program.

The repeated exclusion of consumers, advocacy groups and other stakeholders from the TWG meetings shows a lack of transparency and an active effort to deny inclusion of civil society and to fully represent the public interest.

The TWG has made major decisions and even allowed the expansion of the pilot program to other motorcycle taxi applications without genuine consultation. These are decisions that should not be kept from the public.

In line with this, we respectfully urge Congress, both the Senate Committee on Public Services under the chairpersonship of Senator Grace Poe, and the House of Representative Committee on Transportation under the chairpersonship of Rep. Edgar Mary S. Sarmiento to conduct a committee hearing to update the riding public and other stakeholders on the discussions and concessions made during the TWG.

The public hearing will be a positive step towards legislatively addressing the issue of motorcycle taxis, address questions of transparency in the processes, and will provide information to the public of the planned expansion of the pilot currently being run by DOTr.

Due to the urgent nature of the issue, we request that this issue be addressed in the soonest possible period.

Signed:

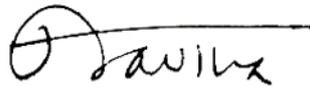
Jason Salvador
Legal Engagement Advocating for Development and Reform (LEADER)



Toix Cerna
KOMYUT



Dr. Grace Gorospe-Jamon
Move Metro Manila



Dean Tony La Viña
Transport Watch

Atty. Ariel Inton
Lawyers for Commuter Safety and Protection (LCSP)

Atty Raymond Fortun
Lawyers for Commuter Safety and Protection (LCSP)

Atty VJ Topacio
Lawyers for Commuter Safety and Protection (LCSP)