

The Public Ought To Know

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By Corey Bearak

UBER Involves More than meets the eye

Some folks might find my fascination with technology and gadgets almost an addiction. I always look for ways to introduce REAL efficiency. I directed three decades back; it involved processing and analyzing data. I created the formula needed and previously relied on hand entries and calculators.

This time I enjoyed a small army of volunteers “armed” with their rudimentary computers; a few weeks work done in a day. Fast forward to today. For a visit to Boston, my cousin recommended

Uber to get around; Shelly and I relied on the subway; it served our needs. My cousin's suggestion and the debate surrounding Uber and its App invited me to make my own assessment.

From the outside looking in, I observed over the past few years, unlicensed and unregulated for hire vehicles under the guise of affiliation with Uber, Lyft and other so-called APPs encouraging an unparalleled growth of cars that pick up passengers without regard to the safety and other protections embedded in regulated taxis and For Hire Vehicle (FHV) industries. The yellow taxi ride surcharge that supports public transit operation currently does not yet get collected from Uber vehicles. This remains important as almost 90 percent of commuters rely not on FHV's but on public transit. This mostly unregulated Uber expansion thus poses more than safety issues for riders but also a diminution of revenues for public transit.

I started gathering information and found interesting how Uber's driver leasing a car financing arrangements suggest a truly different paradigm than independent drivers using cars they owned before joining Uber. More to come.

****Corey Bearak can be reached at StrategicPublicPolicy.com. Find his ebook, *The Public Ought To Know*, at Kindle, Nook and Apple iBooks.***

