

Date of Hearing: May 11, 2022

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Chris Holden, Chair

AB 2716 (Grayson) – As Amended April 18, 2022

Policy Committee: Communications and Conveyance Vote: 13 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: Yes Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill requires transportation network company (TNC) drivers to take a regular safety course.

Specifically, this bill, on and after July 1, 2023, directs a TNC to require a participating driver, at no cost to the driver, to complete a safety course once every two years as a condition of using the TNC's online-enabled application or platform to connect with passengers. The safety course is to include all of the following:

- 1) Training regarding road safety and defensive driving practices, such as avoiding speeding, collisions and driving while drowsy.
- 2) Distracted driving training, which includes appropriate use, mounting and view of mobile devices.
- 3) Training regarding passenger interactions, including de-escalation training, and protocols for managing intoxicated, unruly or violent passengers, as well as unaccompanied minors.
- 4) Training on how to comply with vehicle inspection requirements established by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC).

FISCAL EFFECT:

Minor additional costs, if any, to the CPUC.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** The author intends this bill to improve TNC driver performance through regular mandatory training. According to the author:

While TNCs and drivers provide valuable services to many Californians, some passengers have experienced riding with an unsafe or distracted driver who was using their phone, speeding, or driving erratically. While all California drivers are required to maintain an active driving license, there are currently no requirements in place to ensure that TNC drivers receive regular and recurring safety training...this measure will improve passenger and driver safety and ensure drivers stay up to date on their safe driving skills.

- 2) **Background.** In California, the CPUC regulates TNCs, such as Uber and Lyft, as part of its regulation of charter party carriers. Pursuant to CPUC regulations, TNCs are required to: obtain a permit to operate from the CPUC, run criminal background checks for each driver, establish a driver training program, implement a zero-tolerance policy on drugs and alcohol, and require minimum levels of insurance coverage. Further, TNC vehicles are also required to be inspected at appropriate 12-month or 50,000 mile marks by a qualified facility licensed by the California Bureau of Automotive Repair. Additionally, to ensure proper regulatory oversight of TNC operations, the CPUC also requires each TNC to annually submit comprehensive reports covering a breadth of data including accident reports, law-enforcement citations, zero-tolerance violations and instances of assault or harassment.

The bill is opposed by several labor organizations, which contend it is insufficient to provide training at no cost to a driver and, instead, such a driver should be compensated for their time to receive training necessary to the success of the employer's operation.

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