

## Media Statement

Of course, Metro Taxi is disappointed with the Connecticut's Department of Transportation (DOT)' decision to deny the permits that would allow Metro Taxi and The Yellow Cab Company to expand their services in their respective territory. These permits would have allowed the companies to buy 140 greatly-needed wheelchair-accessible taxis.

What is even more disheartening and outrageous is the DOT's blatant dismissal of the need of Connecticut's large disability community. Group after group, individual after individual, took the time to testify before the DOT's hearings as to the dire need of the community, and their inability to call a cab -- a service the broader community has access to and takes for granted. The DOT cavalierly either ignored the community's testimony, or simply distorted it.

The DOT's decision obstructs a large population's ability and freedom to work and socialize spontaneously as everyone else, and can only be perceived as an affront to Connecticut's disability community, their families, friends, and colleagues. Having only three wheelchair-accessible taxis in a state of 3.5 million, shamefully shows how far Connecticut trails behind in what people with disabilities value most – **equality and 24/7 accessibility**.

Moreover, Metro Taxi and Yellow Cab's investment in the new taxis would allow for a transition to a new fleet of taxi cabs operating on compressed natural gas, reducing emission, our carbon footprint, and our excessive dependence on foreign oil. Clearly, the Connecticut's DOT is out of touch.

Metro Taxi is determined to support the rights of the disability community and the community at large concerned with the environment and foreign oil dependence. Along with our supporters, we will look into all available options, including an appeal of the DOT's decision.

We will keep all our supporters informed as we do our utmost to further equal access transportation for *all*. *We know* the need is there, we are willing to invest and take the risk

to meet that demand, and find it astonishing that the DOT would create a roadblock to such progress.