

Tampa Taxi and Limo Regulator Passes Anti-Consumer Price Increase

The Hillsborough County Public Transportation Commission ups licensing fees on intercounty passenger transport services 900%.

July 17, 2009 (FPRC) --

The new cost for Florida intercounty passenger motor carriers to obtain licensure so they can transport their passengers to and from Tampa International has just jumped to over \$11,000.00.

In a move to suppress new market entry at the bequest of established taxicabs and limousines in the Tampa Bay area, the State created Hillsborough County Public Transportation Commission (HCPTC) has raised licensing fees 900% and annual renewal fees for motor carriers not based in Hillsborough 233%.

"This is completely illegal", states Walter Kozak, a passenger transportation consumer advocate of the Florida Intrastate Transportation Alliance Advocacy Group.

"The HCPTC is authorized under law to charge fees for services rendered, not as a tool to suppress competition. This agency is, under color of law, attempting to create monopolies statewide which will severely impact consumer choices of transportation to the regional interstate hubs in Tampa."

The only agency of its type in Florida whereas the HCPTC is a creation of the State Legislature, consumers on the central west coast of the state already burden the brunt of this agency's economic regulation with motor carriers being restricted to high cost luxury vehicles and paying insurance minimums 3 times that imposed on the Tampa taxicabs.

"We're not talking "fat cat" corporate executives taking limo's to the airport here," exclaims Kozak, "we are talking about the 75 year old lady on a limited income "needing" transportation to the airport so she can go visit her grandkids out of state and this agency is forcing her into paying top dollar for a 50 to 100 mile trip to Tampa."

Continues Kozak, "we attempted to challenge this increase through the Florida Division of Administrative Hearings but the Judge sided with the HCPTC's claim that DOAH did not have jurisdiction to hear the case. The only option left to fight this highway robbery will be a long and expensive challenge in the civil courts."

"This is how government gets away with illegal acts, they violate law and makes it too tough for the common citizen to challenge what they are doing".

"We have called on State Senators such as Mike Fasano and Ronda Storms to initiate an investigation of this corrupt agency their body has created but have been met with deafening silence so it seems their constituents will continue to carry the economic burden or seek unsafe alternative transportation offered by the Gypsy underground", finishes Kozak .

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Keywords

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