



# **San Francisco Ramp Taxis: Serving Wheelchair Users Since 1994**

**San Francisco Taxi Workers Alliance (SFTWA)  
May 11, 2021**

# **SB 1376 requires the CPUC to allow WAV service providers it does not regulate to apply for access funding:**

**“‘Access provider’ means an organization or entity that directly provides, or contracts with a separate organization or entity to provide, on-demand transportation to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.”**

Public Utilities Code Section 5440.5(a)(1)(c).

**“The commission shall distribute funds in the Access Fund on a competitive basis to access providers that establish on-demand transportation programs or partnerships to meet the needs of persons with disabilities, including wheelchair users who need a WAV . . . .”**

Public Utilities Code Section 5440.5(a)(1)(c).

## **SF ramp taxis are highly qualified to provide WAV service:**

- **They have been doing so for 27 years.**
- **They gave close to 10,000 rides to wheelchair users in 2020, almost 80,000 over the past 7 years.**
- **They are insured for \$1 million for all paratransit trips, including ramp taxi trips.**
- **They are subject to rigorous annual or semi-annual inspections by SFO's Ground Transportation Unit.**
- **Drivers are trained, committed professionals. They are permitted by and accountable to the SFMTA.**
- **Drivers are subject to mandatory drug and alcohol testing.**
- **Drivers undergo fingerprint background checks, considered the Gold Standard by law enforcement.**

**The Commission must ensure that ALL carriers seeking access funding meet the same high standards:**

**CPED has proposed appropriate safety standards for Access Providers. The main items are:**

- Background checks**
- Insurance minimums**
- Driver training**
- Drug and alcohol testing**
- Vehicle Inspections**

**These requirements would apply to all WAV providers, regardless of whether or not they are Commission-regulated.**

# How SF taxis compare to TCPs and TNCs under CPED's proposed standards:

Subject	SF Taxi	TCP	TNC
<b>Criminal Background Checks</b>	"Live Scan" fingerprint background checks accessing CA-DOJ databases required	Not required unless carrier is primarily engaged in transporting children under 18.	Private background checks, which only have access to public records required
<b>Liability Insurance</b>	\$1 million for Paratransit rides	\$750,000 for vehicle with seating capacity of 7 passengers or fewer	\$1 million when matched with or transporting passengers
<b>Driver Training</b>	Online instruction for all drivers, plus in-person training for WAV drivers on safety, securements, sensitivity training, etc.	Must have training program under state law; government-sponsored training not required	Must have driver training program on file with CPUC; government-sponsored training not required
<b>Drug &amp; Alcohol Testing</b>	Mandatory pre-employment, post-accident, reasonable suspicion, follow-up and return-to-duty testing	Mandatory pre-employment, post-accident, random, reasonable suspicion, follow-up and return-to-duty testing	"Zero-tolerance policy" does not include mandatory testing
<b>Vehicle Inspections</b>	Semi-annual or annual inspections of dozens of vehicle equipment components conducted by SFO's Ground Transportation Unit	19-point inspection every 12 months or 50,000 miles, conducted by state-licensed facility; SFO GTU conducts TCP inspections	19-point inspection every 12 months or 50,000 miles, conducted by state-licensed facility; no government-conducted inspections

## **Ensuring compliance with Access Provider safety standards:**

- The Commission will establish safety standards that Access Providers must meet for certification.**
- The Access Fund Administrator will be charged with determining compliance with the standards established by the Commission during review of the funding application.**
- Access Providers will be contractually obligated to adhere to required standards.**
- The AFA will be authorized to conduct audits if necessary to verify compliance.**

## **SB 1376 seeks to ensure the widest access to WAV services:**

**“It is the intent of the Legislature that California be a national leader in the deployment and adoption of on-demand transportation options for persons with disabilities.”**

Public Utilities Code Section 5440(g).

**Opening access funding to all qualified WAV service providers is essential to achieving the goals of the statute.**