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Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association Responds To Uber Hire David Plouffe's Initial Statement

ROCKVILLE, Md.— Following the announcement that Uber has hired David Plouffe, former presidential campaign manager, Plouffe issued a statement: ["We're on an inexorable path of progress here," Plouffe stated in news outlets. "Uber is making transportation safer. It's providing jobs; it's cutting down on drunk and distracted driving. I think the mission is really important."](#)

The Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association (TLPA) is responding to this initial statement point by point.

Plouffe: "Uber is making transportation safer."

TLPA response: Uber is the very reason that public safety concerns with so-called 'ridesharing' companies have emerged. Uber's shoddy background checks have resulted in passengers being physically, sexually and verbally assaulted—sometimes by convicted felons. The situation has become so dire that last month [Uber announced Rudy Giuliani's firm would conduct an audit](#) of the company's notoriously insufficient background checks.

Plouffe: "It's providing jobs."

TLPA response: [Twenty states plus Washington, DC](#) and most recently the [National Association of Insurance Commissioners](#) have warned drivers that driving for 'ridesharing' companies Uber and Lyft could result in severe financial consequences as the result of inadequate insurance. In the latest warning, [Iowa warns drivers](#) to check with their insurer in order to avoid "devastating financial losses due to uncovered claims." Moreover, Uber drivers have been protesting the company's rate cuts and have established a national class action lawsuit against Uber alleging the company has been stealing driver tips.

Plouffe: "It's cutting down on drunk...driving."

TLPA response: Drunk driving has been on the wane for a number of years. Although there have been recent anecdotal reports of Uber helping to reduce drunk driving, taxicabs and limousines have been doing the same—without self-promotion—for decades.

Plouffe: "It's cutting down on...distracted driving."

TLPA response: This is simply outrageous. Uber is currently involved in a wrongful death lawsuit as the result of an Uber driver killing six-year-old pedestrian Sofia Liu in San Francisco. A key element of the wrongful death suit is that California is a hands-free state and Uber's business model requires drivers to handle their phones frequently in order to respond to app requests.

Sofia Liu's mother, Huan Hua Kuang, has [described](#) how the last thing she saw before her daughter was killed was Uber driver Syed Muzzaffar looking at his smartphone: "I saw the driver. His face was lit up by the light of the phone. That was the last thing I remember before my daughter lost her life," said Kuang.

"In case anyone is unaware, Uber has refused to compensate Sofia Liu's family—after directly contributing to the child's death—stating its insurance had no coverage for the period while the driver was cruising around waiting to be contacted. Uber's lack of insurance for this scenario was the direct result of the company's cynical and selfish decision to cut critical business costs associated with protecting public safety. To claim that Uber is making transportation safer is so outlandish it strains credulity," said Dave Sutton, spokesperson for 'Who's Driving You?'.

Robert Werth, TLPA president commented on Uber's hiring of Plouffe: "Although David Plouffe is an acknowledged political strategist, he's going to have his hands full messaging on behalf of Uber. Plouffe's opening statement contains obvious falsehoods, so he's off to a rocky start. Hopefully, Plouffe will be able to convince Uber's leadership to simply obey the law and comply with the same public safety requirements that licensed providers do."

ABOUT US:

'Who's Driving You?' is a public-safety campaign designed to educate the public about the dangers of unlicensed transportation companies. It is an initiative of the Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association, an international non-profit trade association whose membership consists of 1,100 licensed transportation companies. For more information, visit www.WhosDrivingYou.org, follow us on Twitter (@WhosDrivingYou) and follow us on Facebook (facebook.com/WhosDrivingYou)

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