

MULTIPURPOSE TAXIS - PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Petition

Mr P. PAPALIA (Peel) [2.53 pm]: I have a petition containing 10 signatures that conforms to the standing orders. It states -

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, say that Western Australians with disabilities who must rely on Multi Purpose Taxis for personal transport are being discriminated against.

My name is Suzanne Hartshorn. I live south of the river and totally rely on Multi Purpose Taxis for my transport requirements. I find the service is very limiting, as there are not many drivers with Multi Purpose Taxis in my area. I know of a driver who lives south of the river who generally uses his Multi Purpose Taxi to do most of his work within the Perth area. Another driver always seems well booked up to the hilt and very busy, although he does do his best to try and pick me up if I make a booking directly with him, in advance, for my medical and personal appointments. However he cannot always collect me at the times I wish to travel. I only get to visit my mother a few times a week, and 2 times out of 3 I am unable to stay at her place for as long as I'd like, simply because the driver begins work very early in the morning. He then feels exhausted by the end of the day so wants to finish work late in the afternoon. Therefore I cannot stay and have dinner with my mother as I would like to. Instead I am required to go home at a time that suits the driver rather than me because his taxi is my only way of getting home.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly to ensure that the Western Australian Government urgently addresses the inadequacy of the existing Multi Purpose Taxi service by requiring all taxis in Western Australia to have the capacity to transport people of all abilities, including people who need to travel in their wheelchair. Only the introduction of a universally accessible taxi fleet will ensure all Western Australians have equal access to taxi services.

[See petition 250.]

Petition

MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen - Minister for Corrective Services) [2.55 pm]: I have a petition, certified to conform to the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly, with four signatures. It states -

We, the undersigned, say that Western Australians with disabilities who must rely on Multi Purpose Taxis for personal transport are being discriminated against.

My name is Carme Elliot and I depend on Multi Purpose Taxis for my transport requirements because I use an electric wheelchair. I do not feel I can rely on the service. Although I always contact the Taxi base well in advance to make my booking, I have often been left like a sitting target, feeling very vulnerable when the taxi did not turn up at the prearranged time. I attend a regular monthly meeting which finishes in the early evening, but I have been left waiting a long time for the Multi Purpose Taxi more times than I can count. It is an alarming thing to have to wait into the early hours of the morning in a deserted street when I thought I would be well and truly home hours before the taxi turned up - but getting home only occurs after more calls to the base, which also costs and has an impact on my limited budget, not to say on me personally. The delay in booked taxis turning up in a reasonable timeframe also often inconveniences others who may agree to wait with me to make sure that I am safe and eventually have been picked up to go home. It makes it very difficult to go out socially - not just attend meetings I want to be involved in since I volunteer my time to be on a Committee and am currently the Vice President.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly to ensure that the Western Australian Government urgently addresses the inadequacy of the existing Multi Purpose Taxi service by requiring all taxis in Western Australia to have the capacity to transport people of all abilities, including people who need to travel in their wheelchair. Only the introduction of a universally accessible taxi fleet will ensure all Western Australians have equal access to taxi services.

[See petition 251.]

Petition

MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen - Minister for Corrective Services) [2.57 pm]: I have a further petition, also certified as conforming to standing orders, with four signatories. It is in similar terms to the previous one and states -

My name is Mrs Elliott and my elderly aunt lives in a nursing home. She is in her 90's and uses a wheelchair. My aunt relies on Multi Purpose Taxis to enable her to go out and visit her daughter at her home during the day time. Her daughter always books the return journey at the same time as she rings the despatch office to arrange the pick up time for her mother. My cousin is always telling me that she needs to ring and check where the Multi Purpose Taxi is even though she has ordered it well in advance so her mother can return to the nursing home at a reasonable time and at a time of her own choosing in the afternoon. The service is very unreliable. As an example, recently the Multi Purpose Taxi did not turn up until 10 pm even though it had been booked to get her back in time for dinner. The nursing home staff got very worried at this and they were also annoyed as well since this late return was very disruptive since it was so late in the evening.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly to ensure that the Western Australian Government urgently addresses the inadequacy of the existing Multi Purpose Taxi service by requiring all taxis in Western Australia to have the capacity to transport people of all abilities, including people who need to travel in their wheelchair. Only the introduction of a universally accessible taxi fleet will ensure all Western Australians have equal access to taxi services.

[See petition 252.]