

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Thursday, February 15, 2024

Written Testimony for Uber Technologies, Inc. on SB0505

In recent years, consumers have grappled with historically high inflation. The increase in costs have impacted families all across the country, including in Maryland. While some costs have started to decline, a report released just this week shows that inflation numbers have not slowed at anticipated rates. Because of this, it is important to consider the impact new fees will have on consumers as they go about their everyday lives.

As written, Senate Bill 0505 would allow local jurisdictions to increase their current assessment from 25-cents to 50-cents on each rideshare trip facilitated through a digital platform. Uber opposes this bill because: (1) there are currently three proposals seeking to increase the costs of rides in Maryland which have the potential to substantially increase the costs of rides in Maryland; and (2) high inflation is impacting consumers throughout the state and increased fees could have unintended consequences.

As previously mentioned, the state is currently considering 3 proposed increased fees on rideshare platforms just this year. The first is a proposed increase on pick up and drop off fees at Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport. Starting this month, passengers taking trips to and from the airport will see a 40-percent increase in their trip fee, from \$2.50 to \$3.50. In addition to the increased fee at BWI/Thurgood Marshall Airport, the General Assembly is considering [House Bill 1215](#), a proposal that would add a 50-cent fee to every rideshare platform trip in the state. While these fees alone may seem insignificant, those proposals in addition to this one would mean that Marylanders would see an additional \$1 to \$2 added to every trip before a ride is even requested. And, these increases would come at a time when consumers are already facing high costs.

A final important consideration for the Committee is the adverse impact increased fees can have on those who use the Uber platform to earn supplemental income. If riders choose to reduce the number of trips they take due to higher prices, that could lead to drivers seeing a reduction in demand for rides, as well as a corresponding reduction in their earnings. For these aforementioned reasons, Uber opposes Senate Bill 0505 and asks the Committee to reject this proposal.