Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 10, 2016

The Honorable Denise Turner Roth
Administrator
United States General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20405

Dear Administrator Roth:

We are writing to request that the General Services Administration (GSA) issue guidance to make clear that the use of transportation network companies (TNCs) as a reimbursable expense is permitted, and to encourage their use by federal employees to the extent practical.

TNCs use online platforms to connect potential riders with persons using their personal vehicles. Examples of TNCs include Uber and Lyft. Such companies are revolutionizing travel, often presenting a convenient, less expensive option for travelers. Because of such benefits, federal employees should be able to use and be reimbursed for the use of TNCs for official business.

GSA currently allows federal employees to reimburse for using TNCs, if the applicable agencies and departments so choose. But, some federal entities are unclear on this point. It would be advantageous for all agencies and departments to know that, should they decide to do so, TNC use by their employees may be reimbursed. GSA should thus proactively issue a guidance explaining that TNC use is reimbursable.

State governments have already had success by authorizing this mode of transportation. For example, California Governor Jerry Brown recently signed into law AB 229, which officially authorizes state employees traveling on official business to be reimbursed for the use of TNCs. We hope that GSA will follow this lead, by clearly stating that federal employees may be reimbursed for official travel using TNCs.

Moreover, we must always be cognizant of wisely using taxpayer dollars. TNCs often offer a less expensive and more convenient option for federal employees, and, as such, GSA should be encouraging their use as a reimbursable expense for federal agencies and suggesting these agencies promote TNC use among federal employees when advantageous to the government.

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As TNCs become an increasingly important part of our transportation landscape, it is important that the federal government keep pace with these developments. Thank you for your attention to this important issue, and please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Darrell Issa
Member of Congress
Co-Chair Sharing Economy Caucus

Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress
Co-Chair Sharing Economy Caucus