



NEWS FROM **Teamsters Local Union 117**

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AIRPORT DRIVERS SUSPECT RETALIATION AS CONTRACTOR TERMINATES 29 FROM FLEET

Drivers Call on Port of Seattle to Bring Justice for the Sea-Tac 29

(TUKWILA) – Sea-Tac Airport taxi and flat-rate drivers responded with calls for justice after taxi airport contractor Eastside for Hire announced the termination of 29 drivers from the airport fleet. Drivers received a communication from Eastside of the terminations on Tuesday, April 24.

“I don’t have thousands of dollars to pay to work at the airport,” said driver Fitaber Gudina in her testimony before Port of Seattle Commissioners on Tuesday. “The only money I have is to buy bread for my children. Please, stop this injustice.”

“We want to be able to work to pay our mortgages and pay for college for our children,” testified Michael Megnta, who has been driving in Seattle for 27 years. “We believe in this society and want to raise the next great generation. Let us work!”

Several of the drivers, including Megnta, were terminated by Eastside shortly after giving testimony on Tuesday. At least 27 of the 29 terminated drivers had participated in a peaceful protest at the airport last week.

“Eastside needs to stop retaliating against drivers and listen to our concerns,” said Suldan Mohamed, a taxi driver who had spoken out against Eastside’s pay-to-work scheme in the media before getting terminated on Tuesday. “We have the right to petition our public officials and not run the risk of getting terminated.”

On April 17, 200 drivers participated in a peaceful protest at Sea-Tac Airport to stop Eastside from extracting thousands of dollars from drivers for their continued access to the airport. Drivers in the fleet have already paid thousands of dollars for the right to serve airport customers. When the Port of Seattle awarded Eastside for Hire the taxi contract in 2016, drivers paid Eastside a minimum of \$4,600 per driver to join the fleet. Drivers also pay monthly dispatch and per trip fees.

“We condemn these unjust terminations,” said John Scearcy, Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 117. “All workers have a right to stand together and voice their concerns to their elected officials without retaliation. Workers have a right to peacefully protest unjust working conditions without being terminated. We call on the Port of Seattle to intervene immediately on behalf of the drivers. Eastside needs to drop its pay-to-work scheme and reinstate its drivers to the airport fleet.”