

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 4, 2016

Mr. Travis Kalanick, CEO  
Uber Technologies Inc.  
1455 Market Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Mr. Kalanick:

As members of the Congressional Black Caucus TECH2020 Diversity Task Force, we write to express our concerns with recent findings from a [study](#) conducted by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) that suggest “significant evidence of racial discrimination” against African American riders – particularly black men – using ride-sharing services like UberX.

The Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) founded CBC TECH2020 in 2015 to bring together the best minds in the tech, non-profit, education, and public sectors to chart a path forward to increase African American diversity and inclusion at all levels of the technology industry. The lack of African American representation in tech means that many of our best and brightest – problem solvers, critical thinkers, and those that challenge conventional thinking – are not included. This means America has not reached its full innovation potential, and our global competitiveness suffers as a result. In addition to full representation of African Americans in the tech sector, CBC TECH2020 is also committed to ensuring African Americans and communities of color are not discriminated as end-users of technology products.

We are deeply concerned with the findings from the NBER study that suggest UberX’s structure allows drivers to discriminate against African American riders. In Boston, African American men are nearly three times more likely to have their trips cancelled, compared to White men. This is consistent with findings that African American riders have statistically significant longer wait times to be picked up once their requests had been accepted<sup>1</sup>. The study also suggests that it takes longer for African American riders to have their ride requests accepted by UberX drivers than White riders.

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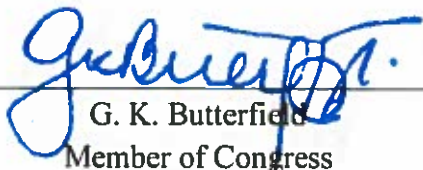
<sup>1</sup> When a driver accepts then cancels a ride, a new driver has to be assigned, which takes more time. The report notes that “If Uber initially sends the trip request to the nearest driver, then the reassigned driver will tend to be farther away, increasing the waiting time.” The authors theorize that “because UberX drivers see a passenger’s name and photo only after accepting a trip, UberX drivers discriminate by canceling after accepting the trip and seeing the passenger’s name.”

While we acknowledge that the peer-to-peer, or sharing economy, can offer cheaper transportation options and employment opportunities to communities who might not otherwise have them, discrimination against users is unacceptable.

We are confident that you and Uber will work expeditiously and diligently to address the concerns that we have raised. As such, we would look forward to meeting with you and your staff to establish an ongoing dialogue and to hear Uber's plan to address these concerns.

Thank you for your consideration on this very important issue.

Sincerely,



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G. K. Butterfield  
Member of Congress



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Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



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Emmanuel Cleaver  
Member of Congress



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Hakeem Jeffries  
Member of Congress

Cc: Mr. David Plouffe, Senior Vice President of Policy and Strategy