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Testimony In Opposition to House Bill 2019
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Chairman Francis and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony in opposition to HB 2019. The question with this bill is: Where does this end? You substitute “construction worker” for “transportation network” and now all construction workers will be denied workers’ compensation coverage, unemployment insurance, minimum wage, overtime and other protections. And it would increase our taxes, because these rich app companies are foisting their obligations to pay employment taxes onto the backs of worker families.

But, we know where this ends. Uber, Lyft and others are also supporting a bill introduced in the US Congress (Worker Flexibility Act) that creates independent contractor status for all workers, simply by signing a so-called flexibility agreement. On top of that, the contracts are given the power to void all state and local wage and hour laws. So much for flexibility, the dignity of labor and state rights. That’s where this ends.

This bill and Uber and Lyft’s proposed bill in Congress, assume that there is equal bargaining power between a lone worker and massive, rich corporations. That is a fantasy. There is no bargaining. It’s sign this boilerplate contract or stay unemployed and struggle to pay for your rent and groceries.

We know the proponents of these bills will say that workers like independent contractor status because it gives them flexibility. That is a false choice. You can be an employee with flexible work hours. They often point to their polls of their workers, but what was the question asked? Was it: “Would you rather be an employee with imposed fixed work hours or have the flexibility of being an independent contractor?”

There are numerous complaints from app workers of low pay, pay that can be below the minimum wage. That’s where this ends, and it is not something that supports or expands a vibrant middle class. We urge the committee to oppose House Bill 2019. Thank you.