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California Welcomes Insurance Coalition for Ride Sharing, Uber Joins In.

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — On Feb. 10, ride sharing companies took another major step toward establishing a foothold in the world of urban transportation when the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) officially recognized and welcomed the creation of the first ever Peer-to-Peer Rideshare Insurance Coalition.

The CPUC, the governing organization of ride-sharing civic technology companies such as Lyft, Uber and others, released a statement of welcome to the coalition that aims to collaborate with the insurance industry to support peer-to-peer ride sharing growth.

On Feb. 10, Lyft announced the list of members slated to attend the first Peer-to-Peer Rideshare Insurance Coalition meeting during the last week of February. The members are:

- John Zimmer, Co-Founder and President, Lyft
- Amy Fox, Partnership Development, Lyft
- Beth Stevens, General Counsel, Sidecar
- Corey Owens, Public Policy, Uber
- Phil Recht, Former Chief Counsel, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for U.S. DOT
- Bill Vainisi, Senior Vice President & Deputy General Counsel, Allstate Insurance
- Chuck Wallace, Founder, Esurance
- Kedar Deshpande, Strategic Initiatives, Farmers Insurance
- Marzia Zafar, Director of Planning & Policy, California Public Utilities Commission
- Carol Brown, Chief of Staff to Commission President Peevey, California Public Utilities Commission

Though announced by Lyft in a blog on Feb. 5, this is the first time the CPUC has formally recognized its involvement as a participating observer in the coalition.

“I’m happy to see this diverse set of participants come together to find a market solution that will enhance insurance for the Travel Network Companies,” said CPUC President Michael Peevey, the commissioner assigned to TNC proceedings, in a CPUC release.

“I will keep a close eye on this, and if there is an insurance gap that has been identified and confirmed, then I will propose regulations that could close the gap if the market has not stepped in to do so,” Peevey said.

Marzia Zafar, director of the CPUC’s Policy and Planning Division, also confirmed today that Uber, which had not initially signed on as a founding member, was now a part of the coalition as well. A notable development, considering the company is currently defending itself in a liability lawsuit after a 6-year-old girl was killed on New Year’s Eve in San Francisco by a driver who claimed to be a part of Uber. The lawsuit, filed on Jan. 27 by the girl’s family, has pushed liability issues of ridesharing companies into the forefront of public debate.

On Sept. 19 the CPUC confirmed itself as the regulatory agency and set insurance regulations for

ride sharing companies in addition to regulations such as criminal background checks, driver training programs, zero tolerance for drugs and alcohol, and 19-point vehicle inspections. The current insurance coverage amount is \$1 million per incident for ride sharing vehicles.

Leading up to the Sept. 19 decision, Uber was one of the few ride sharing organizations to advocate against the CPUCs authority over transportation networks, according the CPUC Decision Document. Uber argued the regulation may inhibit innovations within the industry and that “no public policy or public interest is advanced by such an extension of the law.”

The coalition’s first meeting is scheduled to take place in February, and a full list of members will be shared later this week.

Governing

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