



**Testimony to Philadelphia City Council  
Presented by Donna Cooper, Executive Director, Children First  
Re: Resolutions 26025 and 26028**

My name is Donna Cooper, I live in Councilman Young's district, and I am here to speak to the resolutions to enact new taxes on rideshare companies and cell phone tower owners.

I support both of these taxes because they tax billion-dollar corporations. Let me say that again, they are taxes on corporations currently valued at \$140 billion and \$5 billion. The CEOs and owners of these rideshare companies are among the wealthiest .01% of all Americans. They can afford to pay for the future of our children.

Rideshare companies are projected to make \$1 billion on rideshare trips in Philadelphia this year. In fact, it may be well over that, they ended last year raking in \$898 million in revenue from rides originating in Philadelphia.

Meanwhile their profits per ride are rising astronomically. Although the number of rides last year was comparable to the number of rides in 2019 pre-covid, their revenues grew by \$300 million in the last five years. That's only possible because the owners have ratcheted down what they pay the drivers to extract more profit. Meanwhile their C-Suite of five corporate executives is getting paid \$100 million this year.

This council has been a champion for kids and for low-income families. It's why I hold you in such high respect.

You know that the \$50.4 million that these tax resolutions enable, will save 340 teachers, counselors and climate staff who everyday serve lowest income kids our city – they are the students whose parents cannot afford catholic school, Springside Chestnut Hill, The Philadelphia School, the Prep, Penn Charter or Friends Select.

These revenues will not only save the jobs of the very educators and others that are helping these children learn, but they will also pay for transpasses for the lowest wage workers in the Philadelphia school district and take low-income Philadelphians out of PPA debtors limbo.

Uber acted in true monopoly capitalism fashion by immediately telling you that they will pass this \$1 fee onto their passengers. They are not worried about the competition; they control the market so they can charge whatever they want.

Uber and Lyft are implementing a six-figure twisted PR and ad campaign trying to argue that this is a regressive tax. The real regressive policy is cutting school counselors from low-income neighborhoods to spare billion-dollar corporations from paying taxes. Change the narrative, support this tax and demand that Uber and Lyft stop bilking Philadelphians by agreeing to pay this fair \$1 per ride fee from \$1 billion they will make off of Philadelphians this year.

I wish you could impose a tax on billionaires, or tax high income properties more than others. Unfortunately, the state ties your hands - but with this tax you can get billionaires to pay a small portion of their share. Our kids' education is hanging in the balance; please don't let these Tech companies steal their future.