



OFFICE OF THE BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT
THE BRONX COUNTY BUILDING
851 GRAND CONCOURSE
BRONX, NEW YORK 10451

RUBEN DIAZ JR.
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

TEL. 718-590-3500
FAX. 718-590-3537
E-MAIL: rdiazjr@bronxbp.nyc.gov

May 29, 2015

Ms. Meera Joshi
Chairperson
Taxi & Limousine Commission
33 Beaver Street, 22nd Floor
New York, NY 10004

Dear Ms. Joshi:

I am incredibly disheartened and upset to learn that Carmen Yulin Cruz, the Mayor of San Juan, Puerto Rico, had two bad experiences with yellow taxi drivers during her recent visit to The Bronx.

First, she was kicked out of a yellow taxi when she gave her destination as the Bronx Opera House hotel, a new amenity in The Hub. Later, when she was finally able to hail a cab, her driver complained about the trip throughout the ride. Not only does this make taxi drivers look bad, it casts unnecessary aspersions on my borough and what it has to offer.

As a former employee of the Taxi & Limousine Commission I am well aware of the rules that govern street hails, and I know that what Mayor Cruz's first driver did is illegal. Yellow taxi drivers are not allowed to deny service based on the destination of their passengers. In fact, they are not even allowed to ask a prospective passenger about their destination prior to embarking on their trip.

Beyond that, the refusal of service to The Bronx is a troubling precedent, and works against the major strides this borough has taken over the past two decades. Our borough has numerous world-class tourist destinations, as well as some of the best culinary options the world has to offer. Yet we often hear from borough residents and travelers how difficult it is to take a yellow taxi to the borough. If yellow taxi drivers are refusing service to The Bronx, or only providing that service begrudgingly, how many potential tourists is my borough losing because of this? The Bronx has seen significant transformation in recent years, and we cannot effectively tell that story if yellow taxi drivers are refusing to bring passengers here.

I hope that your agency will provide a thorough investigation into Mayor Cruz's claims. In addition, I believe that your agency must examine the attitudes of its drivers towards my borough, in order to ensure that Mayor Cruz's experience was the exception, not the rule.

Please feel free to reach out to me directly to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

Ruben Diaz Jr.