

Driver Testimony

Good morning, Chairman Burgess, Ranking Member Schakowsky, and committee members.

My name is Luceele Smith and I appreciate the opportunity to address you today and speak about my experience working with Uber. I began driving with Uber in June 2014 and prior to that I worked in the legal field and served eight years in the Air Force. My son is also in the Air Force and will be deployed soon.

Uber has been a great opportunity for me and many others. What I like the most about Uber is the flexibility, it allows drivers to make money on their own time. I don't have a boss to report to. I don't have to be "on call." I work when I want, for as long or as little as I want. I use Uber as supplementary income to finance my travel. I'm from the British Virgin Islands and use my extra income to visit my family - and when I want to travel, I don't need to ask permission, I just go!

Driving with Uber has also helped me discover the city in new ways which has been very rewarding. In fact, I've encouraged friends and even riders to become drivers because I think it's a great opportunity not only to see new parts of your home-town, but to connect with people in your community who you otherwise would never have met.

Every rider I meet is grateful for the choice and convenience that Uber has brought to their lives. The people component is my best part. Having traveled all over the world, I can strike up a conversation with anyone and point out new restaurants or shows in town. When it comes to my riders, I have had so many good experiences. I remember I picked up a couple that was going to a Redskins game directly from the airport. It started raining and the woman was so upset about her hair, so I gave them my umbrella and they were so grateful. It's an opportunity to help people in big and small ways.

I have worked in traditional jobs before, but there's nothing else out there where you can set your own schedule and set your own goals. Sometimes drivers ask me, "how much do you make?" I tell them, "you can make as much as you want." If I want to make \$500 to fly to St. Thomas for Christmas, I know I have between now and Christmas to make that much. With other jobs, the only way to earn more money is to take another job or get a promotion - which can take years. That freedom removes a lot of stress from your life. And that freedom is priceless. Knowing you can log in anytime and make money - that's incredible. It's unmatched.

It's an opportunity that I enjoy, and I know many people feel the same way.
Thank you.