

MEDIA ADVISORY FOR: Thursday May 23rd, 2019 at 10:30 AM

Contact: Roxane Marquez, (213) 705-1078, roxane.marquez@seiu721.org

Mike Long, (213) 304-9777, mike.long@seiu721.org

UBER AND LYFT DRIVERS TO TAKE OVER UBER HUB DURING MASS ACTION IN SOLIDARITY WITH NATIONWIDE ‘FIGHT FOR \$15’ STRIKE

Hundreds of Uber and Lyft Drivers Will Join Forces to Highlight Need for \$30/Hour Pay Rate to Cover Living Wage and Cost of Doing Rideshare Business; ‘Motor March’ in West Adams District to Follow Alongside ‘Fight for \$15’

Los Angeles, CA — Hundreds of Uber and Lyft drivers will take over an Uber Hub during Thursday’s mass action and demand a fair rate of \$30/hour rate to cover both the overhead costs of the rideshare business and provide a \$15 livable wage to drivers. Many Uber and Lyft drivers report that on average, after expenses, they take home less than minimum wage. The Uber hub take-over will mark the first part of a massive all-day protest to raise awareness of the plight of Gig Economy and other low-wage workers. In addition to the \$30/hour living wage, drivers will demand a roll-back of Uber’s recent 25% rate cut, and an end to arbitrary driver deactivations.

The Uber hub take-over will be followed by a “Motor March” to a South L.A. McDonald’s restaurant. During the “Motor March,” Uber and Lyft employees will drive behind a large procession of L.A. fast food workers, child care providers, home care workers and janitors who are all part of the “Fight for \$15” movement.

WHAT: Uber Hub Takeover and “Motor March” with “Fight for \$15” Workers

WHO: Uber and Lyft drivers, fast food workers, child care providers, home care workers, janitors and Union allies from the “Fight for \$15” Movement

WHEN: Thursday, May 23, 2019 starting at 10:30 AM

WHERE: Uber Hub
2118 S. Hobart Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90018
(Near Western Avenue off-ramp just north of from 10 Freeway entrance/exit)

VISUALS: Uber and Lyft drivers will feature decorated cars with pro-worker signage, including Mobile Workers’ Alliance car flags and signs. Giant floating banners will follow participants travelling on foot and by car in the “Motor March.”

Background: Civic leaders throughout Los Angeles, and beyond, often point to the popularity of rideshare services like Uber and Lyft to demonstrate that the local economy has recovered and that economic security is within reach for anyone willing to work hard. But the direct experience of numerous gig economy workers contradicts this claim. Uber and Lyft drivers consistently

report working long hours for low pay, as they cover virtually all the costs of doing business with little to no power to change the terms of their job contract. Recently, for instance, Uber mandated a 25% rate cut – which Uber drivers had no choice but to accept given their contract worker status. Both Uber and Lyft also subject their employees to unfair “driver deactivations” – further impeding the ability of their own workforce to earn a livable wage.

“Rideshare workers throughout Los Angeles are ready to take the wheel and take control of their economic destiny,” said Bob Schoonover, President of SEIU California and SEIU 721, which is organizing the members of the Mobile Workers’ Alliance. “Uber and Lyft drivers know from direct experience what it’s like to take on all the costs of contract work but take home very few of the benefits they were promised. The fact that rideshare workers even need a \$30/hour living wage, which is double what their “Fight for \$15” counterparts are asking for, speaks volumes about the sheer amount of overhead costs that Uber and Lyft drivers are expected to bear – including fuel purchases, car maintenance and general wear-and-tear costs on their vehicle. But just like their counterparts, Uber and Lyft drivers understand that the only way for them to really move forward is through organizing and direct action.”

###