



May 23, 2025

The Honorable Colorado House of Representatives
The 75th General Assembly
First Regular Session
State Capitol
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Honorable Members of the Colorado House of Representatives:

Today I vetoed House Bill 25-1291, "Transportation Network Company Consumer Protection" at 2:55pm. I appreciate the sponsors' work and effort on this bill and their commitment to improving safety for riders and drivers alike.

While I appreciate the sponsors' intent to ensure the safety of riders and drivers, House Bill 25-1291 (HB 25-1291) would impose unworkable regulations on Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), and potentially jeopardize their continued operation in Colorado. I want to make sure that Uber, Lyft, and others will be able to continue to operate in Colorado, but are far more accountable for the safety of riders and drivers. These services go beyond convenience by providing essential means of travel for many Coloradans and improve public safety primarily by reducing driving under the influence.

In June 2014, Colorado became the first state to enact a law regulating on-demand TNCs. At that time, the rideshare industry was relatively nascent, and our pathbreaking regulatory structure under the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) provided important regulatory certainty and safeguards. Colorado also passed nation-leading legislation last year (SB 24-075) focused largely on enhancing the rights of TNC drivers, though not addressing the PUC's regulatory authority in this area. Given changes in the TNC industry since Colorado passed its novel law a decade ago, it is reasonable to revisit our regulatory structure and ensure agencies have appropriate authority to safeguard health and safety.

I believe we should take further steps to stop any type of assault or harassment that occurs within TNCs against drivers or passengers. These stories are harrowing and awful, and no one should have to face danger just because they take a rideshare. I commend the sponsors for their dedication in addressing a challenging and sensitive issue. I also want to thank the survivors who have bravely come forward to share their experiences—your voices matter deeply, and we are committed to taking meaningful steps to ensure you continue to be heard and that these companies are held accountable. Enhancing safety in rideshares is a goal I share as we work to make Colorado one of the ten safest states.

However, this legislation goes beyond a narrowly tailored public safety focus and includes a number of concerning provisions – including unclear language on audio-video recording, a prohibition on arbitration that we believe conflicts with the Federal Arbitration Act, and inoperable timelines to produce new regulatory rules. Together, these changes would jeopardize these services in Colorado to an untenable degree, and could very well lead to companies that Coloradans rely on exiting the market, raising prices, or reducing the number of drivers. This in turn would create economic hardship for the thousands of people who rely on the platforms for income and to go to medical appointments, as well as potentially add more drunk drivers to the road. I've received various outreach expressing concerns about potential disruption to rideshare services, including from MADD, Rocky Mountain Victim Law Center, and AAA, who wrote in a joint letter to my office, "[r]idesharing is an extremely valuable tool for saving lives on our roads. We're concerned that a disruption or even a reduction in rideshare

services could impact DUI prevention efforts, resulting in more deaths and injuries on Colorado roads.”

Specific to the bill, I am concerned about the language around audio-visual recording, which was modified at the last minute and is likely unworkable for both the PUC and TNCs as currently constructed. Drivers and riders are entitled to privacy, and while I appreciate the movement on this issue, the net effect of the remaining language in the bill still strongly suggests making recording mandatory, which will put this law in direct conflict with other state privacy laws and make compliance a challenge. Moreover, the relevant data retention pieces remain challenging, without ensuring proper security protocols, and creates operational difficulties.

Other problematic provisions create significant legal hazard. For example, the language prohibiting arbitration clauses in rider agreements is likely preempted by federal law. I fear victims attempting to bring a claim in court in reliance of this bill will have their claims dismissed based on federal law and the arbitration clauses in the user terms and agreements, causing substantial delay in victims achieving relief from the TNCs. Provisions around deactivation limit due process for drivers and put TNCs in the position of judge and jury just one year after we strengthened drivers’ rights in this area. I am also troubled that, despite expanding the disqualifying criteria for drivers based on some types of criminal history, the bill decreases the amount of time between when a DUI has occurred and when a driver can again get behind a rideshare wheel, which could actually make TNCs less safe, the opposite of the intent of the legislation.

Even though I am vetoing this legislation, I am directing my administration to take active steps, in partnership with the sponsors and proponents of HB 25-1291, to enhance rideshare safety. And I am also challenging TNCs to do more to protect riders and drivers, including being more transparent about their rights, and more vigorous in preventing serious crimes. The status quo isn’t sufficient. Enhancing criminal record checks for drivers and preventing bad actors, including impersonators, from getting behind the wheel are commonsense steps we can and should take, and steps we can address now.

Today, we are taking action to do just that. First, I am directing the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) to work with the sponsors of HB25-1291 and other interested parties to identify shared policy objectives that can be achieved through immediate executive action and through targeted legislative policy during the 2026 legislative session.

Beyond the development of these shared policy goals, I am directing DORA to work with the PUC to review their current rules for TNCs and strengthen them where authority currently exists – with a particular focus on safety specifically including strengthened driver impersonation and penalties. I am also requesting the PUC consider performing enhanced audits to ensure TNCs are complying with background check requirements and previous commitments made by the TNC industry to exceed the baseline statutory requirements. This work should be done in consultation with the sponsors and advocates of HB25-1291 as well as other stakeholders.

I believe it is not yet well understood that the PUC is the primary industry watchdog and regulator, and is where consumers should direct complaints. As such, I am directing DORA to work with PUC to conduct additional outreach to ensure consumers are aware of the PUC’s regulatory role and how to file complaints. Additionally, I am encouraging the PUC to take a holistic approach to its current rules and determine what additional safety enhancements it can undertake under the existing statute, and where it may need additional authority.

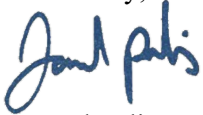
This year the Colorado Office of Policy, Research & Regulatory Reform (COPRRR) within DORA will undertake a sunset review of the PUC. That process will culminate in a series of legislative recommendations, including recommendations regarding the PUC’s authority over TNCs, which I look forward to partnering with the legislature to move forward in the 2026 legislative session. As DORA undertakes that review, I am specifically directing it to explore recommendations to update the TNC regulatory structure and, if needed, expand the PUC’s authority in regulating TNCs, with a specific focus on passenger safety and enhanced transparency for consideration in the 2026 legislative session. I also direct DORA to convene all impacted stakeholders during the sunset review, including the sponsors and those who actively participated in the development of HB25-1291. I

am also directing my staff to work closely with all interested parties to ensure their concerns are considered during the sunset process.

I thank the sponsors for their dedication to this challenging issue and look forward to working with them on these upcoming actions. HB 25-1291 should not represent the end of this conversation on ride share safety. It is my sincere hope and intention that HB25-1291 and the executive actions outlined in this letter will represent a momentum-building moment for our collective efforts to hold TNC companies accountable in addressing the gaps in TNC rider and driver safety. I look forward to continuing this work with the bill sponsors over the next year building upon these immediate executive actions and forthcoming collaboration on potential additional legislative solutions to champion in the 2026 legislative session.

For the above reasons, HB 25-1291 is disapproved and vetoed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Polis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jared Polis
Governor
State of Colorado

cc: Jena Griswold, Colorado Secretary of State