

## *Protect Passengers in Federally Funded Transportation!*



# **Congress Should Require Fingerprinting & Drug Testing of Drivers in Federally Funded Contract Services – *Safety First!***

**Background:** The U.S. government can save considerable amounts of money by contracting transportation services out to third parties, saving on insurance, fuel and maintenance costs. In order for a program like this to be successful for industry and the federal government, the first priority must always be safety.

More than 80 programs across the federal government are authorized to fund transportation services for individuals with disabilities, older adults, persons with lower incomes, and others who require alternatives to traditional public transportation service. Funding agencies include the departments of Transportation, Health and Human Services, Education and Veterans Affairs. Many of these services are competitively bid to private sector transportation companies, such as taxicab, transportation network companies, sedan, paratransit and nonemergency medical transportation companies. In fact, the GSA is looking to issue one such request for proposals from companies to provide transportation for federal workers, a contract valued at \$162 million per year. It is imperative any transportation provider chosen in that process take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of federal workers—or any passenger using a transportation service funded with federal dollars.

**It is time to enact a federal requirement that drivers providing contracted, third-party passenger transportation service funded in whole or in part with federal funds pass a national, fingerprint-based criminal background check that uses the FBI's database, as well as a drug and alcohol test.**

Agencies like the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Health and Human Services require background and drug testing of their contractors, as does the Department of Defense for contractors who deliver goods to military installations all across the country.

The federal government can lead the nation on passenger safety by requiring private sector drivers providing contracted transportation services to submit to a biometric-based criminal history records check that uses the FBI's database before driving government employees or members of the public. All contracted drivers should also submit to drug and alcohol testing.

**Request:** The Transportation Alliance urges Congress to pass legislation requiring drivers for any private sector company awarded a grant or contract to provide for-hire transportation services, paid for in whole or in part with federal funds, to pass both a fingerprint-based background check and a drug and alcohol test.

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### **THE FACTS ON BACKGROUND CHECKS**

- Cost: \$60-90, covered by driver.
- Process takes 24-48 hours to complete.
- Between 2013-2018 industry identified some 400 acts of violence by drivers who had not been fingerprinted.
- Fingerprint background checks are 43 times more effective than 3<sup>rd</sup> party background checks.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> party checks currently done by TNC's are done online with no real verification process.
- There are more than 80 programs funding transportation across the country.