

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence
For HB 1745

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Hearing Date: March 22, 2023 8:00 AM

Ware Wendell, Executive Director
Texas Watch
Austin, TX

I am the Executive Director of Texas Watch, a statewide, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that has worked to protect consumers and our courts for nearly 25 years. We write today in opposition to HB 1745 because it creates unnecessary obstacles for Texans harmed in rideshare vehicles, aligning corporate incentives toward danger and away from safety.

Many passengers in rideshare vehicles are in a vulnerable state. Reports from major rideshare corporations like Uber and Lyft demonstrate far too many rapes, sexual assaults, physical assaults, and even fatalities occurring during these trips. If a passenger is harmed, their rights must be protected and the corporation causing the harm, whether it is an assault or a wreck, should be held fully accountable.

Instead, HB 1745 places legal hurdles in front of those harmed in a rideshare vehicle. The legislation applies to Texans seeking damages for death, bodily injury, or loss of property. It requires special affidavits from the victim, including the signature of a third-party expert if the damages exceed standard insurance coverage limits. If the victim does not comply with this unique law, their case would be dismissed with prejudice. And if rideshare companies are not held accountable, safety suffers for all of us.

This is the wrong public policy for our state. Our laws should improve safety, not increase danger. For no reason, HB 1745 will treat rideshare victims differently under the law, raising costs, creating more delays for them, and effectively benefiting rideshare corporations that have created the harm. There is no need to give special protections to special interests like big, out-of-state corporations that hurt Texans.

We, therefore, urge you to please vote no on HB 1745.