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**Contact:**

Conan Knoll

[conan@emcstrategies.com](mailto:conan@emcstrategies.com)

(831) 524-6764

***Survey: App-Based Drivers in NYC Struggling Financially, Want Benefits***

*Survey and focus group studies find New York app-based drivers struggle financially and any unexpected expense can cause financial ruin; support surcharges on app-based rides to fund benefits package*

**New York City, Dec. 5, 2018**—An [opinion survey](#) released today by [IDG Benefits Fund](#), with support from [Omidyar Network](#), shows the majority of app-based drivers in New York City struggle to pay their bills and say any unexpected expense could lead to financial catastrophe—and as such, support placing surcharges on app-based rides to help pay for a benefits package for drivers.

These drivers, 89 percent of whom drive full time, have difficulty making ends meet: An 85 percent majority struggle “to make their monthly payments like rent, utilities, car payments and other bills,” and if unable to drive due to illness or car trouble, 70 percent would run out money within a month.

Eighty-seven percent of the drivers support a bill increasing surcharges on app-based rides to create a benefits package, including healthcare, vision and disability for drivers. The state of New York and New York City are considering such proposals.

“As New York leaders grapple with potential benefit solutions for independent drivers, this research reveals the financial realities drivers face and the benefits they say would make a positive difference in their lives,” said Andrew Greenblatt, executive director of IDG Benefits Fund.

IDG Benefits Fund and Omidyar Network commissioned the survey of 697 app-based drivers in New York City, fielded in October by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, along with two focus groups, to understand drivers’ economic pain points and study what social protections are most needed.

“We need to find better ways to fund and deliver meaningful benefits for workers who are living on the edge. This research--with insights coming directly from the workers themselves--is an important step toward better understanding their realities and needs so that we can better meet them,” said Tracy Williams, a director at Omidyar Network.

#### **Additional Findings:**

- Seven in 10 drivers have saved \$1,000 or less for retirement and nearly half (49 percent) have no retirement savings. These numbers do not improve for drivers over 50.
- While there is significant interest in nearly every benefit tested, workers’ top priorities are: “disability insurance to cover you if you get hurt or are unable to work,” (66 percent); “free legal services, including help with traffic tickets, Taxi and Limousine Commission, immigration lawyers, family law or disputes with a landlord,” (51 percent); \$50,000 in life insurance (37 percent); and \$50 a month in a retirement savings account (32 percent).
- One third of this population (32 percent) is not covered by health insurance. By contrast, the percentage of New Yorkers who lack health care is 5 percent.
- 95 percent want to belong to a worker or driver organization to demand better wages and improve working conditions

[Click here for the full poll report.](#)

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#### **About IDG Benefits Fund**

Founded in 2017, [IDG Benefits Fund](#) has a mission to ensure New York City’s 70,000 independent black car drivers have access to benefits that provide health and economic security. IDG Benefits Fund works with The Black Car Fund of New York, The Independent Drivers Guild, and others to offer drivers a suite of benefits including free vision benefits, free telemedicine benefits, health insurance enrollment assistance, blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar screening, discount prescription drug cards, discount legal services, and deactivation assistance for Uber drivers.