



City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

In the City Council, May 5, 2022

Upon the Recommendation of: Councilor Alex Jarrett
 Councilor Jamila Gore

R-22.101

A RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO A PROPOSITION 22 CLONE BALLOT INITIATIVE

WHEREAS, For society to work fairly for everyone, large tech companies, like Uber, Lyft, and DoorDash, should follow the same rules as every other business; and

WHEREAS, Uber and several of these giant tech companies do not pay into Social Security, do not pay important business taxes, and do not pay their workers fairly or consistently by the same rules that apply to all businesses in Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, Attorney General Healey is currently suing Uber and Lyft for failing to follow our law. In an attempt to escape these violations, the companies have filed House Bill 1234 and a 2022 state ballot referendum question, asking Massachusetts legislators and voters to grant them special exemptions from our labor, civil rights, and consumer protection laws; and

WHEREAS, The Big Tech sponsored bill exempts these "gig economy" companies from paying into Social Security and unemployment, which would cost Massachusetts taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars, and weakening these programs for everyone; and also attempts to shield these companies from liability and financial responsibility if customers or members of the public are injured; and

WHEREAS, The bill, if passed, would create a permanent underclass of low-wage, mostly Black, Brown, and immigrant workers by allowing these companies to pay their workers less than minimum wage and provide few, if any, benefits; and

WHEREAS, At a moment of racial reckoning in our country, the bill would exclude app-based workers from the robust protections against racial discrimination and sexual harassment under the Massachusetts Civil Rights Act, MGL c. 151B; and according to many leading voices, passing this bill would be among the biggest

steps backwards in the fight for equity and opportunity at work since the passage of the 1964 Civil Right Act; and

WHEREAS, Last year, in California, the same companies pushing House Bill 1234 spent more than \$200 million to win a ballot initiative campaign; and now these companies believe they can buy a law to avoid paying into Social Security, avoid paying taxes, and harm workers and consumers; and

WHEREAS, Big Tech executives seek to present a false choice, suggesting that if low-wage workers are given any control over their schedules, they must sacrifice the rights and benefits our laws provide; yet there is nothing that prevents these companies from offering flexible scheduling while also following our civil rights and labor laws today.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Northampton joins many workers, community, faith, environmental justice, racial justice, labor, civil rights, and consumer advocates to urge the Massachusetts Legislature and the residents of Northampton to oppose House Bill 1234 and the proposed 2022 state ballot initiative; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Administrative Assistant to the City Council shall send a copy of this Resolution to Representative Lindsay Sabadosa and Senator Jo Comerford, Attorney General Maura Healey, the Western Mass Area Labor Federation, and Massachusetts Is Not For Sale.