



Testimony of

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Committee on Science, Space and Technology  
U.S. House of Representatives

**Urban Air Mobility – Are Flying Cars Ready for Take-Off?**

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Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Johnson, and Members of the Committee, it is a privilege to be here before you today to discuss the role Uber will play in delivering aerial ridesharing services in the years ahead.

My name is Eric Allison, and I am excited to lead Uber's Elevate initiative. Elevate is our future uberAIR product that aims to allow anyone to push a button and get a flight; to achieve this, we are developing a real-time, on-demand network of air vehicles to deliver time savings to riders on a massive scale.

We are developing uberAIR because we believe aerial ridesharing has the potential to radically improve urban mobility. Every year, millions of hours are wasted in traffic on roads worldwide. In 2016, the Texas Department of Transportation estimated drivers in five of the state's largest metropolitan areas lose about 52 hours a year due to congestion. And the *Los Angeles Times* reports L.A., one of our pilot markets, is the most congested city in the world. For them and for the rest of us, moments stuck on the road represent less time with family, fewer hours growing our economies, and more money spent polluting our world.

As a multi-modal transportation company, Uber believes solving this problem is core to our mission of making transportation safe, reliable, and affordable to everyone, everywhere. Just as skyscrapers allowed cities to use limited land more efficiently, urban air transportation will use three-dimensional airspace to alleviate transportation congestion on the ground. We started this journey two years ago, publishing our *Elevate White Paper*<sup>1</sup> to answer the questions: why don't people fly in cities today, and what barriers must be overcome.

In addressing these questions, we identified an approach to systematically tackle each of these challenges. And in fact, our analysis not only projects aerial ridesharing as feasible, but also

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<sup>1</sup> Uber Elevate: Fast-Forwarding to a Future of On-Demand Urban Air Transportation: <https://www.uber.com/elevate.pdf>

leads us to chart a path to launch at affordable prices, and, once at scale, to operate at rates that may be cheaper than owning and driving your own car.

To achieve this vision, we aim to begin testing vehicles in Texas and California by 2020 and commence certified commercial operations in 2023. During our trial phase, we intend to prove the high safety, constant reliability, and low noise aspects of our service so we may expand passenger operations once we begin deploying certified aircraft in 2023. In both markets, our service holds the promise of reducing congestion and improving quality of life.

Ultimately, no one company can do this alone. Broad-based partnerships with government and industry are critical to achieve this vision. Our partner, Bell, is a leading rotorcraft manufacturer and on the panel with us today. Bell is perfectly positioned to pave the way for safe, reliable, and affordable Uber air taxis. Together with our other vehicle partners — Boeing’s Aurora, Embraer, Pipistrel, and Karem Aircraft — we are actively designing new aircraft to lead a revolution in urban aviation in cities around the globe. We’re proud to be collaborating with these job creators to chart the future.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration is another important partner. We have signed two Space Act Agreements with NASA, one for the development of new Unmanned Traffic Management concepts and Unmanned Aerial Systems and another to explore concepts and technologies for Urban Air Mobility. We’ve also completed a study on ways our aircraft will safely separate from commercial airliners in Dallas-Fort Worth Airport and conducted simulations paving the way for long-term air traffic management solutions. Additional studies to unlocking urban air transportation are ongoing.

We ask Congress to encourage NASA to continue investing in this ecosystem, and we look forward to extending our collaborations with NASA and other governmental partners to work on aircraft innovation, noise limitations, and autonomous flight. As a member of NASA’s Advisory Council Aeronautics Committee, I am confident our joint research efforts can and will help open this market, and ask each of you to encourage and support NASA to continue investing in this exciting new industry.

At Uber, we are investing in aerial ridesharing because it has the potential to deliver time savings at affordable prices to consumers across the world. We see exceptional demand across all large markets for safe, reliable, fast transportation services, and our network can be an excellent supplement to public and private transit options across each of them. The converging forces of improving battery technology, massive utilization through rideshare, and the outset of reliable autonomous aviation will be a true game changer in how people move around cities across the world. Working with world class leaders like those at this table, we believe we can make a sizable impact on this challenge, bringing about lasting positive change for the world in the process.

To give you a sense of how users will live this future transportation experience, I would like to close with a short video illustrating our future concept. I hope you enjoy this projection of the future, and look forward to answering your questions about our vision and approach. Thank you.

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