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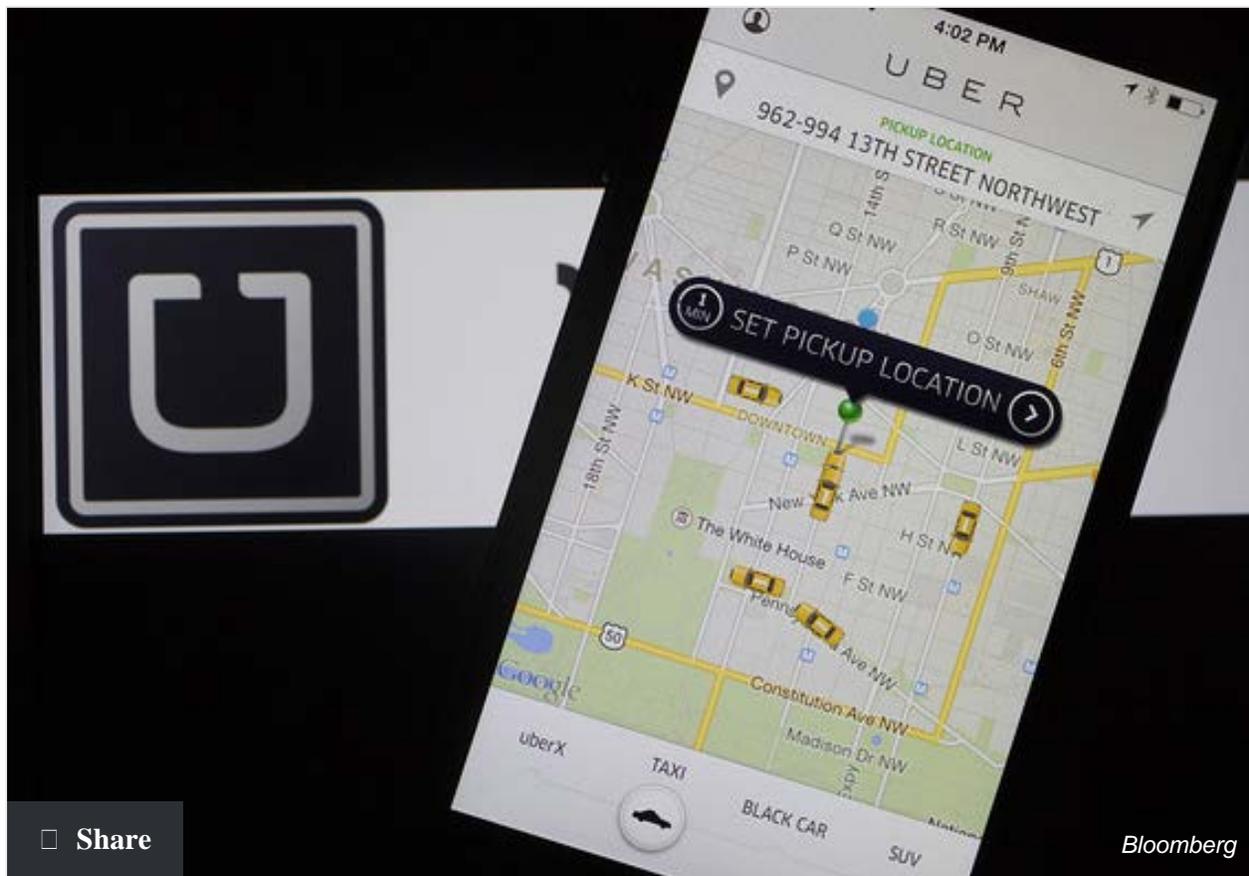
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Is Uber's \$1 'Safe Rides Fee' an insult to passengers?

By [Quentin Fottrell](#)

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Bloomberg

Background checks and interviews are usually part of most companies' recruiting processes. But Uber, the rideshare and taxi service company, is charging customers a fee for the screening of its potential drivers. And given recent sexual assault allegations against the company, Uber's \$1 "Safe

Rides Fee” may be yet another insult to passengers.

Uber introduced the fee last April for UberX in the U.S. and Canada to allay customer concerns about safety. “This Safe Rides Fee supports continued efforts to ensure the safest possible platform for Uber riders and drivers, including a federal, state, and local background check process, regular motor vehicle checks, driver safety education, development of safety features in the app, and more,” it [said in a statement](#). UberX is the company’s less glamorous and cheaper car service — it includes non-luxury cars like the Toyota Prius and minivans, as well as other vehicles. (Uber did not respond to requests for comment.)

“Uber should bear the responsibility of conducting its own background checks,” says Rick Singer, Chief Executive of [GreatApps.com](#). “When was the last time that you went to purchase a coffee or any product or service, and were charged a fee like that? Does Starbucks charge a background check fee to make sure that your barista is not psychotic?”

With a valuation of \$41 billion, he says it’s “laughable” that Uber would charge customers such a fee. And although UberX drivers do receive a background check, [according to the company’s website](#), “there is no formal interview process for UberX.”



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There have been several recent allegations of sexual harassment and assault against Uber drivers. In July, a woman [filed a second-degree sexual assault charge](#) against Uber in D.C. Superior Court. In

June, one woman [told LA Weekly](#) that an UberX driver stroked her face with the back of his hand and asked her to go to the beach (it was after 1 a.m.). The L.A. District Attorney could not track down the alleged victim and no complaint was filed; Uber said it deactivated that driver. In March, a woman [filed a lawsuit](#) in Cook County Circuit Court in Illinois, alleging she was fondled by an Uber driver. (Uber said it deactivated the driver's account.)

And it's not just people who take rides in Uber cars who've had cause to complain. The company, which was [pegged with a valuation of \\$41 billion](#) after a fresh round of funding, recently [came under fire](#) for its lackadaisical approach to riders' privacy and after reports that an executive said he would employ opposition researchers to spread person details of a journalist critical of Uber.

Having a safe driver is something consumers should expect when paying for a transportation service, says investment blogger and founder of [See It Market](#) Andy Nyquist. "Typically, transportation service companies add consumer fees when profit is pinched by things like high energy prices," he says, "and not during collapsing oil and falling gasoline prices."

Edgar Dworsky, founder of ConsumerWorld.org, says the fee is inappropriate. "Uber is beginning to act like a cell carrier where a low price is advertised, but then junk fees are added to inflate the bill."

[Read: Here's what Uber drivers around the world think of the company's leadership](#)

Uber, which operates in over 50 countries, has also been grappling with regulators over safety concerns, which threatens its rapid expansion. The city of Portland, Ore., said Monday that it's suing Uber for "operating an illegal, unregulated transportation service." Charlie Hales, mayor of Portland, said in a statement: "Our main concern is public health and safety." Officials in Delhi, India, on Monday banned Uber and several other app-based car services for failing to carry out adequate safety checks after a woman accused a driver of raping her. On Tuesday, Spain and Thailand also banned Uber.

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A dollar for what? They saying they have conducted background checks, this company is a joke , say that to the woman who was raped in a uber cab.....they did back ground checks on the driver who raped the passenger.....they forgot to check if he was repeat sex offender and was currently out on bail for another rape.

The Delhi governmentdid the right thing....banned uber from operating.All it matters to this company is skimming people's pockets, any which ways.

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Mortgage Equity Savings Auto Credit Cards

	Avg. APR	Last Week	6 Months
Low Interest	10.37%	10.37%	10.37%
Balance Transfer	12.73%	12.73%	12.64%
Business	12.85%	12.85%	12.80%

Student	13.14%	13.14%	13.27%
Reward	14.89%	14.93%	14.97%
Cash Back	14.94%	14.94%	14.91%
Airline	15.46%	15.46%	15.30%
Bad Credit	22.73%	22.73%	22.73%
Instant Approval	23.33%	23.33%	28.00%

Source: CreditCards.com

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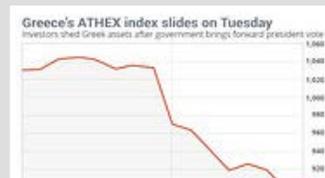
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