

Boston woman signs onto lawsuit against Uber saying she was sexually assaulted by driver



Supporters of Uber, wearing blue, and backers of the taxi cab industry, wearing yellow, converged on the State House on Tuesday for a hearing. A Beacon Hill committee is weighing legislation that would regulate "transportation network companies" like Uber.

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A Boston woman is one of two Jane Does suing the popular ride-for-hire company Uber, arguing they were sexually assaulted by their respective drivers.

The [lawsuit was filed in California](#). Uber, which launched in 2010 and allows users to request a ride through an app on their smartphone, is headquartered in San Francisco.

The lawsuit claims the company does not adequately screen its drivers, some of whom have criminal histories. The company has more than 1 million drivers and is expected to generate \$10 billion in revenue by the end of this year, according to the lawsuit.

Massachusetts lawmakers are considering ways to regulate Uber. Boston Police Commissioner William Evans has called for [Uber drivers to be fingerprinted](#), and said his department is looking at the possibility of fingerprinting taxi drivers as well.

The lawsuit against Uber points to the company's advertising, which suggests that Uber can be used after a night of drinking.

"By marketing heavily toward young women who have been drinking while claiming that rider safety is its #1 priority, Uber is instead putting these women at risk," the lawsuit says.

The lawsuit continues: "Unfortunately, despite its self-proclaimed 'commitment to safety,' opening the Uber App and setting the pick-up location has proven to be the modern day equivalent of electronic hitchhiking. Buyer beware – we all know how these horror movies end."

Identified as "Jane Doe 1," the 20-year-old Boston woman in the lawsuit was allegedly assaulted by an Uber driver, Abderrahim Dakiri, in Feb. 2015.

According to the lawsuit, on Feb. 8, one of Jane Doe 1's friends used the Uber app to ask for a car at 2:30 a.m. The driver dropped off three of Doe 1's friends, and then as she sat in the front passenger seat, she told him her destination.

First, when the vehicle stopped at a red light, Dakiri began groping Ms. Doe 1 in the crotch, upper thigh and top of her pants. Ms. Doe 1 was shocked and terrified.

At the following red light, Dakiri told her that he "really liked her" and forcibly kissed Ms. Doe 1, including on her cheek and neck. Ms. Doe 1's attempts to push him off and yell "no" were to no avail.

The lawsuit adds that she attempted to text several friends, but did not immediately jump out because she did not know which part of the city she was in.

"The next thing she knew, Dakiri's huge body was on top of hers, trying to kiss her and continuing to grope her," the lawsuit says. "Petrified, Ms. Doe 1 was unable to push him off."

She was finally able to unlock the door and ran out of the car, toward a friend's house. The driver was later arrested.

"Jane Doe 2" is a Florida citizen was allegedly sexually assaulted in South Carolina.

"This lawsuit seeks to compensate Jane Doe 1 and Jane Doe 2 for the sexual assaults that they suffered due to Uber's inadequate and disingenuous 'commitment to safety,'" the suit says.

According to [the Boston Globe](#), the company says the drivers are no longer driving for Uber.

"Our thoughts remain with the victims of these two terrible incidents," the statement to the Globe said. "We proactively worked with law enforcement in Massachusetts and South Carolina at the time to share information and aid their investigations."