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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **National Federation of the Blind and Four Blind People File Suit Against RideCharge, Inc. and Three Taxicab Companies in California**

**Los Angeles, California (April 2, 2014):** [The National Federation of the Blind](http://www.nfb.org) (NFB), the oldest and largest organization of blind people in the United States, and four blind people residing in California—Rick Boggs, Geraldine Croom, Rochelle Houston, and Tina Thomas —filed suit today in the United States District Court for the Central District of California against RideCharge, Inc. and three entities that manage taxicab fleets in Southern California: Administrative Services Cooperative, Inc. LA Taxi Cooperative, Inc., and South Bay Yellow Cab Cooperative, Inc. The taxicab cooperatives have deployed RideCharge’s self-service, touchscreen payment terminals, which are inaccessible to blind taxicab riders, in taxicabs throughout Southern California. The complaint alleges violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the California Unruh Civil Rights Act, and the California Disabled Persons Act.

The self-service terminals utilize an entirely visual, touchscreen interface mounted on the back of the front passenger seat that allows sighted taxicab riders to access information and services privately and independently. Among other features, sighted passengers are able to review trip and fare information, privately pay fares with a credit card, and select tip amounts without interacting with the driver. The exclusively visual interface lacks common accessibility features for blind riders. Many other transportation service providers have installed text-to-speech output and tactile controls on their self-service terminals that allow blind riders to operate them independently. As a result of RideCharge’s failure to include these common alternative access features on its

terminals, blind riders are unable to access the information and services offered on these devices.

[Dr. Marc Maurer](#), President of [the National Federation of the Blind](#), said: “The ability to travel safely and independently is central to the ability of blind people to live independent, productive lives. Taxis are a valuable mode of transportation for blind people, particularly in places like Southern California where public transit is not always available. Our right to independent travel is unjustly jeopardized when we enter a taxi that has critical features that cannot be independently accessed by the blind. The laws of the United States and the state of California require, and blind Americans demand, that RideCharge and taxicab companies make all of their self-service terminals accessible to blind taxi riders.”

The National Federation of the Blind and the individual plaintiffs are represented in this matter by Laurence Paradis, Stuart Seaborn, Michael Nunez, and Haben Girma of the Berkeley firm Disability Rights Advocates; Scott LaBarre of the Denver firm LaBarre Law Offices; and Timothy Elder of the Fremont, California firm [TRE Legal Practice](#).

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### **About the National Federation of the Blind**

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) is the oldest, largest, and most influential nationwide membership organization of blind people in the United States. Founded in 1940, the NFB advocates for the civil rights and equality of blind Americans, and develops innovative education, technology, and training programs to provide the blind and those who are losing vision with the tools they need to become independent and successful.