

D.C. Professional Taxicab Drivers Association, Inc.

Newsletter

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Editor - Hassan Abdur-Raheem

Support for the Taxicab Driver's Lawsuit By Aklile Redie

First of all, we thank all of the taxicab drivers who have contributed financially for the lawsuit through direct payments to the legal fund and those who keep their D.C.P.T.D.A. membership current by paying their monthly dues. Second, we are especially grateful to the taxicabs company owners [Elite: \$2,000 Yellow: \$2,000 Washingtonian: \$1,000 World: \$300 and Sun: \$300] who have also contributed financially and encouraged taxicab drivers within their respective companies to become involved. Third, we thank Mr. Zelalm Injera, a community entrepreneur, who donated two hundred dollars.

The financial and moral support we receive from drivers, company owners and community members give the D.C.P.T.D.A. a boost in enthusiasm and dedication to continue the legal fight.

The efforts of the D.C.P.T.D.A. to stop the legislative repression have been enjoined by the Taxicab Industry Group (TIG) headed by Mr. William Wright. The T.I.G. employed Ms. Betty Ann Cane, former D.C. City Council member and sponsor of the *Taxicab Act of 1985*, to lobby the D.C. City Council to reverse D.C. law 50-1501.02, the residency requirement. In soliciting contributors to support our lawsuit, Mr. Jerry Schaffer informed us that the heads of three insurance companies, Fred Brewer, Andrew Schaffer and himself contributed thirty-five hundred dollars (\$3,500) apiece to satisfy the entire ten thousand dollar (\$10,000) fee for Ms. Cane's lobbying efforts.

Please continue to support this significant undertaking or join in if you have not already done so.

Reminder from editor

Although they quite often get mentioned together, membership and the legal fund are two separate entities. Please support both.

Gasoline Prices = Lost Income By John Bugg

First of all, understand that the D.C. Taxicab Commission is *supposed* to take care of this matter. According to the D.C. Taxicab Commission Establishment Act of 1985. The Commission's Panel on Rates and Rules shall have the jurisdiction, power and duty to establish reasonable rates for taxicab service for the transportation of passengers and their property within the District, including all charges, incidentals and directly related expenses to the provision of taxicab service.

A glaring fact from the AAA is that gasoline prices have risen by 43% since March 2006, the date on which the zone map was revised for the most recent fare increase. We have received about 10% since May 2004. The new rate for a one-zone trip, for example, went up from \$5.50 to \$6.50. However, there had been a \$1.50 gasoline surcharge in effect prior to that, meaning that a one-zone trip was \$7.00. With the new rate, we actually *lost* 50 cents per trip. We have not been allowed to pass on the higher gas charges on to the riding public, similar to the airline fare hikes due to fuel costs.

STRIKE??? Yes or No By Nathan Price

Many drivers believe that the only way to fight back against the D.C. Government for its unwarranted legislation against the taxicab industry is to participate in a work stoppage of taxicab service. However, the D.C.P.T.D.A. is cautioning drivers to show patience and restraint, because the most important component in the industry is **the riding public**. If the taxicab drivers strike and thereby alienate the riding public, then support from national politicians and all the people who utilize and depend upon our service could be lost. Such a loss of support could expose the taxicab industry to further negative action from the D.C. Government.

From the Office of Horace Bradshaw

The members of D.C.P.T.D.A. need to know that as of now, no new court date has been set yet. When we submitted our most recent paperwork concerning the case, Judge Kravitz informed us that he would be on vacation for a few weeks during the month of August. This means that he will finally read all of the documents that we have submitted when he returns. The case as presented is based on why drivers need to possess an H-Tag in order to legally own and operate a taxicab in the District of Columbia. Some drivers have already tried unsuccessfully to legally own and operate a taxicab by getting a regular tag in Maryland or Virginia as the D.C. Taxicab Commission's Interim Chairman, Causton Toney, has specified as the way to do so without having an H-Tag.

We are currently seeking anyone who has accurate information on the history of the H-Tag, for example, when it was created and the reason for its creation and how it is intended to be used. There are records that should exist within the D.C. Government that so far have not been found and/or available to us as to what the D.C. City Council (or some other government agency) must have said when the H-Tag was first instituted. If you think you can provide any factual data concerning this, please contact the D.C.P.T.D.A. immediately so that they can get this information to us right away.

Encouragement to Vote and Endorsements

By Carolyn Robinson

The D.C.P.T.D.A. is **encouraging all members** of our organization to participate in the upcoming elections, not only in D.C., but also in Maryland and Virginia. Our BY-LAWS stipulate that the organization participate in the political arena. We are actively trying to set up a meeting/forum with Kathy Patterson, Candidate for Council Chairman, to discuss our concerns and the needs of the organization. The D.C.P.T.D.A. has decided to endorse her candidacy. The member-ship will be notified when the date/time has been finalized.

Mayoral candidate Adrian Fenty has agreed to meet with the organization to listen to our concerns. Woodbridge Library will be the meeting place once the date/time has been established.

Why ALL Drivers Need to Support DCPTDA

By Billy Ray Edwards

All D.C. taxicab drivers have been affected as we have virtually LOST our business license, known better as the DCTC. This is one of the main concerns in our current lawsuit against the D.C. Government. Many believe that only non-residents are affected by this loss since a D.C. resident can still get tags. If you have registered your taxicab (new or renewal) since March 2006 you know that you no longer possess a DCTC (pink 4x6 card) in addition to your registration card, but rather, the DCTC is now **included** on your registration card. Do not be fooled and sleep on this matter. Anyone who owns a taxicab in D.C. has been infringed upon by this, regardless of where you live.

DCPTDA Getting Excessive Returned Mail

By Hassan Abdur-Raheem

We have noticed that a large volume of the mail that is sent out is returned to us due to incorrect addresses. Please, if you are a member and you have not been receiving any mail from us, you need to contact us immediately to supply the correct address. You can contact the DCPTDA either by calling 202-832-3002 or sending an email message to dcptda@verizon.net. We can also save by sending information through email instead of regular mail. Be sure to give us your correct email address as well.

Condolences to Emmett Clark

In addition to effectively be a leader, lately the Chairman of the Board of DCPTDA, Mr. Emmett Clark, Jr., has had to make numerous trips to North Carolina to tend to his ailing father. On Thursday, August 10, 2006 his father, Mr. Emmett Clark Sr., passed and we are asking that you express condolences to the family and keep them in your prayers. As we do not know of all who may have recently experienced the loss of a loved one, DCPTDA would like to express sympathy to anyone else that may be grieving such a loss.

Did You Know?

Failure to have mandatory use of seat belts signage carries a \$100.00 fine.