

D.C. Professional Taxicab Drivers Association, Inc.

Newsletter

May 2006

Volume 1
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D.C.P.T.D.A., Inc. Currently Filing New LawsUIT

As you may know, the DCPTDA unsuccessfully filed a lawsuit against the D.C. Government. We have now retained Mr. Horace Bradshaw, Jr., to represent us in filing a new lawsuit. In this new suit, the defendant will not only be the D.C. Government but will include D.C. Dept. of Transportation, D.C. Dept. of Motor Vehicles and D.C. Taxicab Commission as separate entities. Also, the Plaintiff will still be the DCPDTA but will include one driver, Babf O. Ogunjimi, who resides in Maryland and one driver, Mahman M. Yunus, who resides in Virginia. More information on this can be found in the article in this newsletter that reviews the April 2006 meeting.

Translators Needed Immediately

During both the March and April public meetings of the DCPTDA, several board members have assured us that this organization is for everyone who drives a taxicab without regard to cab company, race, religion, nationality, etc. With this in mind, there is undoubtedly a need to convey information in languages other than English. If you are a cab driver or other participant with the DCPTDA who is fluent in a foreign language, we are appealing to you to help in this endeavor. We need to have the newsletter, as well as other material, to be available to drivers in other languages. Anyone interested in assisting should contact the DCPTDA either by calling 202-832-3002 or sending an email message to dcptda@verizon.net for more information. Thanks in advance.

DCPTDA Membership and the Legal Fund

Although they quite often get mentioned together, membership and the legal fund are two separate entities. This has been clarified in the past but for the purpose of requesting funds from

drivers, we can leave no doubt. There are approximately 1,000 members currently. This association can function to do many things for all drivers but as with any organization, funding is critical. You are reading an example of this need. In order for this newsletter to be generated, a computer, inclusive of a printer, was necessary along with paper and ink. If you received it in the mail add, postage. Also, the computer equipment is inside the DCPTDA office (a building), which requires rent and it will not operate without electricity. Bills, bills, bills... you get the point, don't you?

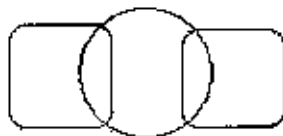
Look at it this way: if you take the same person from the Capitol to BWI once a week, they do not make one payment and continue to ride with you each week. They must continuously pay you or they will not have you for long. Well, it's the same for DCPTDA. Our needs are continuous and without funding, we may not last no matter how many good intentions we have for taxi drivers' protection and well being. This addresses the need for membership dues. Retaining and keeping an attorney, especially while in the current fight to be able to register our vehicles, is an ongoing cost as well. Mr. Bradshaw is a very nice man but in this capitalistic society in which we live, he cannot afford to work for free, no more than any of us cab drivers. Please, keep your membership current by paying the monthly dues AND donating money to the legal fund on a regular basis.

Let your vision take you beyond today. Many of us do not have health insurance, which is a dangerous situation in this country. Do you realize that as the DCPTDA grows and progresses, there is a great possibility that we can do such things as procure health insurance as a group at much better rates than trying to get it as an individual? Rather than the DCPTDA begging for funds, we need for taxi drivers to realize the real benefit of working towards common goals together instead of being fragmented, as has been the case for too, too long. Help us to help YOU!!!!

Who Was Truthful?

During the March 8, 2006, meeting of the D.C. Taxicab Commission, Interim Chairman Causton Toney stated that he did not know how D.C. City Councilwoman Carol Schwartz became aware of the lack of enforcement of D.C. Code 50-1501.02. However, an article in the Washington Post on March 6, 2006 (two days earlier), indicated that it was Causton Toney and Ann Witt who brought it to Schwartz's attention. Hrrrrrrrr... seems as though either Mr. Toney or the Post are not being truthful. Another interesting fact is that Schwartz is the one who introduced legislation "Motor Vehicle and Safe Driving Amendment Act of 2000" that included **domicile requirements**. Once the domicile requirement was passed into law – L#13-289, then codified, DC Official Code §50-1502.02, it gave the DMV the authority to make a rule, DCMR Title 18 Department of Motor Vehicle §18-412.1 (m) Refusal of Registration. Wow!!! So Schwartz had to be informed by someone else of something that SHE introduced. Additionally, at the March 5, 2006, meeting of the DCPTDA, Horace Bradshaw (prior to being retained by DCPTDA) informed the taxicab industry of another statute that none in the industry were aware, 50-371, Loitering of Taxicabs. Loitering has always been against the rules, because it creates unfair competition; however, just as in other major cities, loitering by taxicabs is a civil infraction. Statute 50-371 is a criminal infraction and the penalty for violation could be a fine not to exceed \$300.00 or imprisonment for not more than 90 days, or both, for each violation. Taxicab drivers have been arrested, had their belts and shoelaces removed, handcuffed and taken off to jail.

Such legislature has never had such a negative impact on any other service industry, which would beg the question, "Is this a result of the minority domination in the taxicab industry?" These kinds of things can easily be cast upon thousands of individuals standing alone. It has already been done, so we do not have to wonder. However, it would be quite difficult to continue to do this to thousands of individuals WHO **STAND AS ONE !!!!!!!**



Why are you on top of a tree with your taxicab?



Hiding! |
The DC government is
Trying to kill us

April 2006 Meeting of D.C.P.T.D.A., Inc.

The D.C. Professional Taxicab Drivers Association (D.C.P.T.D.A.) held its second open meeting on Sunday, April 23, 2006, from 1:00 – 4:00 P.M. at McKinley High School in northeast D.C. The agenda for the meeting was similar to the first meeting with one major addition. Mr. Horace Bradshaw, the attorney representing DCPTDA in its lawsuit against the D.C. Government, was the featured speaker. Another noticeable difference was that attendance of taxicab drivers was significantly lower than previously, a situation that all taxicab drivers will take upon themselves to rectify, since this association is here to represent and help all of us. However, do not let this cause anyone to think that this meeting was any less successful than the one that was held in March of 2006. Furthermore, we know how public meetings often can and do have periodic disruptions or outbursts from one or more attendees. Once again, this meeting was run very smoothly

without any such occurrences. This is in part a reflection of good preparation and quality leadership. . . and of course, cooperation from everyone present.

As stated in the past, there are a multitude of issues facing D.C. taxicab drivers. Currently, the main one that concerns many of us is the dilemma caused by the recent decision to enforce the law related to non-resident drivers being unable to register a new taxicab in D.C. The agenda did include other concerns as well. The following presents excerpts of what the keynote speaker, Horace Bradshaw, said.

- Taxi drivers should be able to make a living as ambassadors to the city
- Thanked DCPTDA for giving him the case of a lifetime
- Jim Crow laws are over
- The law is on our side; the case is winnable (not guaranteed though)
- U.S. Constitution
 - No state can challenge the a citizen's right to FREE ENTERPRISE
 - No state can impose a defacto tax on a person seeking revenue
- Government is responsible to deal with you in good faith; they cannot break that trust
- Cannot restrain interstate commerce
- Application of proposed rule-making is unconstitutional
- The first lawsuit did not give the judge something to respond to, it simply said that the law was wrong
- Primary difference between new suit and the first one
 - D.C. Dept. of Transportation, D.C. Dept. of Motor Vehicles and D.C. Taxicab Commission have now been included as defendants
 - Four counts of unconstitutionality prepared
 - Three counts of Common Law violations
- Response when asked if he thinks this whole deal is about a corporate takeover was "I don't know the motivation but have sense enough to suspect"
- Could be money to be found in interrogatory of decision makers
- This is a single issue but not the only issue
- Villages abroad are supported by one or more drivers here

Again, Thanks to those who organized and sponsored this meeting. Thanks also to those who attended, as well as absentees who support this tremendous undertaking. Tell as many other

drivers as you can and emphasize the importance of their participation and support. Keep your ears open for the date, time and location for the next meeting of the District of Columbia Professional Taxicab Drivers Association, Inc.

Did You Know?

The hot weather of summer is approaching. Did you know that you could be fined \$100.00 (or more) for an improperly operating air conditioning system?

D.C. Professional Taxicab Drivers Assn., Inc. Board

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Note: *There are other taxicab organizations, so be sure your funds are addressed to us.*

Support DCPTDA by mail. Send Monthly Dues and/or Defense Fund check or money order to:
DCPTDA
P.O. Box 80006
Washington, DC 20018

The D.C. Professional Taxicab Drivers Association, Inc., will hold its next public meeting on Saturday, May 20, 2006, from 4:00 – 7:00 P.M. at McKinley High School which is located at 157 T Street N.E., Washington, D.C. Be sure to attend. Also, be sure to keep your \$25.00 per month membership dues up-to-date. If you are not already a member, please join your fellow cab drivers as we unite within our industry as independent operators. Donate to the legal fund too, as our current lawsuit is an ongoing expense. See you there.

**DCPTDA
P.O. Box 80006
Washington, DC 20018**

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