

## Comments Received on Accessible Parking

Date Received	Source	Name	Location	Type: Individual or Business	Comment
7/25/16	E-mail	Stevenson, Chris	Arlington, TX	Business Texas Health Resources	Minimum requirement of disabled spaces for businesses is too low
8/10/16	E-mail	Twiname, Gayle	Beaumont, TX	Individual *Disabled Veteran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not enough van accessible parking spaces for vans with wheelchair ramp</li> <li>• Have special placards for van drivers or limit van accessible spaces to vans only</li> </ul>
8/05/16	E-mail	Adkins, Hunter	Austin, TX	Business Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People w/o disabilities or mobility problems parking in handicap spaces</li> <li>• People parking in access aisle so person with disability cannot get out of vehicle</li> <li>• Businesses won't hold accessible parking violators accountable for their actions</li> </ul>
8/08/16	E-mail	Jenkins, Jennifer	San Antonio, TX	Individual *Disabled Veteran	Disabled vets are issued disability plates/placards by DMV and park in accessible parking spaces yet they do not have a mobility disability
8/19/16	E-mail	Morris, John	Edinburg, TX	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-van vehicles using van accessible parking spaces</li> <li>• Fraudulent use of disability placards</li> <li>• Insufficient number of van-accessible spaces</li> <li>• Lack of enforcement for fraudulent use of placards and illegal parking in van accessible parking spaces</li> </ul>
8/10/16	E-mail	Avitt, Linda	Austin, TX	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Married to disabled person and seen countless violation on accessible parking, especially regarding access aisles</li> <li>• Believes education and enforcement will be effective in stopping the violations</li> </ul>
8/09/16	E-mail	Malone, Margie	(not provided)	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People w/o disabilities or mobility problems parking in handicap spaces</li> <li>• Lack of enforcement on accessible parking violations</li> <li>• Doctors giving disability placards to people who really don't need them</li> </ul>
7/27/16	E-mail	Acrey, Penny	Arlington, TX	Individual	Disabled vets are issued disability plates/placards by DMV and park in accessible parking spaces yet they do not have a mobility disability. Requests a designation related to mobility disability for enforcement.
7/29/16	E-mail	Eakins, Ron	(not provided)	Individual	To control abuse of disability placards, state should go to placards with a photograph of the disabled person on the placard like some other states do
8/10/16	E-mail	Winters, Tanya	(not provided)	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible parking abuse prevention should happen through education and enforcement simultaneously; i.e., a 3-prong approach using existing volunteer enforcement training programs: an interactive offender training program (not just an on-line video or PowerPoint); in-person disability sensitivity training component; education of judges</li> <li>• Prioritize accessible parking abuse prevention by dedicating a percentage of fines/fees collected to education &amp; enforcement</li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a statewide accessible parking awareness campaign that includes adding an accessible parking curriculum to driver's education courses</li> <li>• Fines should be strictly enforced. Instead of increasing fines, perhaps introduce a civil option rather than criminal misdemeanor to enhance fine enforcement</li> <li>• As research appears grossly exaggerated at times, have an independent 3rd party conduct a market research study on existing accessible parking abuse data.</li> <li>• Unaware if all law enforcement entities are required to run reports for seized, lost or stolen placards as CN5 Unit does</li> <li>• Strengthen controls on DMV replacement of lost/stolen placards</li> </ul>
8/10/16	E-mail	Litzinger, Amy	Austin, TX	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a very long van ramp. Because of striping width differences, people in sedans take spaces intended for vans. Should reverse striping so that the wider stripes are farther from buildings and narrow stripes are closer to buildings.</li> <li>• At public and private schools, street signs marking the 2 edges of curb cuts should be installed to alert carpool moms who freq. block the curb cuts while they wait for children to exit school.</li> <li>• Parking barriers to keep someone from driving into a place of business located in access aisles and/or at the top of curb cuts.</li> <li>• Need to educate people using sedans from parking in access aisles.</li> </ul>
8/10/16	E-mail	Litzinger, Linda	Austin, TX	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When government entities contract with car-sharing companies (e.g., Car2Go), there should be better consideration on location of spaces reserved for these companies so they do not impact on spaces needed by people w/ ramped vans (e.g., spaces near street signs &amp; trees vs. spaces near empty parkways)</li> <li>• Sets of accessible spaces (two spaces with stripes between them) should either be front-in only or back-in only parking, but not both as all ramped vans extend the ramp only from the right side. Allowing both kinds of parking at the same spaces reduces available parking to ramped vans by half.</li> </ul>
8/02/16	E-mail	Goebel, Christina	Houston, TX	Business Sign Shares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient number of accessible parking spaces at businesses and unresponsive landlords to requests for additional spaces</li> <li>• Need for education by agencies and businesses on meaning of accessible parking. Noted problems: accessible spaces with broken pavement, uneven/steep grades, signs at improper height, blocking access aisles so persons with disabilities cannot get in or out</li> <li>• Businesses do not know where to get info on how to assess parking space access</li> <li>• Need to educate the public via PSAs, Facebook ads, media announcements</li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to navigate TAS to find all information needed on accessible parking standards</li> <li>• Disagreement in disability community on who should use accessible parking</li> <li>• Routinely poll individuals using accessible parking to ensure they have access</li> <li>• Consider accommodating locations that need more access based on consumer demand</li> <li>• Impose stringent penalties with community service on those parking in accessible spaces without a placard or license plate. Penalties should be more severe in the event where they abuse the only available accessible parking space.</li> <li>• It's a different crime to block SOME access than blocking All access (the single accessible space) and penalties should differ under those considerations.</li> <li>• Houston defends time limits as small as two hours for accessible parking stating they have limited resources. Time limitations on accessible spaces should be addressed at a statewide level</li> <li>• Insufficient accessible parking at public institutions of higher learning where there's plenty of preferential parking for staff or faculty. Should the state approve this practice of deeming privilege above need?</li> <li>• Support Parking Mobility initiative on a statewide level because it has the greatest capacity to address the disregard for accessible parking with the urgency with which it deserves and on a large scale.</li> </ul>
8/09/16	E-mail	Winkels, Jeanne	Anson, TX	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a priority ranking for placards based on level of mobility need</li> <li>• People without a van parking in the van accessible space</li> <li>• Access aisles not wide enough</li> <li>• Insufficient number of accessible spaces</li> </ul>
8/10/16	E-mail	Allen, Jennifer	San Antonio, TX	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to look at enforcement of laws that govern the use of disability parking and ensure compliance through a concerted effort by security/law enforcement to check the name on placard with person utilizing it (name often missing on placard) and issuance date to verify that temporary placards are not being utilized past the approved allotted time.</li> <li>• An awareness campaign (could be a state-wide PSA Campaign) to alert citizens of disability parking compliance and repercussions same as the Click it or Ticket (wear your safety belt or pay) campaign.</li> </ul>
8/04/16	E-mail	Bottoms, Judy	(not provided)	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to reevaluate and periodically readjust the number of accessible parking spaces due to increase in aging workforce. Effective starting point to calculate ratio is the number of state employees who self-identify a mobility disability.</li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible solutions for people who abuse use of vehicle disability tags/placards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Statewide promotion of a volunteer disabled parking enforcement program modeled after Precinct 5's Constable's Office program</li> <li>○ PSAs to deter accessible parking abuse &amp; educate public on hidden disabilities</li> <li>○ Require every state employee to obtain an agency-issued sticker to be able to park on state-owned parking lots making it to easier identify employees who park in handicapped spots that do not personally have a mobility disability</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Need to address the inadequacy of accessible parking available downtown for state employees which can lead to avoidable turnover and waste of money better spent on accessibility issues to retain trained and experienced employees</li> </ul>
8/09/16	E-mail	Cox, Kristin	(not provided)	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As the parent of a child with a disability, provides his transportation. He does not walk and depends on a wheelchair for his mobility.</li> <li>• As the owner of a van with a side lift, frequently unable to park due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Not enough - or not any - accessible parking spaces;</li> <li>○ Accessible parking spaces available, but the lone space with a van aisle is occupied by a vehicle that does not have a lift;</li> <li>○ Van aisle is on the wrong side of the parking space;</li> <li>○ Van aisle is not wide enough to get the wheelchair out.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Current method to deal with lack of accessible parking (a dangerous process): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Stop van in middle of parking lot &amp; block traffic to lower lift &amp; let my son exit.</li> <li>○ Block traffic for my son – with his service dog tied to his wheelchair – while he navigates the parking lot to wait for me at the building entrance.</li> <li>○ Park in a regular space and join my son.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Son is in college &amp; hopes to be employed after earning his degree. Has expressed a desire to learn to drive a van. Fears he cannot let himself out in the middle of a parking lot and have the van park itself on auto-pilot when the situation arises.</li> <li>• Believes the following could make a positive impact on accessible parking issue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ State-wide public awareness campaign using all forms of media including social media</li> <li>○ Van spaces reserved exclusively for vans with side lifts</li> <li>○ Stronger enforcement of existing parking rules, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Requirement for number of van spaces &amp; accessible spaces</li> <li>- Requirement for number of van spaces &amp; accessible spaces</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Stricter penalties for businesses that violate the above rules</li> <li>o Funds from parking fines reserved exclusively for public awareness campaign and improving accessible parking on public buildings</li> </ul>
8/03/16	E-mail	Curry, Melonie	(not provided)	Business ParkHouston Admin & Regulatory Affairs Dept.	Recommends a statewide database be created for the public & law enforcement agents to use to report placards that have been stolen or confiscated as they have no current means of notifying the local tax assessor when placards are confiscated
8/09/16	E-mail	Napier, Sandra	(not provided)	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerned about safety (known 2 people in wheelchairs killed in parking lots due to lack of accessible spots) and accessibility (could not deploy ramp because people were parked in access aisle &amp; have asked strangers to move her vehicle)</li> <li>• Main concern is about people with permits who park in access aisles when no accessible parking space is available</li> <li>• Would like a campaign similar to Don't Mess with Texas to educate public on accessible parking as they just don't think about it.</li> </ul>
8/03/16	E-mail	Gardner, Sharon	(not provided)	Individual	<p>Previously served on GCPD as subcommittee chair - Environmental Barriers, which included Transportation Barriers. Identifies 4 areas which still require much improvement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More handicap parking spots with wider striped loading area. Many are too narrow for van unloading or getting wheelchair out of a car.</li> <li>2. Abuse of disability placards when holder is not in the vehicle. Perhaps re-word sign to indicate placard holder must be in vehicle and have stiffer penalties for violators.</li> <li>3. Crack down on people parking on all or part of the stripes.</li> <li>4. Enforce legal ratio of handicap parking spaces per reg parking spots in parking lots. Some of the worst violators are gov't bldgs.</li> </ol> <p>Possible solution for violators: Ask local TV stations to do "Gotcha" type on-the-street interviews with obvious violators. Ask them why they parked there and show it on the news.</p>
7/06/15	Letter	Coverman, Michael M.D.	Austin, TX	Business Dermatology Practice	Has noticed Van Accessible spaces often used by non-van (sedan or similar) vehicles making them unavailable to vans. Suggests signs should read "Van Accessible ONLY" and double fines: \$50-\$100 for non-disabled vehicle parked in regular disabled spot but \$100-\$200 for any non-van vehicle parked in accessible van spot. Also enclosed letter he wrote on bathrooms & employee hygiene issues.
8/10/16	E-mail	Bearden, Chase	Austin, TX	Business Coalition of Texans with Disabilities	<p>Written testimony for Accessible Parking Hearing – Need for Reform. Disabled parking abuse is a growing problem. 18% of population has disabilities; only 4% of parking spaces allocated for their needs. Proposed solutions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Disabled Parking Defender Education Course</u> – TX has highest fines in the nation for disabled parking violations (\$500) as a deterrent to violating accessible parking spaces. However, lack of an educational component</li> </ul>

					<p>produced noticeable results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ticket dismissal rate as high as 83% in some counties;</li> <li>○ Hesitation by law enforcement officers to write tickets because of the high dismissal rates;</li> <li>○ Perceived message by the public: “If you get a ticket, it’s ok, you can get it dismissed” leading to more violations.</li> </ul> <p>An educational alternative to high fines is welcomed by judges and prosecutors which provides an opportunity for the community to learn the importance of disabled parking. After deploying the “Parking Mobility” program in Hays Co in 2013, within 18 months violations decreased 60% with no repeat offenders from those taking the course. <b>Recommendation:</b> Offer a defenders education course focused on accessible parking and offer a reduced fine upon course completion + keep the current \$500 fine as a deterrent for repeat offenders or those who do not want to take the defenders education course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>Quantity of Disabled Placards</u> - Placard/hand tag abuse is constant. Dallas and Houston have discontinued free parking for cars that display placards. Having 2 placards creates opportunity for misuse by family members where placards are lost, stolen or even sold. <b>Recommendation:</b> Limit disabled person to one accessible license plate and one placard to reduce abuse and save the state money.</li> <li>● <u>Is Free Parking the Problem</u> – About 2 dozen states allow people with placards to park for free at metered space, with majority placing no time limits on for parking. Based on 2012 study, states that allow privilege of nonpayment, invite fraud and abuse. The study’s co-author feels it is “vitally important” to issue placards to people with disabilities to park in designated spaces, but they shouldn’t be allowed to park anywhere for as long as they like for free. This places a value on placard, esp. in major metro areas. Also, some state laws are overly broad in how they determine if someone is qualified for handicapped parking credentials which also invites fraud. Some state legislatures are restricting privileges to more narrowly defined group or allowing local jurisdictions to opt out of park-for-free laws. Changes include a tiered system in Illinois with blue placards allowing parking in designated spots with meters and yellow placards for meter-exempt parking based on stringent standards (e.g., no hand dexterity or unable to reach above 42” or unable to approach a meter because of a wheelchair, cane or crutch).</li> <li>● <u>Volunteer Training</u> – Although current law provides volunteer programs provide 4 hours of training, there is no guidance on necessary training. <b>Recommendation:</b> Provide uniform and effective volunteer training statewide.</li> <li>● <u>New Placard Technology</u> – Use of bar codes or QR codes on placards will</li> </ul>
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					<p>allow law enforcement officers instant access to a database to assist in verifying to whom the placard was issued and vehicle information to help improve enforcement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Community Education</u> – Targeted, community-specific education efforts are needed. Campaigns such as “Don’t Mess with Texas” and “Click-It or Ticket” are successful examples of how education and outreach can change behavior and reduce crime.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> As these efforts were costly for taxpayers, allow communities to designate portion of fine revenues collected from disabled parking citations for community campaigns. Disability community should be integrally involved in designing and administering community-targeted outreach &amp; education programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Summary:</b> To address the abuse and shortage of accessible parking spaces, CTD supports limiting access of overly abused secondary placards; discussing the overuse of placards for free meter parking by those w/o disabilities; increasing enforcement by volunteer programs already found around the state; using more efficient, accessible, and error free electronic filing of citations &amp; increasing judges’ flexibility to allow offenders the option to be educated on accessible parking and the effect of their decisions on those with disabilities.</li> </ul>
8/10/16	Public Testimony	Taylor, Lora	Houston, TX	Individual	<p>Mother of a disabled 34 year old daughter who is transported to appointments to 13 medical specialists in a wheelchair. Issues discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly finds no van accessible spots and often no accessible spots in Houston. Not enough spaces to accommodate those with hang tags.</li> <li>• Observed that vehicles in van accessible spot with 8-ft access aisle did not appear to have any type of lift. Own mother says spot says van accessible, not van only, so it’s first come, first served and parks her Cadillac in the van accessible spot to avoid dings. Takes this as a challenge to change the law.</li> <li>• Her solutions to address her parking problems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Takes 2 reg parking spots to be able to open &amp; deploy ramp so daughter could get out. In order to find spots side by side, often ends up on roof. In Houston, this means excessive heat –a dangerous health concern for daughter’s seizure disorder.</li> <li>○ Valet parking – which she does almost all the time now. Not everyone has the means to pay for valet parking.</li> <li>○ Hire an attendant to drive with you do you can drop the individual at the door. Not everyone can afford an attendant.</li> <li>○ Bought a regular Toyota 2 years ago + portable wheelchair. When no accessible parking is available, this does not allow daughter to use her specially designed \$22K wheelchair for scoliosis which enables her to sit for hours at the doctor’s office.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses to questions posed by GCPD: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is accessible parking more of a problem at medical or retail facilities (grocery stores, malls): for her it is medical facilities. In Houston medical seems more acute because so many sick &amp; elderly and people are going to doctor's offices and hospitals.</li> <li>○ In small lots with 25 or less parking spots, where law requires only 1 accessible space should it be van accessible only: tough to address--need accessible parking for folks who truly need it</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
8/10/16	Public Testimony	Robinson, Ileene	Houston, TX	Individual	<p>Prefaced comments by thanking Becky Walker with Senator Seliger's office for work on accessible parking study. Learned of the problem from Lora Taylor and has been working since last session making legislature aware. Sees 2 distinct problems: Rural problems and urban problems. Sent a picture to the committee from rural Wharton County where you spray paint the wheelchair icon on the side of a building as the ground is dirt which is different from the huge office buildings and doctor offices in Houston.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response to question about whether rural areas need different considerations on signage, number of spaces, size, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hopes this will come out in survey. Thinks we need a massive campaign like "Don't Mess with Texas" so we know "Don't Mess with Van Access Disabled Parking" and have every Texan assume that sort of attitude and ethic.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
8/10/16	Public Testimony	Guzman, Ronald	(not provided)	Individual	<p>Biggest complaint is Disabled Veteran parking. Testimony states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lot of accessible parking spots are taken by veterans.</li> <li>• Disable vets get 4 DV license plates while regular disabled get one plate and one hang tag. What is the difference? This allows the disabled vet to use disabled plates on four cars while he has 3 cars but only has tags for 2 vehicles. The disabled vet's son can park in disabled parking lot using the dad's disabled vets license.</li> </ul> <p>Recommended Solution: Have the wheelchair emblem on disabled Veterans plates like it is supposed to be for all disabled drivers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Another issue: Van accessible parking lots. (no additional comments)</li> </ul>
8/10/16	Public Testimony	King, Gaylon	Travis County	Individual/Volunteer	<p>Volunteer for Travis Co. handicapped parking enforcement program since 2013 – can do it when she wants to; helps the community. Testimony included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issued over 2,000 accessible parking citations last year &amp; seized 200+ illegally used placards.</li> <li>• Need an education program and increased judicial enforcement. Prefers that courts assess punishment on a case by case basis. If they find the person is indigent consider community service instead.</li> <li>• 6-month study by constable in 2006 indicated 65% of placards in Austin used illegally. About the same 10 years later. Drivers using other people's</li> </ul>



					<p>placards or buying them on open market to avoid paying parking fees or extend driving/parking times downtown.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constable believes law &amp; enforcement agencies should make accessible parking a priority.</li> </ul> <p>Recommended Solutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Currently it is not illegal to purchase or sell an accessible parking placard. Should enact legislation to make it illegal.</li> <li>○ State law allows you to have 1 accessible parking plate and 2 parking placards. Should reduce to 1 placard if you have a plate.</li> </ul>
8/10/16	Public Testimony	Marsh, Mack	Statewide	Business Parking Mobility	<p>With Project for Mobility addressing parking across the state. Have over 3,000 people gather data using a smartphone app to report violations. Collecting data for 7 years. In last 6 month received over 7,000 reports of accessible parking abuse across state. Travis Co -Constable Precinct 3 - written over 1,000 citations since January 1. Data collection has pointed out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Much misunderstanding &amp; miseducation about accessible parking.</li> <li>• There are a lot of laws and changes to laws are probably needed.</li> <li>• When someone gets a plate or placard, they are not provided with front-end education – rules, rights and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Need to offer an educational alternative to Texas’ high fines – some of the highest in country (\$500 min for accessible parking violation) which has created a bigger problem for abuse as 80% of citations written are dismissed by judges &amp; law enforcement are hesitant to write citations because they feel fines are too high.</li> <li>• Believes fine is correct amount. But if you have a high fine as a deterrent, need educational alternative. Beginning in 2013, partnered w/Hays Co. to offer educational alternative to judges and prosecutors where violators took an online course similar to safe driving class for speeding ticket. Once course is completed, violator pays reduced fee to county. Hays Co. reduced violations by 60% w/in 18 months. No one who completed the course has been repeat offender. In contrast, Travis Co. program audited over past 19 years showed 90% of the 80% dismissals were repeat offenders. Cases were being dismissed over &amp; over again. Case in hand: Mack received a call from a woman in Travis Co. She had disability, had placard, didn’t put up her tag, was angry because she was cited. Said she would call the court to dismiss because that is what they always do. This makes problem worse by sending message to community this behavior is okay &amp; community doesn’t care about this issue. Need to provide education as an alternative before looking at other laws.</li> <li>• Agrees van accessible parking is way under-inventoried.</li> <li>• Need to make people aware. Campaign “Don’t Mess with Texas” was hugely successful. How can we pay for a campaign for accessible parking</li> </ul>

					<p>abuse? Use a portion of the fines collected from accessible parking go to that type of awareness campaign. Let people committing the offenses help solve the problem.</p> <p>Responses to questions from commissioners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What fraction of those fines might go back into these programs? At least 20% of the fine or the fees collected for educational programs. His organization commits 75% of the fee in their education program to our community campaigns.</li> <li>○ Doesn't think lowering the fine is the answer. Other states that lowered fines has same problem as TX. Thinks fine amount is too high if don't have an educational component but with educational component, believes fine amount is just right. Gives community some leeway.</li> </ul>
8/10/16	Public Testimony	Lopez, Rene	(not provided)	Individual	<p>Dream come true was to drive, and thanks to technology was able to drive a modified van. Opened world to him - gave him freedom.</p> <p>Biggest disappointment: accessible parking. Every day can't find disabled parking at malls or doctors, so parks far out to take 2 spaces or parks sideways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● He is a volunteer for parking mobility as it provides a needed answer: educational component.</li> <li>● Need to get judges to stop dismissing tickets as this implies the disabled person is a 2nd class citizen – sends a wrong message.</li> <li>● Would like to see a campaign like “Don't Mess with Texas”</li> <li>● Start education on accessible parking at the front-end with new drivers – add it to driver's education classes for 16 year olds</li> </ul>
8/10/16	Public Testimony	Crowther, Nancy	Austin, Texas	Individual	<p>Resident of Austin over 30 yrs. Involved with Mayor's Committee, Governor's Committee, Travis Co. When City of Austin started their ticket-writing program in 1993, people would get upset, run after you, tear up ticket &amp; throw it in your face-disrespect, no education, scary. Also, gathered data; when word got out they were enforcing accessible parking, people learned you could use placard &amp; park at downtown meters for free. Use of placards rose 300% in 1 year–puts it down to abuse. Notes abuse at state facility here – alludes to state staff but acknowledges invisible disabilities. Qualification states must have difficulty ambulating 200 ft unassisted - does not see this in most people. Problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Need to look at qualifications for plates/placards – go back to medical prof/whoever is signing certified notices &amp; reeducate.</li> <li>● When conducted surveys in 2006, saw abuse by placard users.</li> <li>● Abuse of blue vs. red placards (“slacker placards”)</li> <li>● Happy to be a volunteer with Parking Mobility – safely capture violators who can pay fine or go through education program.</li> <li>● # of spaces: ADA gives guidelines &amp; minimum stds. Recommend higher</li> </ul>

					<p>ratio at places patronized by people with disabilities like hospital, rehab facility, casino where 1:25 doesn't work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible spots are utilized by sedans, not vans. Vans w/lifts need space w/access aisle on right, but sedans are usually in the spot do you have to back vehicle in to other space to get out.</li> <li>• Need enforcement for theft or misuse of placards – too many are handed off or taken from cars going through car wash.</li> <li>• Design of spaces need to be better.</li> <li>• No consistency of fines.</li> <li>• Violators for crossing over hash signs include people with placards and disabled plates. Education program will help here.</li> </ul> <p>Response to question from Commissioner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 300% increase in placard use probably around 1994-95 when multiple municipalities allowed free parking at meters all day</li> </ul>
8/10/16	Public Testimony	Carter, Marilyn	(not provided)	Individual	<p>As wife of blind person and full-time caregiver last 10 years, fully concurs with everything said here. Does not agree with having fine assigned to the license plate or vehicle registration because of a personal incident. A vehicle registered in her name was loaned to a temporary contract laborer. Ticket for parking in accessible parking spot in was discarded. Received summons 3 years later on unpaid \$500 fine + penalties. Took 8 years to get it off her record. Request:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a way to impose the fine w/o tying it to a vehicle where owner may not have been the driver? Perhaps use red light cameras in parking lots to take pictures of people getting in/out of vehicles to ensure they are ones tickets are assigned to.</li> <li>• Believes education is needed when placard or plate is assigned.</li> </ul>
8/10/16	Public Testimony	Hadley, Barbara	Austin, Texas	Individual	<p>Archer's (one of GCPD Commissioners) Mom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not enough spaces. Need more, especially at medical facilities/ medical doctor offices. Might have 1-2 spaces w/no marks on sides; no cover like other spaces. Handicap spot is afterthought.</li> <li>• Cars, smart cars, or motorcycles park in hash marks where ramps are to deploy. Archer will park behind the car waiting for police but police will not respond.</li> <li>• Enforcement is the key - enforce and make the person pay. Has heard (maybe rumor) that person with a disability can take a picture of cars illegally parked, send it to an enforcement agency who sends the violator a ticket. Thinks this is a great idea.</li> <li>• Feels placards dispensed too freely for temporary disabilities. Need checks &amp; balances on people giving Rx for placards.</li> <li>• City issues: Parallel parking on handicapped spots is impossible- curbs are way too high; need to have public accessible parking in different spots</li> </ul>

					<p>where you can deploy the ramp out the side; and the city has a rule that if the spot is at a certain angle, they have to build up the concrete and put a platform there but you cannot get a converted van across it making the spot unusable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional issues: GCPD needs to address access to buildings; why is it so easy to get placards; why do you have to have the license plate; agrees to the disabled vets – they ambulate right up to the front door; why not a license plate and not a placard?</li> </ul> <p>Response to question from Commissioners and GCPD ED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Re: access to building was talking about doors – being able to get in and signage is very poor.</li> <li>○ Re: Architectural challenge of parallel parking – curbside w/van that has side wheelchair lift – willing to send smartphone picture of example of this challenge. Parallel parked for hearing, but not handicapped spot. Spot in front of her was handicapped spot but would not have been able to deploy ramp because of curb.</li> <li>○ Re: Access aisles – Ramps can deploy from rear or right side. Access aisle may be needed on right side for ramp or on left for wheelchair user who deploys from passenger side of vehicle.</li> </ul> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sedans and access aisles: Gov. Abbott used to be their neighbor before becoming Governor. He has sedan &amp; manual wheelchair. Would take wheelchair from back to side of the car, so still needs room for his wheelchair. People who complain about sedans parking in the “Van Accessible Only” don’t think about users who still need wheelchair space on side of car they are exiting from.</li> <li>• Inconsistent size of access aisles: Notes most too narrow. Has sticker on her van “Please allow 10 feet of space.” Believes most people don’t understand what slash space is for. Needs to be marked better &amp; spacing needs to be consistent at 10 ft, not 8 ft.</li> </ul>
8/10/16	Public Testimony	White, Brian	(not provided)	Business Texas Independent Living Council (Project Mgr)	<p>Echoes comments of Mack Marsh and Parking Mobility. Also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes changing demographics in TX as one of fastest growing states in nation with over 3 million Texans with disabilities whose numbers increase daily.</li> <li>• New to this arena serving as project director at Texas State Independent Living Council involved in accessible transportation issues. On a personal level has an aging parent living independently who will want available parking spot as a senior or person with disability.</li> <li>• Studies show over 70% of Texans with disabilities have noted transportation (which includes parking) is an issue in terms of being productive and having sustainable work.</li> </ul>
8/10/16	Public	Borel, Dennis	(not provided)	Business	CTD - advocacy org that has done lot of parking legislation in last 10 yrs.

	Testimony			Coalition of Texans with Disabilities	<p>Accomplishments: Accessible parking that was previously not a violation is now a violation; altered placard now a violation; fixed fines for placard expirations to align with that for driver's licenses; and now a bill for accessible parking study. Listening session in El Paso with about 30 people disclosed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• people willing to give up free parking meter;</li> <li>• inability of some persons with disabilities to feed meters so suggested a tiered system from free to pay for meters like in some other states;</li> <li>• Veterans from the large El Paso veteran community said disabled vets plate should not equate to right to use accessible parking space as disability may be unrelated to mobility (e.g., hearing loss, arm amputation). Also, family members w/o disability get to use DV plates.</li> <li>• Vets wanted something on placard (chip/barcode) to associate placard with the vehicle or passenger in the vehicle.</li> <li>• Pointed out local ILC couldn't get placard for company accessible vehicle used to transport residents; used staff member's placard.</li> <li>• Need to change behaviors. Most important thing he heard today: Mack's statement on no repeat offenders after they had education.</li> <li>• Believes Parking Mobility type of program need to be in statute. Confrontation an issue. No Parking Mobility program in El Paso, just standard citizen enforcement that can lead to confrontation. Heard people may be hesitant to write a ticket &amp; place on a car. Although Travis &amp; Hays Counties have programs, it is a barrier not being recognized in statute as a means of enforcement.</li> </ul> <p>Response to question from GCPD ED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CTD members/staff park at meters due to loss of previously designated accessible parking spaces when they did security improvements around the capitol. However, meters are full of mostly state employee vehicles with placards most of whom have parking provided but use street parking with their placard to get block or two closer. It is legal, but is it best use of placard?</li> <li>○ Issues - Parking in front of Texas Archives building that is assigned to a specific house district yet is accessible &amp; could be designated as accessible and allocated as resources for citizens w/disabilities. Also, public parking at the garage is uphill to rear entrance of the capitol. This is a deterrent for people to come speak their mind at capitol. Would like to see more designated spots near GCPD or a solution like accessible golf cart or shuttle from the parking structure (during legislative session).</li> <li>○ Another option by Lucey: Offer more covered parking than San Jacinto parking garage for members of legislature and make those spots for the public (not in the interior circle). Borel opined a number would probably volunteer to do that.</li> </ul>
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8/10/16	Public Testimony	Guzman, Roland	(not provided)	Individual	Texas Ramps builds ramps for disabled people in wheelchairs. Although ramp requirements call for 4-ft turnaround, found this was not adequate for some wheelchairs. Had David Gonzalez (TDLR?) bring in power wheelchair and built a portable ramp to use with the wheelchair but he was unable to turn based on given specs. Urges people to use Ron's suggestion to take pictures of problems to demonstrate why the changes in law are needed for accessible parking. They provide the proof needed for more accessible areas.
8/10/16	GCPD Committee	Bangor, Aaron			<p><b>Wrap-up of Public Testimony:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the biggest keys: Education – Not preaching to the choir but educating people about the real consequences of fraudulent use of accessible parking spaces.</li> <li>• Are collecting information &amp; combining it with that collected from a survey. Will be looking for help in disseminating the survey widely across Texas to get input from individuals with disabilities and others with an interest in accessible parking.</li> <li>• Later this year, staff based on guidance of the committee, will be finalizing a report that will be provided to the legislature and governor by November. Once completed, the report will be publicized. If you are on the discovery platform you should get a copy of the report. If not on Gov delivery, can leave address to get on e-mail list. Once the report is turned over, it is in the law maker's hands. GCPD will do best to advocate for ideas brought up today and will recommend solutions – some broad, some specific. Want to provide info for citizen law makers to make informed decisions about these issues. Hopefully, will be able to educate them, inform them &amp; point them in right direction. After that it will be up to the legislative process.</li> </ul> <p>Meeting adjourned.</p>