

**THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES
AGENCY PERFORMANCE OVERSIGHT HEARING
ON FISCAL YEARS 2011 – 2012**



**Testimony of
Lucinda Babers, Director
Department of Motor Vehicles**

**Before the
Committee on the Environment,
Public Works and Transportation
Mary Cheh, Chairperson**

**Friday, February 17, 2012
11:00 am – Room 412
The Wilson Building
Washington, DC**

Good Morning, Chairperson Cheh, Committee members, Council members, and your staffs. My name is Lucinda Babers, and I am the Director of the District of Columbia Department of Motor Vehicles (DC DMV).

Prior to sharing the major FY11 and year to date FY12 DMV accomplishments, I would like to thank our customers, our employees, this Committee and the rest of the Council for your support. We often rely on all of you to provide the necessary feedback that guides our decisions for service improvements. I also must extend a special thanks to my DC DMV coworkers whose dedication and efforts make it possible for us to service the needs of the customer. As I always say, I am truly humbled to serve with them and thank them for all they do for the District and Team DMV.

DMV provides service to approximately 480,000 licensed drivers/identification card holders and 278,000 registered vehicles at three service centers. We provide adjudication services and collect ticket payments for more than 2.5 million tickets annually. We also conduct over 193,000 annual vehicle inspections. DMV interacts with DC residents and non-residents, with an average of 3,200 daily customer contacts—more than almost any other District government agency and an increase of about 400 from last year.

During FY11 and year-to-date FY12, we continued our efforts to streamline and improve service delivery to offset the increased demand for our services. Following are the highlights of the past and current fiscal year's accomplishments.

For FY11, we had several major goals in our agency performance plan. I personally delivered a customized, customer service training course to 93% of our frontline employees that provided examples for addressing customer issues that do not necessarily fit into the round hole. The training allowed employees to “think outside of the box” in addressing customer issues. We also distributed reinstatements, foreign national and for-hire functions to all of our service centers by cross-training all frontline service center employees. Additionally, our automated tag surrender refund process eliminated the need for manual paperwork by having the computer automatically process and generate the necessary refund paperwork during the tag surrender transaction. Tags can be cancelled online.

In December 2011, we implemented an online traffic school for customers who were approved for driver record point removal and for those who wanted to improve their driver safety knowledge. Multiple DMV visits contribute to both customer frustration and increased lines. Therefore, another online enhancement was our introduction of the document verification module which allows customers to determine what paperwork is necessary prior to an in-person DMV visit. Most of this paperwork can then be filled out online with our new fillable forms to reduce employee typing errors due to illegible handwriting.

A ticket amnesty program, which included moving, parking and photo tickets, was implemented from August 1, 2011 through January 27, 2012. The amnesty program, which brought in \$4.95M in revenue, encouraged those with outstanding tickets issued prior to January 1, 2010 to pay their debts without the doubling penalty. Over 89,000 residents and non-residents took advantage

of the program in order to reinstate their driver licenses, obtain other DMV services or stop collection activity.

A Pilot Parent-Teen Forum resulted in all teens who attended obtaining their provisional driver license during their next road test. Both parents and teens highly recommended we make the Forum a staple for all teen drivers. Based on this feedback, we are studying ways to further integrate the Forum into our Gradual Rearing of Adult Drivers (GRAD) licensing program.

As shared during last year's hearing, we are continuing to work with the Department of General Services (DGS) to expand our Penn Branch Service Center to provide a larger customer waiting area and to relocate our Brentwood Road Test and Commercial Driver License Office. We are also working with DGS to identify a new location for our Georgetown Service Center which must be relocated due to the redevelopment of the Georgetown Mall.

Another major project is the continued implementation of a more secure credential; this mainly involves imaging breeder documents and taking photos upfront. The September 2012 implementation of the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS) will reduce fraud by allowing DMV to instantly and reliably verify the information on the paper title with the electronic data from the state that issued the title. The NMVTIS project was delayed into FY12 due to the need to conduct extensive system testing.

We conducted outreach meetings at all senior wellness centers and attended community and ANC meetings whenever invited. Additionally, in mid-2011, we launched our Twitter, Facebook and YouTube accounts as additional

customer communication vehicles. Live web chat sessions on any DMV topic are also now conducted with me on the first Thursday of each month.

Prior to closing, I would like to provide the listening public with a few important DMV tips. To avoid insurance lapse fines and possible registration suspension, insurance must be maintained on all vehicles that are currently registered in the District. Therefore, prior to cancelling the insurance for a vehicle which you're no longer driving, please also cancel your vehicle registration by surrendering your license plates to DMV.

The District's Department of Transportation regulates parking by managing policy, signage and meters; the Department of Public Works enforces parking by issuing tickets; and DMV adjudicates tickets by allowing you to contest a ticket you believe was erroneously issued. If you receive a ticket which you believe to have been issued in error, you must officially adjudicate the ticket using the instructions on the back of the ticket to protect your legal right to adjudication. Additionally, if you receive a ticket which doubles (i.e., has a penalty added), and you wish to contest just the penalty amount, you should not pay the original fine amount. Payment of any portion of the ticket is an admission of liability and prevents you from adjudicating any part of the ticket.

Finally, DC DMV rivals almost any motor vehicle jurisdiction in terms of online services. Therefore, we encourage you to take advantage of these online services to skip the in-person DMV trip and avoid the lines. All DC local libraries have secure Internet connections to assist those without computers or web access. Furthermore, most online services can also be done by mail...just allow sufficient mailing time.

Although we have made improvements during the past year, we are aware more is needed, especially with the increase in the District's population; therefore, despite these lean budgetary times, we will continue to move forward to identify and implement innovative operational processes, especially those aimed at reducing customers' in-person visits. Again, we appreciate the support we've received from the Council and look forward to continuing our efforts to improve the quality of service to the residents of the District of Columbia. We will now address any questions you may have.

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