

**THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES
AGENCY PERFORMANCE OVERSIGHT HEARING
ON FISCAL YEARS 2010 – 2011**



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

**Before the
Committee on Public Works and Transportation
Tommy Wells, Chairperson**

**Monday, March 7, 2011
10:00 am – Room 412
The Wilson Building
Washington, DC**

Good Morning, Chairperson Wells, Committee members, Council members, and your staffs. My name is Lucinda Babers, and I am the Director of the District's Department of Motor Vehicles.

Prior to sharing the major FY10 and year to date FY11 DMV accomplishments, I would like to thank our customers, our employees and 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 the men and women in the department whose dedication and efforts make it possible for us to service the needs of the District. As I always say, I am truly humbled to be able to call such dedicated individuals my "co-workers" and thank them for all they do for Team DMV.

DMV provides service to approximately 460,000 licensed drivers/identification card holders and 275,000 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 200,000 annual vehicle inspections. DMV interacts with DC residents and non-residents, with an average of 2,700 daily customer contacts—more than almost any other District government agency.

During FY10 and year-to-date FY11, we continued our efforts to streamline and improve service delivery. Following are the highlights of the past and current years – some are completed – others are in progress.

For FY10, we had several major goals in our agency performance plan. We provided customized customer service training to all frontline management to find innovative, legal ways to assist customers to prevent a second customer visit or escalation of an issue. Additionally, we trained 92% of frontline licensing employees on fraudulent document recognition—a critical requirement for ensuring the authenticity of documents presented for DC credentialing. The integration of the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlement (SAVE) system with our licensing system allows us to verify immigration documents with the US Department of Homeland Security. Our first level review for adjudication standardizes basic ticket defenses to allow for streamlined adjudication without customer waiting. We also implemented a performance-based system which assists in identifying at-risk motor carriers with a history of safety problems, places them on an improvement process and may ultimately lead to revocation of the registration of vehicles assigned to an unsafe motor carrier.

We continued to rely on mail and online services to decrease in-person customer visits and improve operational efficiencies. In September, we implemented the ability of customers to submit adjudication requests online and receive hearing decision letters online through our ticket customer account service. We also now offer driver records, driver license reinstatements and change of address transactions online. The increased use of mail and online services helps decrease in-person volume at our facilities; thereby, allowing capacity for those customers who truly must visit us in person to complete their transactions. Although we have a 57% increase in online licensing/registration service, our online services are still underutilized due to customers' lack of Internet access and heavy reliance on cash transactions. We

look forward to working with the Administration and the Council on ways to eliminate these barriers.

Thus far in FY11, we have conducted senior outreach sessions at DC wellness centers to encourage the use of online services and provide senior related information. We have also implemented an online traffic school for customers seeking to have points removed or those who need a refresher on safe driving requirements. In an effort to streamline services, we are also now processing surrender tag refunds using an automated method. Additionally, our online document verification check, combined with our online fillable forms, allows new residents to ensure they have the necessary documents prior to visiting the DMV; this service helps eliminate multiple customer visits for one transaction.

Additional projects we are working on this fiscal year include expansion of the 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 the Department of Real Estate Services 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 involves imaging breeder documents and taking photos upfront. The September 2011 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.

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 your insurance, please also cancel your vehicle registration by turning in your license plates to DMV. If you receive a ticket which you believe to have been issued in error, you must 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, an emission inspection is still required for all passenger vehicles every two years; only the safety portion of the inspection was eliminated in FY10.

Although we have made improvements during the past year, we are still aware that much more is needed; therefore, despite these severe budgetary times, we will continue to seek out innovative solutions for tomorrow's increased challenges. 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're happy to respond to any questions you may have.

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