

Councilmembers Head and Midura
To Introduce Legislation Re: City Take-Home Cars
At Tomorrow's Regular Council Meeting

News Release

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New Orleans, LA - February 4, 2009 - In a January 30, 2009 response to the Inspector General's vehicle report, the administration cited ordinance "contradict[ion]" as a reason for failing to comply with the City ordinances prohibiting more than the administration's 50 take-home cars (excluding police and fire vehicles).


In an effort to clear any road-blocks to the administration's compliance with City ordinances related to legally-allowed take-home cars, Councilmembers Midura and Head plan to introduce an Ordinance at the City Council meeting on Thursday, February 5, 2009 that will reconcile the conflicting ordinances related to the domicile of City employees and take-home vehicles.

District "B" Councilmember Stacy Head stated, "This Ordinance should remove any argument that take-home vehicles are appropriate for administration employees residing outside of Orleans Parish."

She further stated that "This is not intended to penalize people for living outside the parish, but instead to ensure that administrative executives who choose to live outside of our Parish do not subject the City to liability, maintenance or gas costs based on that lifestyle decision."

Additionally, in order to draw focus on adherence to the 50 car rule, which would allow take-home vehicles for the 15 or so administrative department heads as well as additional vehicles for the Mayor's own use, the Councilmembers will introduce a Motion which calls on the administration to comply with the existing law and to turn over vehicles in excess of the quota by March 13, 2009.

The Fourth Quarter 2008 Take-Home Vehicle Report furnished to the City Council on January 30, 2009 by the Assistant Chief Administrative Officer of the Equipment Maintenance Division supports the findings of the Inspector General in the Interim Report on the Management of the Administrative Vehicle Fleet that the executive branch total of vehicles far exceeds the permitted quota by ordinance.



Councilmember Head continued, "After careful review it may even be possible to restrict the number of take-home vehicles further than 50. The public needs to remember that these actions have no bearing on pool vehicles. Pool vehicles should be available for City employee use including: the Department of Safety and Permits, Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC), and the Mayor's communications staff."

New Orleans City Council

The New Orleans City Council is the legislative branch of New Orleans city government. The Council considers and enacts all local laws that govern the City of New Orleans. The Council also approves the operating and capital budgets for the City, as recommended by the mayor, and continually monitors revenues and expenditures for local government operations. The City Council is also the regulatory body for public utilities. It also reviews and has final say on many land use and zoning matters, as well as considers major economic development projects for the City. As a Board of Review for Orleans Parish, the Council examines appeals of property tax assessments for real estate taxes, and certifies tax rolls to the Louisiana Tax Commission. Other responsibilities of the Council include overseeing the operation of the public access television in Orleans Parish.

The City Council is comprised of five districts and two councilmembers-at-large. Council President and Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson; Council Vice-President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow; District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura; District "B" Councilmember Stacy S. Head; District "C" Councilmember James Carter; District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis.