



Office of the Chicago City
Clerk



R2011-1362

Office of the City Clerk

City Council Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	11/16/2011
Sponsor(s):	Laurino, Margaret (39)
Type:	Resolution
Title:	Call for hearing(s) on wrongful use of handicap placards
Committee(s) Assignment:	Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, it has come to the attention of the Corporate Authorities of the City of Chicago that there has been a recent increase in the illegal use of State issued handicap placards in the City limits; and

WHEREAS, according to a recent Chicago Sun-Times investigation, more able-bodied drivers than ever are wrongfully using handicap placards to park for free at metered parking spots; and

WHEREAS, the Chicago Sun-Times investigation reported that, since September of 2011, a retired Chicago Police Department lieutenant observed 82 instances in which seemingly able-bodied drivers used handicap parking placards or license plates to park for free; and

WHEREAS, vehicles properly displaying handicap placards are exempt from parking meter fees under State and City law; and

WHEREAS, a total of 204,787 of all handicap placards statewide belong to Cook County residents, or a placard for every 13 passenger vehicles countywide; and

WHEREAS, the recent increase in Chicago parking meter rates appears to have coincided with the rise in the illegal use of handicap placards; and

WHEREAS, between 2006 and 2010, the City issued 12 tickets a year for displaying fake, altered, stolen, lost or expired handicap parking placards; and

WHEREAS, through September 1, 2011, the number of such tickets issued has spiked to 155; and

WHEREAS, Chicago court cases concerning the wrongful use of handicap placards have also reportedly increased from 68 in 2009, to 119 in 2010, to 149 thus far in 2011; and

WHEREAS, individuals caught wrongfully using handicap placards or handicap license plates currently face severe fines and penalties; and

WHEREAS, vehicles parked in spaces reserved for persons with disabilities without displaying disability plates or a parking placard may be fined a minimum of \$250; and

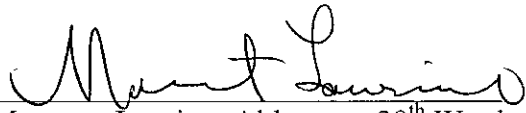
WHEREAS, individuals utilizing disabled parking privileges without the authorized holder of disability plates or a placard being present face a \$500 fine, a 30-day license suspension, and the suspension and/or revocation of the plates or placard; and

WHEREAS, altering a placard, possessing a fake or fraudulent placard, possessing a lost or stolen placard, duplicating or manufacturing a placard, or selling or otherwise distributing a fraudulent placard are classified as Class A misdemeanors for a first offense and may result in a fine of up to \$2,500 and the suspension of one's driver's license; and

WHEREAS, the current penalties and/or enforcement mechanisms have seemingly failed to prevent the recent proliferation of disabled parking abuses; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities has recognized the magnitude of disabled parking abuses and has committed to working with the City Council to root out disabled parking abuses; **NOW THEREFORE**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Corporate Authorities of the City of Chicago do hereby invite the Commissioner of the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities and representatives from the Chicago Police Department to appear before the Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety to present recommendations for more efficient enforcement of the aforementioned laws and/or recommendations for enhanced penalties in order to further deter potential abuses.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Margaret Laurino".

Margaret Laurino, Alderman, 39th Ward