

LETTER TO CITY OF KEY WEST REGARDING ACCESSIBLE TAXI'S

TO: All Below (Via Email)
Craig Cates, Mayor
Teri Johnston, Commissioner
Clayton Lopez, Commissioner
Mark Rossi, Commissioner
Billy Wardlow, Commissioner
Jimmy Weekly, Commissioner
Tony Yaniz, Commissioner
Shawn Smith, City Attorney

Dear Mr. Mayor, Commissioners, and City Attorney:

This letter is being sent on behalf of the Florida Keys Council for People with Disabilities in support of expanding the availability of wheelchair accessible taxi's in the City of Key West. Through media coverage, the Council has learned that this issue has been under review by the Commission. It is our understanding that you will discuss it again at your meeting on February 19, 2014, tonight.

Currently, Key West residents and visitors needing wheelchair accessible taxi services have extremely limited options: there is one cab company with one accessible vehicle in service, and advance reservation for that specific taxi is required. The freedom others enjoy, and the convenience of simply calling a cab, is virtually foreclosed to those in wheelchairs.

The Florida Keys Council for People with Disabilities urges you to take a closer look at this issue, and consider options which would expand the number of accessible taxi's available for use by Key West's residents and visitors. In New York City, after years of dispute and class-action litigation, the City recently adopted regulations requiring that half of all taxi's put into service each year be accessible to people with disabilities. This allowed the City to control the total number of taxi's on the street, while increasing the number that can accommodate people in wheelchairs.

The Florida Keys Council for People with Disabilities commends the Key West City Commission for considering this problem, and for being open to solutions. If the Council can assist in any way, we would be most happy to do so.

Sincerely,

Cindy McKnight, Chairperson
Florida Keys Council for People with Disabilities