

We had a very traumatic experience of survival during our time in Key West. We arrived on a Thursday. On Saturday morning we woke up to a gentleman at the Opal Key Resort asking us to move. After asking a few questions, we did move and were then followed by the Police to the Publix. As we recall with the encounter with the Police, we were told that oversized vehicles are not allowed to park in Key West and were told that we should park at a campground. We understood this to mean that it was a parking violation, not an unlawful violation that would result in arrest. We did not see any signs that said no parking for oversized vehicles on the 1600 block of Duval Street. We in fact paid to park initially, only to find a parking ticket on our vehicle. After receiving several parking tickets on Saturday, we decided we were going to make a trip to City Hall on the next business day, which was Tuesday being that Monday was a Holiday, to further educate ourselves on the parking situation for oversized vehicles in Key West.

On Monday, around 9:30am we start hearing knocks on our vehicle. In our experience, we have had strangers knock on our vehicle, curious about our converted school bus. We have come to ignore these knocks for the sake of privacy. It wasn't until about 15 minutes later that the persons knocking announced that they were the police and that a tow truck was on the way. To reiterate, the police did not announce themselves for 15 minutes. Receiving the information that a tow truck was on the way as a call to move, we immediately started the vehicle and made preparations to move, announcing to the police that we would move. At this moment, we had no knowledge that it was unlawful to lodge in a vehicle. I, Matthew Davey, was eventually detained, my fiance was asked to leave the vehicle, our dog was taken to the SPCA, and our vehicle was towed by Arnold's Towing. I was incarcerated for about 30 hours.

We had come to Key West for work. We are not hippies, we are traveling wedding professionals. We were contracted for a wedding at the Opal Key Resort, which was unfortunately canceled last minute while we were in Florida due to the couple breaking up. We were unaware of any oversized vehicle restrictions in Key West prior to our arrival. With a relative living in Key West, it was our intention to come early to Key West and work part-time at the restaurants leading up to the wedding on February 5th, 2021. After my arrest on January 17th, I was assigned a court date of February 3rd, 2021. Given our previous involvement with food banks, I sought out a food bank to volunteer and gain community service hours prior to the court date. We were in a bit of a predicament in that we couldn't leave the Keys (due to the court date) and we couldn't afford any of the campgrounds (due to the economic impact the pandemic inflicted on our business). So we had to survive in fear of being arrested again.

Every night leading up to the court date was a trauma to both of us. The police constantly harassed us, knowing that we had no other choice until the court date. The price to stay at the cheapest campground (even though it had no availability until April) was \$100 per night. With 16 days to the court date, and the loss of all of our savings to pay for bail and to retrieve our vehicle from Arnold's Towing, coming up with \$1,600 was just not possible.

While we know we cannot find restitution from this situation for us, we hope to prevent it from happening to someone else. We hope that the City of Key West will erect signs making it very clear that it is unlawful to lodge in a vehicle and doing so will result in arrest. We hope that the

City of Key West will post this information very clearly on its website. We also hope that police make it very clear in a warning to any person in an oversized vehicle that lodging in an oversized vehicle will result in an arrest, a courtesy that we were not given.