

CITY OF ANN ARBOR
CITY CLERK
REC'D

2012 MAR -7 PM 4: 53

March 1, 2012

1308 Birk Ave.
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Mayor John Heiftje
Larcom City Hall, third floor
301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48107

Police Chief Barnett
Jones Justice Center,
second and third floors
301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48107

City Council Members,
Larcom City Hall,
Council Chambers, second floor
301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48107

Dear Mayor Heiftje:

Recently I was in the 4th Ave. Food Coop when a woman who had been shopping there returned to the store. She was elderly, needing a cart to carry her own grocery bag. Her car had been towed by the city because she had forgotten to put her handicap hangtag on her rearview mirror. I helped the woman by carrying her groceries and driving her to the police station and to Brewers.

I am writing to ask the city to change its policy of towing away cars that appear to be illegally parked in spaces for handicapped persons. It's important to keep in mind that memories of senior citizens are no longer as sharp as they were. This was the second time the woman had forgotten to use her hangtag. She had never received a parking ticket before these two instances. I wish I could say the same.

I am asking the city stop towing cars that are illegally parked in handicap spaces and that, in the alternative, the fine be raised for people who cannot later present their hangtags. It is very stressful for handicapped people to deal with the procedure of getting their towed cars back. This woman was clearly distraught and the cost to her was far more than I had imagined.

Some may counter this suggestion by saying that the space needs to be cleared for truly handicapped individuals and that older people, whether they experience

memory problems or not, should remember to use their hangtags. My response is that, while there may be exceptions, people generally don't use handicap parking if they do not actually have a hangtag. What is more common and what I have witnessed first-hand is that people who are not handicapped use hangtags of their parents, spouses, friends and relatives to park in handicapped spaces. This is unlawful but difficult to prove.

I am asking for the city to do its best to show its support for disabled and elderly people by no longer towing vehicles from handicap spaces.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan M. Reinhart".

Susan M. Reinhart