

Offered by:
COUNCILOR JOHN FITZGERALD



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS THE OPTION TO EXPAND ACCESS OF HANDICAP PARKING PLACARDS TO THOSE WHO ARE PREGNANT

WHEREAS: The city has a rising population causing the availability of parking in the City of Boston to become an ongoing and growing concern for its citizens and even some of our most vulnerable such as pregnant individuals; and

WHEREAS: Those who are pregnant may need access to handicapped parking spaces for several reasons; and

WHEREAS: 1. **Mobility issues:** Some who are pregnant may experience physical discomfort or limitations, such as back pain or swollen feet, which can make walking long distances difficult.
2. **Medical conditions:** Many have certain medical conditions, such as gestational diabetes or high blood pressure, and may require closer parking to minimize physical exertion.
3. **Safety concerns:** Being closer to the entrance of a building can reduce the risk of accidents such as falls, especially for those who may be more prone to losing their balance.
4. **Emergency situations:** In the event of a medical emergency, having access to a handicapped parking space can expedite access to medical care. Overall, providing access to handicapped parking spaces for those who are pregnant helps ensure their safety, comfort, and accessibility while navigating public spaces.

WHEREAS: Most pregnant folks especially in the last trimester have a hard time walking more than 100-200 yards without being short of breath or winded; and

WHEREAS: Illinois and Texas, for example, have a parking policy that explicitly included pregnant women. Dubbed Henry's Law in Illinois, it allows people in the third trimester of pregnancy to use a disability placard for 90 days; and

WHEREAS: Regardless of whether such voluntarily provided preferential parking is available, if a physician certifies that a pregnant person has a walking disability, they may qualify for a temporary handicapped parking permit under both state and federal law and regulations; and

WHEREAS: A number of stores such as Target, Walmart, and Buy Buy Baby have had a few parking spots for expecting parents and parents with small children. The parking signs have typically been someone with a baby bump, a stork flying with baby and/or baby carriages; and

WHEREAS: Along with examining logistics surrounding current parking programs such as resident parking and visiting parking, the city can use this opportunity to explore the potential need to expand needs for a pregnant person to obtain a temporary handicapped pass in the third trimester of pregnancy; and

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council conduct a hearing to review the potential for expansion for pregnant persons entering the last trimester to request a temporary handicapped placard for parking. We also indicate that the appropriate city officials and members of the public be invited to attend.

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