

Email from auto industry consultant Victor Vandergriff

From: [Vandergriff, Victor](#)
To: [Steven J. Albright](#); [Jonathan Sierra SC](#)
Cc: [Kuntz, Jeremiah](#); [Brewster, Whitney](#)
Subject: Department of Motor Vehicles - HB 2714 and HB 1692
Date: Friday, May 10, 2013 8:20:30 AM

Brewster is TxDMV's exec director

Senate
staffers:

Steven and Jonathan,

Vandergriff was no longer DMV
chairman at this point

Good morning to both of you. I hope you are both doing well and holding up strong during the last days of the regular session.

I noticed that HB 2741 is on the agenda for Monday's Senate Transportation Committee. This is of course the companion bill to Senator Nichol's SB 1669. I know that the TxDMV will have resource witnesses available at the meeting. I also know that Jeremiah will touch base with you to see if you need anything further.

I would like to inquire about the status of hearing HB 1692 in committee. I noticed that this bill was not on the agenda. I believe you are aware that TxDMV and the manufacturers and dealers agreed to a new structure for handling lemon law and warranty performance cases as well as requiring mandatory, non-binding mediation in all dealer vs. dealer and dealer vs. manufacturer contested cases which will remain at SOAH. I will not take up your time extolling the merits, benefits and cost-savings associated with this new structure because we discussed them earlier in the session. Is there something else that you need from the department? Do you have any concerns about this bill? Do you need to hear directly from representatives of the dealers and manufacturers that they are for this legislation?

I would not normally write or be concerned about the status of HB 1692. I know that there is still time in this session to bring the bill to the full Senate. However, I am all too aware that the usual hysteria which surrounds automotive franchised dealer and manufacturer relations has taken up the valuable time of yet another Texas legislative session. I would not blame you if you were leery of any new legislation in this area. In an effort to keep what little harmony there is in this dealer/manufacturer arena TxDMV agreed to let the dealers have a Senator of their choosing pick up the bill in the Senate. The dealers were concerned about other amendments being placed on the bill and not having a direct voice to discuss them. My understanding is that Senator Patrick has agreed to this assignment.

I know you are both extremely busy. Thank you for giving us a status report or direction when you have time.

I will come by and see you both after the session when you have more time. Please give Senator Nichols my best. I will come by and see him as well. Let him know that my TxDOT District tours are starting in June and that I am neck-deep in briefing materials. He set the gold standard in terms of learning about all things TxDOT. I am going to try my best to uphold his high standards.

Victor

Dan Patrick carried the legislation
and was elected lieutenant
governor 18 months later


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Thank You.

Victor T. Vandergriff
P.O. Box [REDACTED]
Arlington, Texas 76012
(817) [REDACTED] Mobile
[REDACTED] [\[REDACTED\]@vtaig.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@vtaig.com)



**This was Vandergriff's
email address from
his client and former
employer, the Van Tuyl
Group, later bought by
Berkshire Hathaway**

Emails between auto industry consultant Victor Vandergriff and TxDMV

Harbeson, Bill

From: Harbeson, Bill
Sent: Friday, November 18, 2016 8:58 AM
To: Victor Vandergriff
Subject: RE: TxDMV Meeting re Recalls and Stop Sale notices

Director of TxDMV's enforcement division

Vandergriff organizes a meeting among dealers and manufacturers to discuss an issue that divides them: vehicle recall orders

It has to be the 6th. The following week we launch E-Licensing. R/WPH

-----Original Message-----

From: Victor Vandergriff
Sent: Thursday, November 17, 2016 10:47 AM
To: Harbeson, Bill <Bill.Harbeson@txdmv.gov>
Subject: Re: TxDMV Meeting re Recalls and Stop Sale notices

Bill,

I believe I need to point out one other thing that likely impacts our choice of meeting dates. December 8 happens to be the next scheduled meeting for the Sunset Commission. TxDOT is on the list of reviews to be discussed. In the words of the Quorum Report, the Sunset Advisory Commission staff issued a "scathing review" of TxDOT. I am the point person for the Commission on the review. I already been notified by the staff that I will likely be "invited" to attend the meeting on the 8th and answers questions from the members. I know that TxDOT, and its Commission members will expect to "defend" us. Upshot, the 8th is now likely to be problematic for me.

There will never be a date that everyone can attend. Ultimately you have to select a date that works best for you and your staff. All of the potential attendees will adjust. Unfortunately, it is likely essential that the date works for me as well. I am not essential to the automobile business but I am likely essential to this process being successful. Therefore, December 6 is likely the better date during the week we have discussed. You could also look to December 9 or the following week if that is better for your team.

I have not discussed my new conflict with anyone outside of this message to you.

Victor

Vandergriff signals that Dec. 6, 2016 is the best option for the date of the meeting

Harbeson, Bill

From: Harbeson, Bill
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2016 9:54 AM
To: Victor Vandergriff
Subject: RE: TxDMV Meeting re Recalls and Stop Sale notices

Here is approved announcement. Unless you object, I am going to mail invitation this morning. Following invitation is my current list of invitees. R/WPH

In recent years, there has been an increase of highly-publicized recalls of motor vehicles that have greatly affected consumers, manufacturers, dealers and the agencies that regulate the motor vehicle industry. With these recalls have arisen a number of questions regarding the appropriate response and responsibilities of the affected parties. The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles has been requested by former chairman, Victor Vandergriff, to host an open forum where a discussion can be conducted to lay out concerns in this area and have a conversation regarding possible strategies for handling recalls in the future.

Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2016
Time: 9:00 A.M.
Location: Lone Star Room
Building 1, Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
4000 Jackson Avenue, Austin, Texas 78731

In initial email, TxDMV's Harbeson says meeting was initiated at Vandergriff's request

Anyone interested in this topic is invited to attend. Should you have any questions, please contact Bill Harbeson, TxDMV, by telephone: 512- 465-4142 or email: bill.harbeson@txdmv.gov.


Harbeson, Bill

From: Harbeson, Bill
Sent: Tuesday, November 22, 2016 9:30 AM
To: Victor Vandergriff
Subject: RE: TxDMV Open Forum to Discuss Recalls and the Motor Vehicle Industry

I say we start the meeting calling for thoughts on the relative harm these recalls have caused the parties and let it flow from there.

From: Victor Vandergriff [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 22, 2016 9:06 AM
To: Harbeson, Bill <Bill.Harbeson@txdmv.gov>
Subject: Fwd: TxDMV Open Forum to Discuss Recalls and the Motor Vehicle Industry

Vandergriff tells Harbeson he'd rather not have his name and organizing role mentioned in the invitation to participants



Bill,

I liked this message better than the first one. I neglected to mention that I thought you should drop the reference to me in the invitation. In my opinion, it needed to be more about the TxDMV's call versus calling into question what my role has been. I am glad that you caught that.

Have you looked at the message I sent regarding the focus on the existing statute and the need for agenda and perhaps short presentations? If you have, what are your thoughts?

Victor

Sent from my iPad.

Please excuse my typographical and spelling errors.

Here is the invitation sent to industry participants. The reference to Vandergriff is gone



From: Harbeson, Bill [mailto:Bill.Harbeson@txdmv.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, November 22, 2016 10:59 AM
Subject: Open Forum to Discuss Recalls and the Motor Vehicle Industry

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of highly-publicized, safety related recalls of motor vehicles that have greatly affected consumers, manufacturers, dealers and the agencies that regulate the motor vehicle industry. With these recalls have arisen a number of questions regarding the responsibilities of the affected parties. The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles will host an open forum to discuss issues related to this important topic and possible strategies for handling current and future recalls.

Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2016
Time: 9:00 A.M.
Location: Lone Star Room
Building 1, Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
4000 Jackson Avenue, Austin, Texas 78731

Anyone interested in participating in this important dialogue is invited to attend. Should you have any questions, please contact Bill Harbeson, TxDMV, by telephone: 512- 465-4142 or email: bill.harbeson@txdmv.gov.

**TxDOT Commissioner Victor Vandergriff
Seeks Reimbursement For Travel To Austin in Dec. 2016**



Form 148-B-1
(Rev. 11/16)
Page 1 of 2

C. REESE

Travel Expense Account

Texas Department of Transportation



TRAVELER INFORMATION

Victor	01090158	MI	Vandergriff
First Name *	01090158		Last Name *
Commissioner			70015236279SP1
Title *			Employee Identification Number *
Administration - ADM - 41			Fort Worth
District / Division			Designated Headquarter City *
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Direct Deposit <input type="radio"/> Warrant	12/05/16	12/09/16	<input checked="" type="radio"/> In State <input type="radio"/> Out of State
Reimbursement type	Date From MM/DD/YY *	Date To MM/DD/YY *	Travel Type *
Is this claim associated with a travel advance? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No			
Travel Advance *		Travel Advance Request Number	



This is one day before
meeting of auto industry
reps organized by
Vandergriff

TRAVEL DISTRIBUTION SUMMARY

Distribution Information	Amount
Public Transportation: <input type="checkbox"/> Air <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi <input type="checkbox"/> Car Rental <input type="checkbox"/> Other Total	
Personal Car Mileage, <u>379.2</u> Miles @ Rate Set by Legislature 0.54	\$204.77
Meals and Lodging (Attach Receipts for Lodging)	\$769.00
Personal Plane Mileage, _____ Miles @ Rate Set by Legislature	
Other Travel Expense (Itemize) State lodging taxes	\$33.84
City/County lodging taxes	\$50.76
Parking	\$151.56
Total	\$1,209.93

ACCOUNT INFORMATION

Amount*	Dept.*	Account*	AY*	Approp.*	Fund*	Task	P.C. Business Unit*	Project*	Activity*	Source Type*
769.00	410960	7110	17	13800	0006		60171	413120	IND	020
204.77	410960	7102	17	13800	0006		60171	413120	IND	020
202.32	410960	7105	17	13800	0006		60171	413120	IND	020
33.84	410960	7135	17	13800	0006		60171	413120	IND	020

CERTIFICATION



I certify that this expense account is true, correct and unpaid.

A claim for more than the amount spent is a violation of state law & TxDOT policy, and is subject to disciplinary action.

Victor Vandergriff
Signature *

Commissioner
Title *

12/13/16
Date *

Approved: Manager, Supervisor *

Title *

Date *

Approved: DE, DD or Designee *

Title *

Date *



IN-STATE CLICK => In-State Contract Hotels									
LEAVE HEADQUARTERS		ARRIVE HEADQUARTERS		PER DIEM Lodging Receipt Required *			ACTUAL EXPENSE Administrative Approval Required *		
DATE * (ie. MM/DD/YY)	TIME * (ie. 1:00PM)	DATE * (ie. MM/DD/YY)	TIME * (ie. 1:00PM)	MEALS ACTUAL NTE \$41	LODGING RATE	TOTAL	MEALS	LODGING	TOTAL
12/05/16	3:00pm			\$41.00	\$141.00	\$182.00			
12/06/16				\$41.00	\$141.00	\$182.00			
12/07/16				\$41.00	\$141.00	\$182.00			
12/08/16				\$41.00	\$141.00	\$182.00			
		12/09/16	7:00pm	\$41.00		\$41.00			
Total Meals and Lodging:						\$769.00	Total Actual Expenses:		

Vandergriff reports leaving
Arlington at 3 p.m. on Dec.
5, 2016

Taxpayers are billed \$182
for meals and lodging on
Dec. 5, 2016

NON-CONTRACTED VENDOR EXCEPTION definition CLICK => Valid Travel Exceptions	
Does this claim include a NON-CONTRACTED Vendor? * <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
<input type="checkbox"/> Air	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotel (C) Unavailability of Contract Travel Services

Vandergriff said he should not
have billed taxpayers for this
day. He said he would
reimburse TxDOT

RECORD OF TRANSPORTATION & DUTIES PERFORMED CLICK => Texas Mileage Calculator		
DATE *	RECORD DESCRIPTION *	TOTAL DAILY MILEAGE
12/05/16	Departed HQ to Austin to attend commission business meetings throughout the week and Sunset Hearings at the Capitol. Traveled via personal vehicle. <i>1100 Congress Ave Austin, Tx</i>	189.5
12/06/16	Commission business. <i>Overnight Stay</i>	
12/07/16	Commission business. <i>Overnight Stay</i>	
12/08/16	Commission business. <i>Overnight Stay</i>	
12/09/16	Commission business. Return to HQ via personal vehicle.	189.7
Valet parking used due to in/out assistance privileges needed by employee because of luggage and meeting materials. Self-parking does not grant these privileges.		
TOTAL		379.2

On the morning of Dec. 6, Vandergriff
was at a meeting of auto industry
reps at the TxDOT



If multiple employees attended the same event and are being reimbursed for their travel expenses, the agency has deemed that there is a benefit from this number of people receiving the valuable knowledge from communications and participating in the networking at the event. Therefore, the number of individuals traveling was necessary to perform official state business.