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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES CITY COUNCIL PASSAGE OF ORDINANCE TO CREATE  
CHICAGO'S TOP TAXICAB DRIVER CONTEST**

*'Chicago's Top Cabbie' Will Be Awarded Free Taxicab Medallion*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) today announced City Council passage of an ordinance that creates a citywide competition to find "Chicago's Top Cabbie" with a top prize of a free taxicab medallion. The contest builds on the success of the Taxicab Driver Excellence Award, which recognizes taxicab drivers who serve the disabled community.

"Chicago has the best taxicab drivers in the country and this contest is designed to recognize examples of the high-level of service they provide to Chicago's residents," Mayor Emanuel said. "I look forward to rewarding Chicago's Top Cabbie for a heroic act or excellent customer service."

The new contest is designed to reward a licensed public chauffeur for their heroism and/or exemplary customer service. The contest will be open to all 12,000 public chauffeurs licensed by the city.

"The goal of this contest is to spark industry-wide pride from all taxicab drivers, so residents and visitors of Chicago have safe, enjoyable and memorable cab rides," said BACP Commissioner Maria Guerra Lapacek. "I'm looking forward to the public sharing their positive experiences with Chicago's excellent taxicab drivers."

Members of the public can nominate their favorite taxicab driver through 311 or a website that will be announced before the contest opens. BACP staff will review each nominee to verify the requirements are met, and then post the finalists online for voting. The voting period will last 14 days and will be open to the public. The first place prize will be a free taxicab medallion and additional prizes will be available to runners-up.

Today's announcement is the latest step taken by the Emanuel Administration to support Chicago's taxicab drivers. As part of the Mayor's 2016 budget passed by City Council, taxicab drivers received a 15 percent fare increase that took effect on January 1, 2016. This change will boost average taxicab driver income by \$4,000 to \$10,000 annually.

Additionally, as a result of the recently amended taxicab license holder rules and regulations, the credit card transaction fee imposed on taxicab drivers was reduced to 4 percent effective January 1, 2016 and will further be reduced to 3 percent starting July 1, 2016, resulting in an additional \$375 to \$800 in annual income for the average driver. Taxicab drivers are also now entitled to revenue generated by exterior advertising.

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