



Office of the Attorney General
State of Texas

DAN MORALES
ATTORNEY GENERAL

December 12, 1997

The Honorable Ben. W. "Bud" Childers
Fort Bend County Attorney
301 Jackson, Suite 621
Richmond, Texas 77469-3506

Letter Opinion No. 97-112

Re: Whether the inscription of an elected official's name is permitted on county-owned vehicles (ID# 39652)

Dear Mr. Childers:

You ask if chapter 721 of the Transportation Code either permits or prohibits the inscription of an elected official's name on a county vehicle, and if permitted, whether either the county official or the commissioners court has discretion as to the inscription. Section 721.004 of the Transportation Code requires that county-owned vehicles and heavy equipment bear the name of the county, followed by the title of the office, and it reads as follows:

**Inscription Required on Municipal and County-Owned Motor Vehicles
and Heavy Equipment**

(a) The office having control of a motor vehicle or piece of heavy equipment owned by a municipality or county shall have printed on each side of the vehicle or equipment the name of the municipality or county, followed by the *title of the department or office having custody of the vehicle or equipment*.

(b) The inscription must be in a color sufficiently different from the body of the vehicle or equipment so that the lettering is plainly legible.

(c) The title of the department or office must be in letters plainly legible at a distance of not less than 100 feet. [Emphasis added.]

It is a fundamental rule of statutory construction that effect and meaning be given to each and every sentence, clause, phrase, and word.¹ The statute does not specifically permit the inscription of an elected county official's name on a county-owned vehicle. Since the statute gives precisely the information to be inscribed on the vehicle, it follows that there is no authority to inscribe a

¹67 TEX. JUR. 3D *Statutes* § 124 (1989).

county official's name on the vehicle.² In view of our answer, we do not address your second question.

S U M M A R Y

An elected official may not inscribe his or her name on a county-owned motor vehicle.

Yours very truly,



Rick Gilpin
Deputy Chief
Opinion Committee

²When a statutory power is granted, and the method of its exercise prescribed, the prescribed method excludes all others and must be followed. See *Cole v. Texas Army Nat'l Guard*, 909 S.W.2d 535, 539 (Tex. App.—Austin 1995, writ denied); see also Attorney General Opinions DM-242 (1996), JM-995 (1988).