



## TALKING POINTS FOR PRESS – Great Plate Auction 2013

### **FIRSTS:**

- Texas is first in the U.S. to order the hire of a private vendor (My Plates) to create, market, and sell new license plate designs as a way to raise money for the state.
- My Plates is the first entity the state legislature authorized to hold a license plate auction.
- The first time Texans can buy the 7-character messages HOUSTON, ROCKETS, BENTLEY, MAYBACH, PHANTOM, BOXSTER, CARRERA. (Texas personalized plates had maxed at 6 characters or fewer since 1965, until My Plates introduced 7 characters at the Great Plate Auction 2011).

### **WHAT'S DIFFERENT:**

- Auction plates are *fully transferable*.  
Prior to the Great Plate Auctions, if you snagged a coveted plate combination you could not sell the right to that combination to someone else, no matter what they were willing to pay. You could renew it or turn it back in to the state, but you couldn't sell it. With our auction plates, you can.)
- Most Expensive Plate ever sold in Texas? A Texan paid \$15,000 for FERRARI at the Great Plate Auction 2011. Will that state record be beaten tonight?

### **LASTS:**

- Tonight could be the first and *last* shot at the 7-letter combinations up for bids.
- See, the winners of the Great Plate Auction win these plates for 10 years AND they can renew them every 10 years after that, pass them down to their kids, who can renew them every 10 years after that and so on. So, there's a chance the plates will *never* be on the market again after January 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **FACTS:**

- The Great Plate Auction is paid for by My Plates. No tax dollars were spent on the event.



-The majority of auction proceeds will benefit the state general revenue fund. My Plates has designated charities to receive a portion of the proceeds, as well as TxDMV for cost recovery. See scale below.

-So, with zero dollars invested, the State gets a return of anywhere from 50 to 90% of the sale of each plate, depending on the sale price.

-The state receives 50% for plates priced at \$400-1000.

-For plates above \$1000, here's the royalty scale that is set by a contract between My Plates and the TxDMV:

**Royalties paid to State for plate sales of more than \$1,000**

For each of the following categories, the royalties to state shall be calculated incrementally. For example, for Category G Plates, the royalties to the state shall be the applicable Category E royalty for the first \$1,000, amounts between \$1,000 and \$5,000 will bear the Category F royalty, and amounts between \$5,000 and \$25,000 will bear the Category G royalty.

| CATEGORY | PRICE  | All Years |
|----------|--|-----------|
| F        | More than \$1,000 and no more than \$5,000         | 60%       |
| G        | More than \$5,000 and no more than \$25,000        | 65%       |
| H        | More than \$25,000 and no more than \$100,000      | 70%       |
| I        | More than \$100,000 and no more than \$500,000     | 75%       |
| J        | More than \$500,000 and no more than \$1 million   | 80%       |
| K        | More than \$1 million and no more than \$5 million | 85%       |
| L        | More than \$5 million                              | 90%       |

-As other states and cities around the country are facing bankruptcy, Texas has gotten creative and has come up with a way to raise money that is NOT a tax or a fee. Buying a specialty plate is a *choice*. Those who buy My Plates can know that, not only do they get fun, cool, colorful plates, but that a portion of the sale goes to help pay for services to all Texans.

-Auction winners are not bound to a certain background design. They are purchasing the *message*, example, HOUSTON, that they may then put on any of the 35 My Plates designs that accommodate 7 characters.



-All Auction license plates are still manufactured by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice prison in Huntsville, Texas, as are all license plates in Texas.

-In August 2009, the state awarded a contract to design and market new specialty license plates to License Plates of Texas, LLC., a joint venture of Etech, Inc. of Nacogdoches ([www.etechnic.com](http://www.etechnic.com)) and Pinnacle Technical Resources of Dallas ([www.pinnacle1.com](http://www.pinnacle1.com)), DBA My Plates.

-My Plates is the exclusive vendor of specialty plates for the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV).

-Since sales began November 19, 2009, Texans have bought more than 128,000 My Plates, putting more than \$14M in the general revenue fund. This is not counting Great Plate Auction sales.

### **TERMINOLOGY:**

-“Specialty” plate refers to any official license plate other than the state’s general issue plate.

-Specialty plates can be “personalized” plates, but they don’t have to be.

-My Plates uses only “specialty” and “personalized” to refer to these plates, not “vanity,” which is pejorative and lacks accuracy.

### **VISUALS:**

Fun Crowd of Texans, including excited bidders

10 Auction Plates, [click here](#) for individual hi-res images, [click here](#) for collage

Houston Auto Show

Cheerleaders and Mascots for [Texans](#), [Rockets](#), and Dynamo.

Live String Trio

Auctioneer Renee Jones,

Renee Jones, CAI #9270, International Champion Auctioneer, [click here](#) for bio

-Create custom graphics for your media outlet using our site: [www.myplates.com](http://www.myplates.com).

Click through the “Create a Plate” process, then once you’ve chosen your background and message, right click on the plate image to save as a hi-res jpg.

### **Contact:**

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(512) 423-4237, text and email are best on the night of the Auction