

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5375

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As of January 23, 2002

**Title:** An act relating to the auction and titling of abandoned vehicles.

**Brief Description:** Revising abandoned vehicle auction laws.

**Sponsors:** Senators Kline, Swecker, Costa, Prentice, Rossi and Constantine.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Transportation: 1/24/02.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Staff:** Dean Carlson (786-7305)

**Background:** Concerns have been raised that buyers of junk vehicles from tow truck operator auctions can remove the vehicles from the lot after purchase, take the vehicle to a public street, remove parts and leave the remainder on the street. The vehicle is later hauled away by a tow operator and the last known owner billed for the costs. Because the buyer at auction has not titled the car when the vehicle is towed, the last known owner receives a ticket and is billed for the costs of towing the vehicle even though that person is no longer the owner of the car.

**Summary of Bill:** No vehicle meeting the definition of "junk" vehicle can be resold at auction.

A tow truck operator can refuse to accept a bid at auction for the following reasons: the bidder owes the operator money; the operator knows the bidder has previously abandoned vehicles sold at auction; or the bidder has bought more than four vehicles at auction within the last calendar year without obtaining title to any of the vehicles.

A successful bidder of a vehicle at auction must apply for title at the time the bidder takes possession of the vehicle. The tow truck operator must submit the title application completed by the successful bidder at auction to the Department of Licensing (DOL) no later than five days after the bidder takes possession.

DOL must ensure that all information contained in the title application is available electronically to law enforcement within seven days after receiving the information.

The penalty for abandoning a vehicle is \$250 and cannot be reduced.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 22, 2002.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.