
Transportation Committee

HB 2274

Brief Description: Allowing registered tow truck operators to pass the costs of tolls and ferry fares to the impounded vehicle's registered owner.

Sponsors: Representatives Armstrong, Clibborn and Ormsby.

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allows tow truck operators to collect the costs of tolls of ferry fares paid during the course of towing, removing, impounding, or storing an impounded vehicle.
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Hearing Date: 1/18/12

Staff: Alison Hellberg (786-7152).

Background:

Tow truck operators who impound vehicles from private or public property and/or tow for law enforcement agencies must be registered with the Department of Licensing (Department). Impounds, i.e., the taking and holding of a vehicle in legal custody without the consent of the owner, may only be performed by registered tow truck operators (operators). If on public property, the impound is at the direction of a law enforcement officer; if the vehicle is on private property, the impound is at the direction of the property owner or his agent.

An operator must file a fee schedule with the Department and may not charge fees that exceed those in the schedule.

Operators are also prohibited from committing certain acts. A violation of these prohibitions is a gross misdemeanor. These prohibitions include:

- asking for or receiving compensation, gratuities, or rewards from a person authorized to sign an impound authorization related to the impounding of a vehicle beyond the costs of towing, storage, or other services rendered;

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- having an interest in a contract, agreement, or understanding between a person having control of private property and an agent of the person authorized to sign an impound authorization;
- having an interest in an entity whose functions include acting as an agent or representative of a property owner for the purpose of authorizing impounds; and
- entering into any contract or agreement or offering an incentive to a person authorized to order a private impound that is related to the authorization of an impound.

Operators are not prohibited, however, from collecting the costs of towing, storage, or other services rendered during the course of towing, removing, impounding, or storing of an impounded vehicle.

Summary of Bill:

In addition to collecting costs of towing, storage, or other services, tow truck operators may also collect the costs of tolls of ferry fares paid during the course of towing, removing, impounding, or storing an impounded vehicle.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.