

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2021 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Third Reader**

Senate Bill 501

(Senator Beidle)

Judicial Proceedings

Environment and Transportation

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**Towing or Removal of Vehicles From Parking Lots – Placement of Signs –  
Regional Malls**

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This bill requires signage with specified towing information to be placed at every entrance to the parking lot of a “regional mall.” The bill defines “regional mall” as a shopping mall with at least 400,000 square feet of gross leasable area and two anchor stores (*i.e.*, large department stores). The square footage of any anchor store is excluded from the calculation of gross leasable area. The owner or operator of a parking lot (or their agent) may not have a vehicle towed (or otherwise removed) unless the signage placement requirement of the bill is met (in addition to existing signage requirements related to size and content).

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill does not materially affect State finances or operations.

**Local Effect:** The bill does not materially affect local government finances or operations.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** The owner or operator of a parking lot (or the owner’s or operator’s agent) may not have a vehicle towed or otherwise removed from the parking lot unless the owner, operator, or agent has conspicuously placed signs that indicate, among other things, that State law requires the vehicle be available for reclamation 24 hours per day, seven days per week. At least one such sign must be placed for every 7,500 square feet of parking space in the parking lot.

Generally, if a vehicle is towed or otherwise removed from a parking lot, the person in possession of the vehicle (1) must immediately deliver the vehicle directly to the storage facility stated on the required signage; (2) may not move the towed vehicle from that storage facility to another storage facility for at least 72 hours; and (3) must provide the owner of the vehicle with immediate and continuous opportunity (24 hours per day, seven days per week) to retake possession.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 12, 2021  
rh/ljm Third Reader - March 16, 2021

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