

# **HB 191-Vehicle Laws - Towed, Removed, or Abandoned**

Uploaded by: Andrea Mansfield

Position: FAV



## Towing & Recovery Professionals of Maryland

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### MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Ted Dent, President, Towing & Recovery Professionals of Maryland  
Vince Flook, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Towing & Recovery Professionals of Maryland

DATE: January 30, 2025

RE: **HB 191 Vehicle Laws - Towed, Removed, or Abandoned Vehicles - Electronic Notice to Owner**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Towing Recovery Professionals of Maryland (TRPM) SUPPORT HB 191. This bill would allow a towing company to notify the owner of a towed vehicle electronically if the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) sends the notice. The bill provides for additional protections for the vehicle owner by requiring notification by certified mail, return receipt requested, and first-class mail if the owner does not respond within 7 days.

The Committee may remember similar bills from the past two sessions to allow a tower or a police department to notify a secured party/lien holder and insurers of record electronically when a vehicle is towed from a parking lot if agreed to by the parties. This has significantly streamlined the process for those entities using it and allows matters to be resolved more quickly when a vehicle is not claimed.

HB 191 establishes a similar process for the notification of a vehicle owner when a vehicle is towed from a parking lot. Currently, a towing company is required to notify the vehicle owner of record by certified mail, return receipt requested, and first-class mail within 7 days. This process is followed to provide proper notification to all parties to reclaim the vehicle. Should the owner/secured party/insurance company not claim the vehicle, the owner/secured party/insurance company is then agreeing to relinquish any rights to the vehicle which would allow the towing company to seek a CS-78 from a law enforcement agency to transfer the vehicle to a licensed automotive & dismantler recycler. HB 191 streamlines this notification process for the vehicle owner in a similar manner to that of the electronic notification process with that of the secured party and lien holder.

During the interim, TRPM worked with MVA to determine the best process for notifying vehicle owners electronically. To protect a vehicle owner's email address and provide owner protections, it was agreed that MVA would send the notice using the email address the owner provided to it and mailed notification would still be required if the vehicle owner did not respond within 7 days.

Most transactions these days can be managed electronically, from the purchasing of a home, securing a loan, and submitting applications. Providing for electronic notification of vehicle owners, as well as insurers of record and secured parties in previous legislation, saves money on behalf of the towing industry and will resolve matters concerning abandoned vehicles more quickly should a vehicle not be claimed.

For these reasons, TRPM SUPPORTS HB 191 and urges a FAVORABLE Committee report.

# **HB 191 Support Letter.pdf**

Uploaded by: Karen Straughn

Position: FAV



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**OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**  
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January 30, 2025

To: The Honorable Marc Korman  
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Karen S. Straughn  
Consumer Protection Division

Re: House Bill 191 – Vehicle Laws – Towed, Removed or Abandoned Vehicles – Electronic  
Notice to Owner (SUPPORT)

The Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General submits the following written testimony in support of House Bill 191 submitted by Delegate Linda Foley. This bill would permit a tower and the police department to notify, by electronic notice, an owner, the insurer of record, and any secured party of the action taken against the vehicle.

When a vehicle is towed, the owner, if he is aware his vehicle is missing, is often left confused, believing that his vehicle may have been stolen. The law, as currently written, requires notice by certified mail within 7 days of the tow. When an individual believes his vehicle has been stolen, however, this is a lengthy period of time. This bill would permit electronic notification to the owner and the secured party as well as the insurer of record, which will likely result in a quicker ability for an individual to know what has occurred and take appropriate action. If no response is received within 7 days, then notice must still be sent by certified mail. This bill therefore adds protections, without removing any protections currently in the law in the event that electronic notice is not sufficient to notify the parties.

This bill will also help to potentially reduce storage charges imposed upon the owner. The Consumer Protection Division often receives complaints from individuals about the costs incurred in having their vehicle towed, including storage charges. By providing an option for more rapid notification, the owner can act to retrieve the vehicle sooner, resulting in smaller fines for consumers.

For these reasons, we ask that the Environment and Transportation Committee return a favorable report on this bill.

cc: The Honorable Linda Foley  
Members, Environment & Transportation Committee

# **Testimony for Vehicle Laws - Google Docs.pdf**

Uploaded by: Linda Foley

Position: FAV

**Delegate Linda Foley**  
*Legislative District 15*  
Montgomery county

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Environment and Transportation Committee

**House Office Building,**  
**6 Bladen St., Annapolis, Maryland,**  
(410) 841-3052 | 1-800-492-7122, ext. 3052  
linda.foley@house.state.md.us



**Testimony:** HB191 - Vehicle Laws - Towed, Removed, or Abandoned Vehicles - Electronic Notice to Owner

**Committee:** Environment and Transportation Committee

**Hearing Date:** January 30, 2025

**Position:** Favorable

Chairman Korman and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present HB 191 on behalf of the Towing and Recovery Professionals of Maryland.

HB191 is intended to streamline processes and ensure the quick resolution of situations where a vehicle is not claimed when towed.

Similar legislation has been voted favorable by this committee over the past two years, authorizing the electronic notification of secured parties, lien holders, and insurers of records by towers and police departments. This bill extends this process to the vehicle owner and provides additional protections; under HB191, the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) will be required to notify the vehicle owner using an email address if provided on file and requires mailed notification if the vehicle owner does not respond within 7 days.

HB191 will improve communication between the administration and vehicle owners by expediting the notification process, and reducing state expenses with regards to certified mail.

TRPM worked with MVA during the interim on this process. Representatives of TRPM are signed up in support and can respond more specifically to questions about this bill and the current process.

Thank you for your consideration. Please issue a favorable report of HB191.

# **MCPA-MSA\_HB 191-Vehicle Laws - Towed, Removed, or**

Uploaded by: Samira Jackson

Position: FAV





# Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

## Maryland Sheriffs' Association



### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

**FROM:** Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee  
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee  
Samira Jackson, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

**DATE:** January 30, 2025

**RE:** **HB 191 Vehicle Laws - Towed, Removed, or Abandoned Vehicles - Electronic Notice to Owner**

**POSITION:** SUPPORT

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT** HB 191. This bill would allow a towing company to notify the owner of a towed vehicle electronically if the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) sends the notice. The bill provides for additional protections for the vehicle owner by requiring notification by certified mail, return receipt requested, and first-class mail if the owner does not respond within 7 days.

Currently when removing an abandoned vehicle, a police department, or a towing company if authorized to do so by the police department, is required to notify the owner, any secured party, and the insurer of record by certified mail, return receipt requested, and first-class mail within 7 days. This process is followed to provide proper notification to all parties to reclaim the vehicle. Should the owner/secured party/insurance company not claim the vehicle, the owner/secured party/insurance company is then agreeing to relinquish any rights to the vehicle which would allow for its disposal.

Most transactions these days can be managed electronically, from the purchasing of a home, securing a loan, and submitting applications. Providing for electronic notification of vehicle owners, secured parties, and insurers of record saves money on behalf of the police department and tower, and will resolve matters concerning abandoned vehicles more quickly should a vehicle not be claimed.

For this reason, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT** HB 191 and urge a **FAVORABLE** Committee report.

# **HB0191 – MVA - LOI - Vehicle Laws - Towed, Removed**

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

January 30, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman  
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee  
250 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Information – House Bill 191 – Vehicle Laws - Towed, Removed, or Abandoned Vehicles - Electronic Notice to Owner***

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 191 but offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

House Bill 191 would allow a person who tows or removes a vehicle to request the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) send an electronic notice to the vehicle owner with the location and contact information of the towing company only if the MVA has an email on file.

Currently, the MVA offers customers the option to register an email address to receive electronic communication, such as renewal notices. Under State law, email addresses are protected personally identifiable information (PII) that the MVA is not permitted to share.

The proposed legislation would ensure the MVA is able to comply with protecting customers’ PII while providing notification service to Marylanders for towing notifications. A towing company would register with the MVA to allow exchange of a towed vehicle’s information and query whether the MVA has a customer’s email address on file. If one is found, an electronic notice would be sent to a customer similar to a flag notice and provide information on where the vehicle was towed and how to contact the towing company.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests that the Committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 191.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine E. Nizer  
Administrator  
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration  
410-787-7830

Matthew Mickler  
Director of Government Affairs  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
410-865- 1090