



## Towing & Recovery Professionals of Maryland

P.O Box 905 \* Huntingtown, Maryland 20639

410-414-5406 \* 1-800-244-0102 \* Fax 410-414-5408

### MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Will Smith, Chair and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

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

DATE: February 19, 2026

RE: **SB 578 Public Safety – Department of State Police – Police-Initiated Towing - Alterations**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Towing Recovery Professionals of Maryland (TRPM) SUPPORT SB 578. This bill defines light-duty towing in statute and requires the Maryland Department of State Police (MDSP) to establish maximum rates for police-initiated light-duty towing and recovery similar to how MDSP establishes rates for medium and heavy-duty towing and recovery.

SB 578 is a consumer protection focused bill aimed to provide uniformity and reasonable guidance for the towing industry to follow with respect to the rates charged for police-initiated light-duty towing and recovery. It is the outcome of MDSP and TRPM collaboration on towing matters that come before MDSP.

As a result of conversations with MDSP and to examine and report on insurance matters, the sponsor is offering several amendments to clean up and clarify a few provisions in the bill. The amendments remove two dates from statute that are no longer relevant, change the name of the Committee on Rate Setting and Complaint Resolution for Police-Initiated Medium-Duty and Heavy-Duty Towing and Recovery to include Light-Duty, require the Committee to recommend light-duty tow rates, provide clarity for the setting of maximum rates for that purpose, and adds two responsibilities for the Committee to examine and report on during the interim. TRPM believes these changes provide the needed clarity to offer uniformity and guidance for police-initiated light-duty towing and recovery.

The two additional responsibilities for the Committee focus on insurance matters related to vehicles registered and insured out of state and costs associated with the cleanup of cargo and debris.

Although the Maryland Insurance Administration has issued Bulletin 16-25 to advise automobile liability insurers for the at-fault vehicle that they are responsible for the cost of 1) removing the vehicle accident debris, 2) removing the at-fault and not-at-fault vehicle from a roadway or from property adjacent to a roadway after an accident, and 3) towing the not-at-fault vehicle away from the scene of the accident; MIA's authority is limited to covering only vehicles registered in the State of Maryland. Towers are having issues with receiving payment through insurance companies for vehicles that are registered out of state.

Property and casualty liability insurance for vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,001 or more pounds is governed by federal law and regulation. The minimum required coverage is \$750,000. This level of coverage may be sufficient in most situations if the vehicle, trailer, and cargo are all owned and insured by the same entity. Many times, the owner of the vehicle and the owner of the cargo are two different entities. If an accident occurs, the vehicle owner may have insurance to cover the property damage liability claims and for the removal of the vehicles, but coverage may not apply or be high

enough to cover the cost of damage and clean-up of the cargo that was being hauled. When this occurs, the towers are left with paying for the clean-up with no recourse to recoup the cost.

SB 578 is a good consumer protection bill. The amendments provide clarity and serve to examine important insurance matters to ensure towers are fairly compensated for the work they perform. They have been reviewed by the Maryland Insurance Administration, Maryland Motor Truck, and the American Property & State Casualty Insurance Association. All have responded they are fine with the amendments.

For these reasons, TRPM SUPPORTS SB 578 and urges a FAVORABLE Committee report with the Sponsor amendments.