



February 18, 2026

Hon. William Smith and Members of the Committee
Committee on Judicial Proceedings
Maryland Senate

RE: NICB Support for S.B. 0578

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), I'm writing to express NICB's support for Senate Bill 0578. NICB is a national, century-old, not-for-profit organization supported by approximately 1,200 property and casualty insurance companies, including many who write business in Maryland. Working hand-in-hand with our member companies and Maryland state and local law enforcement, we help to detect, prevent, and deter insurance crimes.

Insurance fraud is not a victimless crime. A 2022 study placed total U.S. insurance fraud at \$308.6 billion. Fraudsters will exploit every avenue, forum, and opportunity to bilk consumers and their insurers to line their own pockets, which ultimately increases costs for everyone. Vehicle collisions can provide an opportunity for fraudsters to prey on victims that are often already under significant strain. In addition to dealing with any serious injuries that may result, victims must often report to law enforcement and file insurance claims. Handling ongoing medical issues; managing follow-up appointments with either medical professionals, insurance carriers, or law enforcement agencies; providing additional written material that may be required; and finding a reputable vehicle repair shop all pose significant burdens on victims as they deal with the after-effects of a collision.

This high-stress situation creates the perfect opportunity for predatory wrecking and towing companies to exploit accident victims. Some wreckers or towers often take advantage of confusion at the accident scene or even after the fact by grossly inflating invoices or falsely claiming various services were rendered at the scene. NICB has seen examples of towers charging accident victims exorbitant fees for towing and storage – sometimes as high as \$17,000 for a single routine vehicle tow and upwards of \$100,000 for a semi-truck tow. In some situations, predatory towers may hold a car hostage until the fee is paid or file lawsuits against the vehicle owner.

Senate Bill 0578 would help combat predatory towing by amending Maryland's towing regulations to expand the Department of State Police's authority to set and regulate rates for all police-initiated towing, not just medium or heavy-duty commercial vehicles. This would further strengthen Maryland's towing regulations, including the Department's authority to maintain a public list of approved towing companies and its formal process for handling complaints and removing companies that violate standards. These changes will better protect consumers by combating inflated billing and ensuring greater oversight of towing services. **Accordingly, NICB supports S.B. 0578 and urges passage of this bill.**

As always, please consider NICB a resource and partner in the fight against insurance crime. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at hburriss@nicb.org or 847-707-2554.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hannah Burriss", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Hannah Burriss
Director, Strategy, Policy and Government Affairs
National Insurance Crime Bureau