

CHAPTER 514

(House Bill 684)

AN ACT concerning

Task Force to Study Motor Vehicle Towing Practices

FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force to Study Motor Vehicle Towing Practices in the State; providing for the membership of the Task Force; requiring the Governor to designate the chair of the Task Force; requiring the Task Force to study certain issues relevant to motor vehicle towing practices in the State; requiring the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for reimbursement for expenses for a member of the Task Force; providing for the staff of the Task Force; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the establishment of the Task Force to Study Motor Vehicle Towing Practices in the State.

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

- (a) There is a Task Force to Study Motor Vehicle Towing Practices in the State.
- (b) The Task Force consists of the following members:
 - (1) ~~two members~~ one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;
 - (2) ~~two members~~ one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
 - (3) one representative from the Motor Vehicle Administration, appointed by the Motor Vehicle Administrator;
 - (4) two representatives from the motor vehicle insurance industry, appointed by the Governor;
 - (5) two representatives from two different county police departments who are involved with the county's towing policies and the disposition of abandoned motor vehicles, appointed by the Governor;
 - (6) two representatives of the Towing and Recovery Professionals of Maryland, appointed by the president of that organization;

(7) two representatives of the Maryland Association of Counties, appointed by the president of the Association;

(8) one representative of the Maryland Retailers Association, appointed by the president of the Association;

(9) one representative of the Maryland Bankers Association, appointed by the president of the Association;

(10) one representative of the Maryland Automobile Dealers Association, appointed by the president of the Association;

(11) one representative of the Apartment and Office Building Association, appointed by the president of the Association; ~~and~~

~~(12) two members from the general public, appointed by the Governor~~

(12) one representative of the Maryland Auto and Truck Recyclers Association, appointed by the Executive Director of the Association;

(13) one representative of a Maryland branch of the American Automobile Association (AAA) appointed by the branch president of the Association;

(14) two representatives of the Maryland Municipal League, appointed by the Executive Director of the League; and

(15) the following members appointed by the Governor:

(i) two members representing the interests of commercial and residential property owners; and

(ii) two members from the general public.

(c) The Governor shall designate the chair of the Task Force.

(d) The Motor Vehicle Administration shall provide staff for the Task Force.

(e) A member of the Task Force:

(1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Task Force; but

(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(f) The Task Force shall study:

- (1) the State and local laws governing towing practices, including the storage and disposal of towed vehicles, and any recommended changes to these laws;
 - (2) the costs, benefits, and feasibility of a State program of licensure or registration for the towing industry;
 - (3) issues related to notice given by a private property owner to the owner of a motor vehicle before towing the vehicle;
 - (4) issues related to notice given by a police department to the motor vehicle owner, a secured party, or an insurer of an abandoned motor vehicle in police custody;
 - (5) issues related to notice given by a private tower to the motor vehicle owner, a secured party, an insurer, or the local police department of a towed vehicle in the possession of a private tower;
 - (6) issues related to State preemption of local authority governing the towing or removal of motor vehicles; and
 - (7) any other issues that the Task Force considers relevant to motor vehicle towing practices in the State.
- (g) On or before December 31, 2008, the Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2008. It shall remain effective for a period of ~~7 months~~ 1 year and, at the end of ~~December 31, 2008~~ May 31, 2009, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved by the Governor, May 13, 2008.