

Chapter 546

(House Bill 1100)

AN ACT concerning

Telecommunications Infrastructure – Protections

FOR the purpose of specifying that certain documentation may establish lawful authority to sell certain telecommunications equipment as junk or scrap metal; requiring certain junk dealers, scrap metal processors, and antique dealers to register and provide a description including certain information of purchased telecommunications equipment with a certain law enforcement official; ~~prohibiting certain junk dealers, scrap metal processors, and antique dealers from purchasing telecommunications equipment other than by check mailed to the seller's address; prohibiting the sale or disposal of certain telecommunications equipment within a certain period;~~ prohibiting certain individuals from destroying telecommunications infrastructure in a certain manner; and generally relating to telecommunications equipment and infrastructure.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
 Article – Business Regulation
 Section 17–1001(a) ~~and (f)(2)~~ and (f)(1)(ii)9. and (2)
 Annotated Code of Maryland
 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
 Article – Business Regulation
 Section 17–1001(f)(1)(ii)8. and ~~9.~~ 17-1009(d)
 Annotated Code of Maryland
 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

~~BY adding to~~
~~Article – Business Regulation~~
~~Section 17–1001(f)(1)(ii)9. and (m) and 17–1010.1–10.~~
~~Annotated Code of Maryland~~
~~(2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)~~

BY adding to
 Article – Criminal Law
 Section 6–305.1
 Annotated Code of Maryland
 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Business Regulation

17–1001.

(a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

(f) (1) “Junk” or “scrap metal” includes:

(ii) the following used articles, made of either ferrous or nonferrous metal:

8. ~~cell tower batteries; [and]~~

~~9. TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT
TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE AS DEFINED IN § 6-305.1 OF THE
CRIMINAL LAW ARTICLE;~~

~~10. TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT THAT INCLUDES
ANY OTHER USED ARTICLES OWNED BY A TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY, AS
DEFINED IN § 6-305.1 OF THE CRIMINAL LAW ARTICLE, INCLUDING:~~

~~A. ANTENNAE;~~

~~B. BURNED WIRES;~~

~~B. C. BUSBARS;~~

~~C. D. CELL TOWER BATTERIES;~~

~~E. FIBER OPTIC AND COPPER CABLES;~~

~~F. POWER INVERTERS; AND~~

~~D. G. MATERIALS WITH IDENTIFIABLE MARKERS THAT
INDICATE OWNERSHIP BY THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY; AND~~

~~H. SMALL CELL FACILITIES; AND~~

~~9.] 10. 11. any other used articles owned by a public utility
including:~~

A. guardrails;

B. manhole covers;

- C. metal light poles;
- D. tree grates;
- E. water meters; and
- F. street signs.

(2) “Junk” or “scrap metal” does not include beverage cans or food cans.

17-1009.

(d) (1) A junk dealer or scrap metal processor may not barter, buy, exchange, or accept from a person any junk or scrap metal unless the junk dealer or scrap metal processor keeps records and makes entries in them in accordance with this subtitle.

(2) A junk dealer or scrap metal processor may not purchase a catalytic converter from an individual unless the individual, at the time of purchase, provides identification as:

- (i) a licensed automotive dismantler and recycler or scrap metal processor; or
- (ii) an agent or employee of a licensed commercial enterprise.

(3) (I) A junk dealer or scrap metal processor may not purchase a cemetery urn, grave marker, or any other item listed under § 17-1001(f)(1)(ii) of this subtitle from an individual unless the individual, at the time of purchase, provides appropriate authorization from a relevant business or unit of federal, State, or local government **OR FROM AN INDIVIDUAL WITH AUTHORIZATION UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH** specifically authorizing the individual to conduct the transaction.

(II) **FOR A PURCHASE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT SOLD AS JUNK OR SCRAP METAL, APPROPRIATE AUTHORIZATION UNDER THIS SUBSECTION INCLUDES A BILL OF SALE, RECEIPT, LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION, OR OTHER DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE THAT THE SELLER HAS LAWFUL AUTHORITY TO SELL THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT.**

~~(M) “TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT” MEANS AN ITEM THAT AN INDIVIDUAL KNOWS OR REASONABLY SHOULD KNOW TO ORDINARILY BE USED BY, OR BELONG TO, A TELEPHONE, TELEGRAPH, INTERNET, OR OTHER WIRELESS COMMUNICATION COMPANY.~~

~~17-1010.1.~~

~~(A) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO ALL JUNK DEALERS, SCRAP METAL PROCESSORS, AND ANTIQUE DEALERS WHO ARE RESIDENTS OF THE STATE.~~

~~(B) (1) EACH JUNK DEALER, SCRAP METAL PROCESSOR, OR ANTIQUE DEALER SUBJECT TO THIS SECTION WHO PURCHASES TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT SHALL REGISTER WITH THE SHERIFF OR OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL DESIGNATED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE BUSINESS OF THE JUNK DEALER, SCRAP METAL PROCESSOR, OR ANTIQUE DEALER IS LOCATED A COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT.~~

~~(2) THE DESCRIPTION SHALL INCLUDE:~~

~~(I) THE DATE AND TIME OF PURCHASE;~~

~~(II) THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE SELLER; AND~~

~~(III) THE LICENSE TAG NUMBER OF ANY VEHICLE USED.~~

~~(C) A JUNK DEALER, SCRAP METAL PROCESSOR, OR ANTIQUE DEALER SUBJECT TO THIS SECTION WHO PURCHASES TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT MAY PURCHASE TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT ONLY BY ISSUING A CHECK THAT IS MAILED TO THE SELLER'S ADDRESS.~~

~~(D) TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT MAY NOT BE SOLD OR OTHERWISE DISPOSED OF FOR A PERIOD OF 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF PURCHASE.~~

~~(E) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION:~~

~~(1) IS SUBJECT TO REVOCATION OF ANY STATE JUNK LICENSE HELD BY THE PERSON; AND~~

~~(2) IS GUILTY OF A MISDEMEANOR AND, ON CONVICTION, IS SUBJECT TO A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$2,000.~~

Article – Criminal Law

6-305.1.

(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(2) “TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY” MEANS A COMPANY THAT PROVIDES BROADBAND INTERNET, CABLE TELEVISION, TELEPHONE, OR OTHER WIRELESS COMMUNICATION SERVICES.

(3) (I) “TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE” MEANS ITEMS THAT ARE USED TO PROVIDE BROADBAND INTERNET, CABLE TELEVISION, TELEPHONE, OR OTHER WIRELESS COMMUNICATION SERVICES.

(II) “TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE” INCLUDES:

1. ANTENNAE;
2. FIBER OPTIC AND COPPER CABLES;
3. HEADENDS;
4. TELEPHONE POLES;
5. RADIO TRANSCEIVERS;
6. RADIO TOWERS;
7. WIRELESS SUPPORT STRUCTURES;
8. SMALL CELL FACILITIES; AND
9. TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY OFFICE FACILITIES.

(B) THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO:

(1) AN EMPLOYEE OF A TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY OR A PERSON ACTING UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF A TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY; OR

(2) SUPERVISION AND CONTROL OF A TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY AND ITS MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, OR FACILITIES BY A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION WITHIN WHICH THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY IS DOING BUSINESS.

(C) A PERSON MAY NOT RECKLESSLY OR WILLFULLY AND MALICIOUSLY DEFACE, DAMAGE, OR DESTROY TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE.

(D) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION IS GUILTY OF A ~~FELONY~~ MISDEMEANOR AND ON CONVICTION IS SUBJECT TO IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 6 MONTHS OR A FINE NOT EXCEEDING ~~\$5,000~~ \$500 OR BOTH.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2026.

Approved by the Governor, May 12, 2026.