

SENATE BILL 577

R5

6lr3137

By: Senator James

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2026

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Vehicle Laws – Towing of Vehicles from Parking Lots – Civil Action for**
3 **Nonpayment**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing a person in possession of a towed vehicle to require the
5 owner of the vehicle to present a valid government-issued photo identification card
6 before retaking possession of the vehicle without payment; authorizing a tower to
7 bring a civil action against a vehicle owner who withholds payment for retaking the
8 vehicle; and generally relating to towing.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

10 Article – Transportation

11 Section 21–10A–01

12 Annotated Code of Maryland

13 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

14 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

15 Article – Transportation

16 Section 21–10A–05

17 Annotated Code of Maryland

18 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

20 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

21 **Article – Transportation**

22 21–10A–01.

23 (a) In this subtitle, “parking lot” means a privately owned facility consisting of 3
24 or more spaces for motor vehicle parking that is:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (1) Accessible to the general public; and

2 (2) Intended by the owner of the facility to be used primarily by the owner's
3 customers, clientele, residents, lessees, or guests.

4 (b) (1) This subtitle applies only to the towing or removal of vehicles from
5 parking lots.

6 (2) Nothing in this subtitle prevents a local authority from exercising any
7 power to adopt local laws or regulations relating to the registration or licensing of persons
8 engaged in, or otherwise regulating in a more stringent manner, the parking, towing or
9 removal, or impounding of vehicles.

10 21-10A-05.

11 (a) Subject to subsection (b) of this section, if a vehicle is towed or otherwise
12 removed from a parking lot, the person in possession of the vehicle:

13 (1) Shall immediately deliver the vehicle directly to the storage facility
14 stated on the signs posted in accordance with § 21-10A-02 of this subtitle;

15 (2) May not move the towed vehicle from that storage facility to another
16 storage facility for at least 72 hours; [and]

17 (3) Shall provide the owner of the vehicle or the owner's agent immediate
18 and continuous opportunity, at a minimum from 6 a.m. to midnight, 7 days per week, from
19 the time the vehicle was received at the storage facility, to retake possession of the vehicle;
20 AND

21 (4) **MAY REQUIRE THE OWNER OF THE VEHICLE TO PRESENT A VALID
22 GOVERNMENT-ISSUED PHOTO IDENTIFICATION CARD BEFORE RETAKING
23 POSSESSION OF THE VEHICLE WITHOUT PAYMENT.**

24 (b) Before a vehicle is removed from a parking lot, a tower who possesses the
25 vehicle shall release the vehicle to the owner or an agent of the owner:

26 (1) If the owner or agent requests that the tower release the vehicle;

27 (2) If the vehicle can be driven under its own power;

28 (3) Whether or not the vehicle has been lifted off the ground; and

29 (4) If the owner or agent pays a drop fee to the tower in an amount not
30 exceeding 50% of the cost of a full tow.

5 (ii) If the storage facility accepts only cash, have an operable
6 automatic teller machine available on the premises.

17 (i) Inspection; or

18 (ii) Retrieval from the vehicle of personal property that is not
19 attached to the vehicle.

20 (D) (1) A STORAGE FACILITY MAY BRING A CIVIL ACTION TO RECOVER
21 PAYMENT AGAINST A VEHICLE OWNER WHO RETAKES POSSESSION OF A VEHICLE:

22 (I) WITHOUT PAYMENT; OR

23 (II) WITH PAYMENT BY USE OF A CREDIT CARD, BUT
24 SUBSEQUENTLY WITHHOLDS THE PAYMENT.

1 (II) LIQUIDATED DAMAGES OF TWO TIMES THE AMOUNT
2 VALIDLY CHARGED FOR TOWING THE VEHICLE, BUT NOT MORE THAN \$1,000;

4 (IV) REASONABLE ATTORNEY'S FEES.

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