

# SENATE BILL 578

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CF HB 30

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By: **Senator James**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2026

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Safety – Department of State Police – Police–Initiated Towing –**  
3 **Alterations**

4 FOR the purpose of altering certain provisions related to the rates the Department of State  
5 Police sets for towing companies involved in certain police–initiated towing to  
6 include the towing and recovery of certain vehicles; and generally relating to  
7 police–initiated towing of motor vehicles.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
9 Article – Public Safety  
10 Section 2–314 and 2–314.1  
11 Annotated Code of Maryland  
12 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

15 **Article – Public Safety**

16 2–314.

17 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

18 (2) “Approved rates” means the maximum rates approved by the  
19 Department that apply to police–initiated towing and recovery services.

20 (3) “Authorized tow company” means a company providing towing and  
21 recovery services at the request of the Department and designated on the tow list.

22 (4) “Heavy–duty towing” means towing and recovery of a vehicle including  
23 trailers and semitrailers with a gross vehicle weight rating over 26,000 pounds.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(5) “LIGHT-DUTY TOWING” MEANS TOWING AND RECOVERY OF A VEHICLE INCLUDING TRAILERS OR SEMITRAILERS WITH A GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT RATING OF 10,000 POUNDS OR LESS.

[(5)] (6) “Medium-duty towing” means towing and recovery of a vehicle including trailers or semitrailers with a gross vehicle weight rating from over 10,000 pounds to 26,000 pounds.

[(6)] (7) “Per pound billing” means a method of calculating a fee for towing and recovery services using a formula that considers the weight of the vehicle, equipment, or cargo that is the subject of the towing and recovery and multiplies the weight of the vehicle, equipment, or cargo by a monetary amount.

[(7)] (8) “Police-initiated towing” means the towing or recovery of a [commercial] motor vehicle which was authorized, requested, or dispatched by the Department.

[(8)] (9) “Recovery” means winching, hoisting, up-righting, removing, or otherwise relocating a vehicle when the vehicle is found in a location, state, or position in which it cannot be removed from the location, state, or position using only the vehicle’s own power, even if it were in complete operating condition.

[(9)] (10) “Tow list” means the list of towing businesses authorized by the Department to perform police-initiated towing services of disabled or abandoned commercial vehicles within the Department’s jurisdiction.

[(10)] (11) “Towing” means using another vehicle to move or remove a vehicle.

(b) The Department shall:

(1) establish and maintain a tow list, by county, of qualifying tow companies for use by the Department in carrying out the duties of this subtitle; and

(2) make the tow list available to the public on request.

(c) The Department may adopt regulations to establish standards for tow companies, including application procedures and minimum qualification requirements, and must include on the list all qualifying tow companies.

(d) The Department shall:

(1) require a tow company that is on the tow list to ban the use of per pound billing by October 1, 2023;

(2) establish the approved rates for **LIGHT**-, medium-, and heavy-duty towing and recovery that may be charged by a tow company on the tow list by January 1, 2024; and

(3) develop a process to receive, investigate, and adjudicate complaints from a vehicle owner or operator or the owner's designee against an authorized tow company regarding the police-initiated towing of a commercial motor vehicle, including a process to suspend or remove an authorized tow company from the tow list.

(e) **(1)** An authorized tow company may charge less than but may not charge more than the approved rates authorized by the Department for a police-initiated towing and recovery.

**(2) THE APPROVED RATES FOR LIGHT-DUTY TOWING AND RECOVERY MAY NOT EXCEED A PERCENTAGE OF THE APPROVED RATES FOR MEDIUM-DUTY TOWING AND RECOVERY CHARGED BY A TOW COMPANY.**

(f) If a vehicle owner or the owner's designee requests the use of a specific towing company, the Department shall honor that request and allow the vehicle owner to engage the services of the requested towing company except when:

(1) the requested towing company cannot arrive at the location of the vehicle within a reasonable time period;

(2) a traffic safety problem exists and the requested towing company cannot arrive at the location within 30 minutes of a police employee's arrival at the location of the vehicle; or

(3) the vehicle is disabled in the roadway as a result of a collision or vehicle fire and the requested towing company cannot arrive within 30 minutes of a police employee's arrival at the location of the vehicle.

2-314.1.

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) "Approved rates" has the meaning stated in § 2-314 of this subtitle.

(3) "Committee" means the Committee on Rate Setting and Complaint Resolution for Police-Initiated Medium-Duty and Heavy-Duty Towing and Recovery.

(4) "Police-initiated towing" has the meaning stated in § 2-314 of this subtitle.

(5) "Recovery" has the meaning stated in § 2-314 of this subtitle.

(b) There is a Committee on Rate Setting and Complaint Resolution for Police–Initiated Medium–Duty and Heavy–Duty Towing and Recovery.

(c) The Committee consists of the following members:

(1) two representatives of the Towing and Recovery Professionals of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Towing and Recovery Professionals of Maryland;

(2) a representative of the Maryland Motor Truck Association, appointed by the President of the Maryland Motor Truck Association;

(3) a representative of the Owner–Operator Independent Drivers Association, appointed by the President of the Owner–Operator Independent Drivers Association;

(4) a representative of the Maryland Transportation Authority Police, appointed by the Secretary of Transportation;

(5) a representative of the State Highway Administration, appointed by the Administrator of the State Highway Administration; and

(6) a representative of the Maryland Insurance Administration, appointed by the Insurance Commissioner.

(d) (1) A member of the Committee shall be appointed for a 3–year term.

(2) A member of the Committee may be reappointed at the end of the member’s term.

(e) The Department shall provide staff support for the Committee.

(f) A member of the Committee:

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

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

(g) The Committee shall:

(1) on or before December 1, 2023, recommend approved rates **FOR MEDIUM–DUTY AND HEAVY–DUTY TOWING AND RECOVERY** to the Department that should be charged for police–initiated towing and recovery services;

(2) meet at least once every 3 years to review and consider modification of the approved rates;

1                   (3)     request information and comments from other parties of interest to  
2 assist with its work;

3                   (4)     recommend to the Department a process for resolving towing  
4 complaints; and

5                   (5)     make any additional recommendations to the Department that the  
6 Committee considers appropriate.

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