



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: House Bill 483
SPONSOR: Delegate Veronica Turner
HEARING DATE: March 16, 2021
COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation
CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENTS House Bill 483** which seeks to limit to a minimum from 6 a.m. to midnight, the hours during which a person in possession of a vehicle that has been towed or removed from a parking lot is required to provide an opportunity for the vehicle owner or the owner's agent to retake possession of the vehicle. Furthermore, the bill seeks to alter the signage requirements imposed on the owner or operator of a parking lot relating to hours during which a towed vehicle may be reclaimed.

1. Again, the bill seeks to limit the amount of time that a vehicle owner has to reclaim his or her vehicle, after it has been towed. As proposed, the legislation is very limiting for the vehicle owner. The owner is only given from 6:00am until midnight to reclaim their vehicle. The legislation should be amended to expand the time frame for vehicle reclamation from 6:00am until midnight to 24 hours 7 days per week to correlate with or match the same provision that appears in the Prince George's County Code Section 26: 142.03 (b) which provides in relevant part:

“On the same sign, the property owner shall post the telephone number and name of each towing company hired to tow unauthorized vehicles from the property and the address of the location where the vehicle can be reclaimed. The towing company shall answer this telephone number twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days a week.”

The rationale for supporting the bill with amendments is that the addition of this time frame of giving the owner access to his/her vehicle is fair and reasonable. However, the bill, as currently drafted, does not take into consideration predatory and unlawful towing violations that occur on many occasions. As a result, this creates a hardship for the owner of the vehicle as it relates to the potential impact on the owners' finances and employment situation. As it stands, some tow companies are not adhering to the code and are not made readily available by phone for the owner to retrieve information about their vehicle. The current bill also may give the tow

company an incentive not to follow the code as it relates to calling the tow into the Police department's teletype system within an hour of towing the vehicle, as required by the regulations.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 483 WITH AMENDMENTS.**