

## Environment & Transportation Committee Follow Up

### HB0846 - Baltimore City - Traffic Control Signal and Speed Monitoring Systems - Impoundment

**Question: What is the importance of adopting House Bill 846?**

Answer: House Bill 846 would provide Baltimore City an additional tool to reduce reckless driving. Baltimore City averages over 16,000 reported vehicular crashes per year, contributing to roughly 40-60 crash-related deaths annually. House Bill 846 is intended to improve public safety in Baltimore City.

**Question: What is the process for notifying an individual who received an automated traffic enforcement citation?**

Answer: Baltimore City notifies vehicle owners of automated enforcement citations by mailing a letter to the address on file for that vehicle. The City will issue up to three letters per offense if the citation remains unpaid over time.

**Question: What is the process for notifying a vehicle owner whose vehicle was impounded?**

Answer: Baltimore City issues two letters, one via certified mail, and the other through standard mail. The address information for the vehicle owner is pulled from multiple databases, including MDOT MVA and the Baltimore City Police Department. In addition, after 11 business days have transpired, Baltimore City Towing Division will post a notice of the impounded vehicle in local newspapers and courthouses to ensure comprehensive notification has taken place. If the owner contacts Baltimore City Towing Division, requesting that the vehicle be held, the Towing Division will hold the vehicle indefinitely as long as the owner remains in contact with the Towing Division in order to allow additional time for the owner to pay off the amount owed.

**Question: What is the timeline for vehicles to be auctioned off that have been impounded?**

Answer: The City has authority granted to it by the General Assembly to auction off impounded vehicles after 11 businesses days have transpired. However, the average length of time that vehicles remain on the City's impound lot is 3 to 4 months prior to the vehicle being auctioned.

**Question: Doesn't the MDOT MVA already have the ability to revoke or suspend registrations based upon unpaid citations?**

Answer: During the 2020 Legislative Session, the Maryland General Assembly adopted [House Bill 46](#) / [Senate Bill 177](#) - Motor Vehicle Administration – Authority to Suspend Registration for Violations Recorded by Traffic Control Signal Monitoring Systems and Speed Monitoring Systems – Repeal. That legislation repealed previously existing law which allowed MDOT MVA to suspend a vehicle's registration for unpaid automated enforcement citations. The legislation did not repeal the ability of MDOT MVA to refuse to renew the registration, however, the legislation is enabling only and does not require MDOT MVA to refuse the renewal.

**Question: How much does it cost to have a vehicle boot removed?**

Answer: Under current local ordinance, Article 31 § 31-26 of the Baltimore City Code, immobilized vehicles must have all parking citations paid prior to a boot being removed. In addition, the vehicle owner is subject to a \$150 boot removal fee. If a vehicle owner believes their vehicle was immobilized in error, they retain the right to a hearing to contest the immobilization.

**Question: What are the costs associated with impounding a vehicle?**

Answer: There is a maximum \$140 towing fee, \$50 storage fee that only is assessed after 48 hours, and \$40 administration fee for required notifications and vehicle record investigations. The City of Baltimore has not been charging daily storage fees since 2020.

**Question: Does Baltimore City issue late fees for unpaid automated enforcement citations?**

Answer: No, Baltimore City does not issue late fees for unpaid automated enforcement citations. In order for a vehicle to be subject to HB 846, it would need to accrue over 13 red light camera citations or over 25 speed camera citations.

**Question: Does Baltimore City offer payment plan options for parking and automated enforcement citations?**

Answer: Baltimore City does not currently offer payment plan options for parking and automated enforcement citations. The establishment of a payment plan program for parking and automated enforcement citations would likely require a change to Baltimore City Code. Relatedly, Baltimore City occasionally will offer a citation amnesty day, providing citizens the opportunity to pay off outstanding citations at a significantly discounted price.

**Question: What payment options does Baltimore City offer residents?**

Answer: Baltimore City recently transitioned over to Paymentus, allowing residents to pay with traditional check, e-check, debit card, credit card, Venmo, Paypal, Google Pay and Apply Pay. The City is currently exploring additional opportunities to allow for the payment of fines, fees, and taxes over time.

**Question: Where can I find more information on Baltimore City's towing and impoundment operations?**

Answer: Information on Baltimore City's towing and impoundment operations is available on BCDOT's website, at <https://transportation.baltimorecity.gov/towing>.

**Question: Where can I find more information on Baltimore City's automated enforcement operations?**

Answer: Information on Baltimore City's automated enforcement operations is available on BCDOT's website, at <https://transportation.baltimorecity.gov/atvesprogram>.