



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony

SB 545: Towing or Removal of Vehicles – Reclamation Hours Judicial Proceedings Committee

- Good Afternoon Chairman Barve, Vice Chair Stein and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee
- SB 545 is not a new bill to this committee. This committee has passed this bill out of the full committee and on the House floor in 2021 and 2020.
- SB 545 would change the hours in which a towed vehicle may be reclaimed, which currently is 24 hours a day and 7 days a week **to** a minimum of 6:00am to 12-midnight, 7 days a week.
- Currently, contractors who tow on behalf of the Maryland State Police are only required to make vehicles available for reclamation Monday–Friday from 8:00am to 6:00pm and Saturday-Sunday from 9am to 12noon.
- This legislation is not asking for the reduction of hours to meet those of the Maryland State Police, but simply a **reasonable** request of 7 days a week from 6:00am to 12-midnight. Thus, SB 545 allows private property tow operators to operate under the same reasonable and safer hours that government contracted tow operators.
- **WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?**
 - In addition, tow companies encounter the most dangerous elements of society between the hours of midnight and 6:00am when they are forced to make towed vehicles available during that window of time. The number of threats and assaults against operators and their

property during this time frame is well documented with law enforcement and insurance companies. In fact, there are two instances where tow truck operators were killed at work in the last 5 years.

- I will close... by answering the question of... ***WHY DO WE NEED THIS LEGISLATION?***
 - This legislation is needed, because private tow contractors are required to have the vehicles available for reclamation 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week. While those tow contractors who are contracted through the Maryland State Police and other Local Police Authorities have reduced hours. While SB 545 is by no means asking for the same minimal hours, this legislation is seeking **REASONABLE** hours for a consumer to reclaim their vehicle.
- In closing, on all properties where private tow operators are lawfully contracted for towing enforcement, there is signage stating the requirements for parking on the property. Therefore, the driver of the vehicle makes a conscious decision to illegally park.
- Thank you in advance for your consideration and I ask for a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 545.