



BRANDON M. SCOTT
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations
88 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

HB 828

February 23, 2023

TO: Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee
FROM: Mayor Brandon M. Scott, City of Baltimore
RE: House Bill 828 – Vehicle Towing or Removal – Parking Lots – Maximum Fees
POSITION: Support

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that my Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 828.

HB 828 provides clarification to local jurisdictions regarding the fees that tow companies can charge for trespass towing. By removing language referencing “total fees” and amending to “fee”, HB 828 provides clearer guidance to local jurisdictions and tow companies on what fee rates can be authorized.

Based on the current iteration of the statute, the ability to double “total fees” has led to more ambiguity and less clarity for local governments, including Baltimore City. The ambiguity has at times resulted in fees submitted to the Baltimore City Trespass Tow Board in excess of the authorized doubling of municipal rates. Ultimately, the excessive fees can burden the citizens and visitors of Baltimore City, adding financial hardship in times of fiscal uncertainty.

I ask that you also take into consideration a recent formal opinion submitted by the Maryland Attorney General, specifically Opinion 107OAG093¹, which states that “total fees” allowed to be doubled should only be the towing fee and not include storage, administrative, or other miscellaneous fees. Passing HB 828 would effectively codify this opinion and help to clarify authorized trespass towing rates.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a **favorable** report on House Bill 828.

¹ <https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/Opinions%20Documents/2022/107oag093.pdf>