



State of Maryland
Department of State Police
Government Affairs Unit
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

DATE: February 28, 2024

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 871 **POSITION:** Support

BILL TITLE: Business regulation – Catalytic Converters – Record Keeping Requirements

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

This legislation requires the records of junk dealers and scrap metal processors to include additional information for each purchase of catalytic converters. The additional information required for the records are the vehicle identification number, the registration plate number, make, and model from which all or part of the catalytic converter was obtained.

Under current law, junk dealers and scrap metal processors are required to report the acquisition of catalytic converters and other certain articles required in the law. The records include who may have brought the item(s) in for disposal. Local and state law enforcement have access to the electronic records and are able to review the business records during normal business hours.

In CY 2023, the State of Maryland received records for 33,156 catalytic converters processed at Scrap and Automotive Dismantler and Recycler dealers. This substantial volume of converters lacked identifying information, hindering the recovery of unlawfully removed converters from residents' vehicles. The State of Maryland and the mid-Atlantic region have experienced a continued increase in thefts of these items from both personal and fleet vehicles. These thefts frequently remain unresolved due to the inability to trace the origin of the converter once it's been removed from a vehicle.

Mandating identification of the vehicle from which the catalytic converter was removed would enable law enforcement to ascertain whether possession of the item resulted from a lawful vehicle repair or theft. Catalytic converters can cost the victim several thousand dollars to replace. The information required to be captured and reported would aid in the closure of criminal investigations. The knowledge that the catalytic converter could be traced back to the vehicle would act as a deterrent to thieves and businesses accepting the items.

For these reasons, the Department of State Police urges the committee to give House Bill 871 a favorable report.