


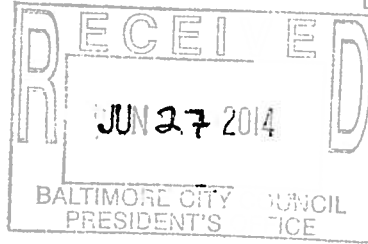
Andrew Klein

FROM	NAME & TITLE	Andrew Kleine, Chief	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Bureau of Budget and Management Research Department of Finance (410-396-4941)		
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill No. 14-0352 Immobilization of Vehicles Booting Fee		

TO

Honorable President and
 Members of the City Council
 C/O Karen Randle
 Room 409, City Hall

DATE: June 27, 2014



This bill proposes an increase in the fee charged for the release of an immobilized vehicle. In Fiscal 2008, a similar bill (CCB 08-0107) was passed by the Council.

Analysis

City Council Bill 14-0352 is for the purpose of increasing the booting fee imposed on owners to secure the release of their immobilized vehicles. Unattended motor vehicles “found parked at any time upon any street of the City” may be immobilized (“booted”) if “there are 3 or more unsatisfied citations for parking violations” against the vehicle and “30 days or more has elapsed since the 3rd unsatisfied citation” [§31-21].

Upon passage, CCB 08-1017 increased the booting fee from \$24 to \$100 to accommodate new technology in the immobilization of vehicles. The City’s deployment of the Smart Boot system was to complement the City’s existing License Plate Recognition (LPR) program to create a comprehensive scofflaw identification and immobilization program that would significantly improve the City’s Parking Enforcement operations. Additional benefits of the new system included the provision of a 24/7 automated fine payment and boot release as well as shorter wait times for other customers of the City’s Collections Call Center as the boot-related call volume was handled by the City’s private vendor (PayLock). The \$100 booting fee was to cover the \$100 per boot cost the City was required to pay to PayLock for its services. At the time of its passage, CCB 08-1017 was estimated to increase the City’s related net revenue in FY 2009 by \$384,000.

In practice, the Department of Transportation has found a quarter of all booted vehicles are subsequently towed to the City’s yard because the boot remained on the vehicle for several days, because the vehicle remained in a tow-away zone and required more immediate relocation, or because the citizen owed more than \$1,000 to the City in fines.

If the vehicle is towed, citizens are charged for the “towing, storage, and administrative fees but not the additional boot fee” requiring the City to pay its vendor \$50 for the booting of the vehicle.

City Council Bill 14-0352 is for the purpose of increasing the booting fee from \$100 to \$150 to offset losses when the City must pay its vendor \$50 for the booting of a vehicle which is subsequently towed to the City’s yard.

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Fiscal Impact

The Department of Transportation estimates these losses to be \$85,000 annually. In addition to covering those losses, the Department of Transportation estimates the new booting fee will also generate \$167,000 annually in net revenue.

Recommendation

The Finance Department supports passage of City Council Bill 14-0352.

CC: Harry Black
William Voorhees
Angela Gibson