

Andrew Klein

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	SUBJECT	City Council Bill #09-0127R

CITY of
BALTIMORE
MEMO



DATE: June 5, 2009

TO
The Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
Room 400, City Hall

Attention: Ms. Karen Randle

City Council Bill 09-0127R is for the purpose of requesting the Director of Transportation to report to the City Council on the proposed increase in towing fees; the rationale for the increase as based on fuel utility and operational costs; the possible effect the increase will have on the general public's ability to reclaim towed vehicles in a timely fashion; and the possibility that the increases will result in an increase in the number of vehicles that are abandoned in towing storage facilities.

On April 15, 2009, the Board of Estimates approved the Towing Rates Agreement by and between the Mayor and City Council and the Baltimore Towers Association.

In order to enforce the City's parking regulations and scofflaw laws as they apply to motorists and their vehicles, the City, through the Department of Transportation and the Police Department, utilizes a group of Medallion Towers to augment City resources. This includes the towing of vehicles that are in violation of parking laws in identified tow zones, vehicles towed in response to police action, and vehicles that have been identified as scofflaws. The vehicles are towed to the Fallsway Impound Lot or to the Pulaski Highway Storage Facility, where they are held until all fines and fees have been satisfied.

The new fee schedule applies to two zones. The rates are increased from \$105 to \$130 in Zone 1 (CBD and Inner Harbor) and from \$115 to \$140 in Zone 2 (Rest of City) for a three year period. Towing charges pass through the City and are paid to the Medallion Towers. The towing rate change has no impact on the City budget.

Data from the Department of Transportation also show that the increased rates in November 2005, 2006 and April 2009 did not increase the number of unclaimed vehicles in the towing lot. The number of vehicles in the tow lot was 2,562 as of November 1st, 2005, 2,560 as of November 1st, 2006, and 1,898 as of May 1st, 2009.

The Department of Finance defers to the Department of Transportation for additional details about the towing rate changes.

CC: Edward J. Gallagher
Angela Gibson

