


FROM	NAME & TITLE	Alfred H. Foxx, Director	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Transportation 417 E. Fayette Street, Room 527		
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill 09-0319		

DATE: May 29, 2009

TO
 The Honorable President and Members
 of the Baltimore City Council
 c/o Karen Randle
 Room 400 City Hall

I am herein reporting on City Council Bill 09-0319.

Impound Towing Fees

For the purpose of setting maximum towing, storage, and related charges that may be imposed on the owners or operators of impounded vehicles; establishing a period within which these charges may not be increased; correcting, clarifying, and conforming related provisions; and generally relating to impound towing.

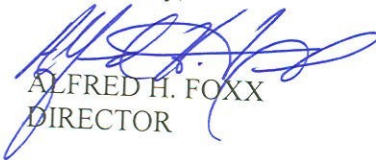
The Department of Transportation has reviewed this bill and, while we have amendments, we believe that the sponsor's intent is to protect consumers from escalating fees. We share that mission.

As part of its operations, The Department of Transportation employs private towing companies to assist us in the removal of vehicles that block the flow of traffic during the morning and afternoon rush (peak) hours. This is a vital task that allows the free flow of traffic as commuters and residents move to and from work in the City.

This bill prohibits towers from charging more than the fees set by the Board of Estimates approved Towing Rates Agreement of April 1, 2009. We have no objection to capping the fees. We do, however, wish to reserve the right to amend fees, when needed, by Board of Estimates action. This step might be called for in the event of unanticipated circumstances, for example, a spike in fuel prices. The Board of Estimates offers a public forum where the pros and cons of a policy change can be aired and voted upon.

As written, The Department of Transportation is opposed to the passage of this bill.

Respectfully,


 ALFRED H. FOXX
 DIRECTOR

AHF/WD:zs

- cc: Ms. Angela C. Gibson
- Mr. Bill Driscoll
- Mr. Jamie Kendrick
- Mr. Frank Murphy

Angela

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