

*Andrew Klein*

<b>FROM</b>	NAME & TITLE	Andrew W. Kleine, Chief
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Bureau of the Budget and Management Research Room 469, City Hall (396-4948)
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill # 08-0127

CITY of  
BALTIMORE  
**MEMO**



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

DATE: June 23, 2008

Attention: Karen Randle

City Council Bill # 08-0127 is a resolution by the Mayor and City Council to clarify and revise the laws governing accident and disabled-vehicle towing to, among other things, further protect the public from unauthorized, predatory towers; conform these laws to current practices; correct, clarify, and conform related provisions; increase certain penalties; authorize the issuance of civil citations, subject to certain penalties, for violations; and generally relate to the towing of vehicles disabled by accident.

The towing process is supposed to work as follows:

- When a vehicle needs to be towed from an accident scene, a police officer sends a request to a dispatcher, who selects the nearest medallion towing company from the list of licensed companies.
- If this company cannot show up to the accident scene to conduct towing action, a second company from the list will be dispatched, and so on.

In some cases, unlicensed, "predatory" towers – and even some licensed medallion towing companies other than the one authorized by the dispatcher -- show up at the accident scene and tow the disabled vehicle.

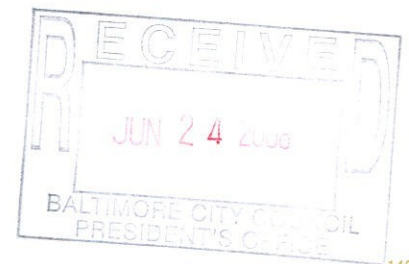
The Bill proposes the following changes:

**Increase the medallion license application fee from \$100 to \$1,000 and the annual license fee from \$100 to \$1,000**

Finance projects \$6,500 in towing license fees from 11 companies (69 vehicles) in FY 2008.

Assuming all 11 companies remain licensed, the proposed application and license fees will generate \$17,900 in FY 2009, \$11,400 over FY 2008.

**Increase penalties for unauthorized towing from \$10 - \$100 to not more than \$1,000, and civil citations from \$0 to \$750**



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The City does not have current data on penalties for unauthorized towing, so an estimate of fiscal impact is not possible. Larger penalties and civil citation amounts are intended to deter unauthorized towing.

**Increase required surety bond coverage from \$5,000 to \$75,000**

This change will increase liability protection for the City in cases of damaged vehicles.

Based on this analysis, the Department of Finance supports the passage of City Council Bill #08-0127.

CC: Edward J. Gallagher  
Angela Gibson

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