



BILL SYNOPSIS

Committee: Economic and Community Development

Bill: 22-0192

Transit and Traffic - Impoundment or Immobilization - Chronic Offenders

Sponsor: Councilmember Dorsey

Introduced: January 10, 2022

Purpose:

For the purpose of authorizing the Baltimore City Police Commissioner to impound or immobilize the vehicle of a certain person; defining certain terms; and generally relating to chronic offenders of parking ordinances.

Effective: The 30th day after the bill is enacted.

Agency Reports

City Solicitor	
Finance Department	
Department of Transportation	
Police Department	No Objection

Analysis

Current Law

Article 31 – Transit and Traffic; Sections 31-1 and 31-21; Baltimore City Code; (Edition 2000)

Background

Baltimore City Department of Transportation's vehicle immobilization policy is as follows:

Transportation Enforcement Officers are deployed in various sectors of the city identifying and booting scofflaw violators, using state of the art systems that identify vehicles that have in excess of three (3) unpaid citations each more than 30 days old.

Scofflaw is the term used to refer to persons owning vehicles that are delinquent on three or more citations. Any vehicle on a City roadway with three or more unpaid citations that are all over 30 days old may be booted at any time. Upon booting, the vehicle owner will have 48 hours to unlock their vehicle before it is towed. However, a vehicle may be towed early for any of the following reasons:

- The vehicle has escaped booting in the past
- The vehicle owes over \$1,000 in outstanding fines
- The vehicle is parked improperly or in a restricted area
- The City cannot affix the boot to the vehicle
- The owner is found tampering with the boot

Bill 22-0192 proposes to amend the Baltimore City Code – Article 31- Transit and Traffic; Subtitle 31 - Clear Streets and Impoundment to:

- add a new definition – “Chronic Offender” (*Section 31-1*);
- create impoundment penalties for newly designated chronic offenders (*Section 31-21*) and
- authorize police to cause vehicles owned by chronic offenders to be towed or immobilized.

The bill defines a “chronic offender” as the owner of a vehicle that, as a result of parking violations, has accumulated \$1000 or more in fines and penalties on the vehicle within a single jurisdiction. The bill also adds new language to define “parking violation” which would consist of fines incurred for violations recorded by a speed monitoring or control system. Fines accrued for parking violations would then be added to the cumulative total of fines and penalties that an owner of a vehicle has accrued.

If the owner of a vehicle has accrued more than \$1000 in parking violation fines and is identified as a chronic offender, by the Department of Transportation, AND the unattended motor vehicle is found parked, at any time on any City street, the Baltimore City Police Commissioner is authorized to have the vehicle:

- towed or otherwise, removed or conveyed to and impounded in any place designated the by the director; or
- immobilized so as to prevent its operation.

Baltimore City Department of Transportation towing fees are as follows:

Towing:

- Vehicles east of Charles Street: \$130
- Vehicles west of Charles Street: \$140

Storage:

- \$15/day after 2 days (temporarily waived)

Other fees:

- Initial storage charge: \$50
- Administrative fee: \$40

Additional Information

Fiscal Note: Not Available

Information Source(s): Reporting Agencies, Department of Transportation; Bill 22-0192

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