



**Testimony of the Towing and Recovery Professionals of Connecticut in support of HB 6026 introduced
by Representative Roberta B. Willis**

The Towing and Recovery Professionals of Connecticut fully support this Bill. Our membership consists of the largest 200 towing companies conducting business in this state. We estimate that of the 280,000 plus tows that our members perform on a yearly basis, this proposed legislation would apply to less than 2% (5,000) of the unpaid towed vehicle claims.

The purpose of this Bill is to allow an operator of a business a method to be paid for services rendered for the towing, recovery and storage of a motor vehicle that an owner does not claim. In these instances the owner is aware that the vehicle is in the towers custody and they are also aware of the charges for the tow, recovery and storage. The owner is not claiming the vehicle as it may be structurally damaged beyond repair, (repairs exceed the value of the vehicle and/or there is no insurance on it) or it may require mechanical repair that also exceeds the value of the vehicle. In both instances the tow company has invested time and labor to tow and recover the vehicle and place it in storage.

The current method of collection is to take the owner of the vehicle to a small claims action, although the tower is awarded the fees the person(s) seldom pay and there is little recourse left. The majority of these tow bills are less than \$1500.00 including the storage.

This also frequently happens when an insurance company declares a vehicle a total loss. The insurance adjuster will inspect the vehicle at the towers location and make this determination. The insurance company does not want the vehicle as the damages together with the tow bill exceed the salvage value. In these cases the car is "dumped" (car left with the tower, no title - no direction of disposal or payment) on the tower by the insurance company. If the car is not picked up by the insurance salvage company the tower is not paid. This legislation would ensure that the vehicle would be picked up and the tow company paid for their services.

This proposal will allow the tower to place a hold on the registration(s) of the vehicle owner until the tow bill is paid. There are limitations on the amount of storage that can be collected in conjunction with the tow, the proposal is for no more than 45 days of storage.

There are safeguards built into this proposal, notice to the owner is required before any action may be taken, if there is a lien holder notice to them is also required. If there is no action after these notifications are made the vehicle may be disposed of by the tow company (after applying to the

Department of Motor Vehicles for paperwork) and the proceeds applied to the tow bill. When the tow bill is finally satisfied the vehicles owners name must be immediately removed from the registration suspension list.

Respectfully submitted by

Tim Vibert

President

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