

RON WATSON, PH.D
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Judicial Proceedings Committee



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The Senate of Maryland

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 24, 2022

Chair Barve, Vice-Chair Stein, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present this legislation before you today.

SB 731 provides for the electronic notification of secured parties/lien holders with vehicle information that is required in statute when a vehicle is towed from a parking lot. The towing company would only be able to contact the secured party electronically if that form of notification is agreed to by the tower and the secured party in writing or by electronic communication.

Most transactions these days can be handled electronically, including purchasing a home, securing a loan, and submitting applications. Authorizing electronic notification in these matters makes sense. Under current law, when a vehicle is towed from a parking lot, the towing company is required to notify the owner, any secured party, and the insurer of record by first-class certified mail, return receipt requested, within 7 days. Providing for electronic notification of secured parties will save towing companies money and will allow for the resolution of matters more quickly should a vehicle owner not contact a tower to reclaim the vehicle. This legislation has been discussed with the Maryland Bankers Association and they approve of the language in the bill and have no concerns.

This bill has no opposition in the Senate. The house cross-filed version of this bill, HB 870, received a unanimous favorable report from the Environment and Transportation Committee and the bill unanimously passed through the House as well (138-0).

For these reasons, I respectfully request the committee to give SB 731 a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ron L. Watson".

Senator Ron Watson

Legislative District 23