

HB 629 -- Wrecker and Towing Services

Sponsor: Yates

This bill establishes provisions regarding the licensure of operators and employees of wrecker and towing service companies. In its main provisions, the bill:

- (1) Requires towing companies and their employees to be licensed by the Missouri Public Service Commission;
- (2) Requires a company to prominently display its state license on both sides of all its wreckers;
- (3) Requires licensees to maintain liability insurance in the amount of at least \$750,000 with a deductible not greater than \$1,000 per occurrence;
- (4) Requires a licensee to pay a \$200 initial licensing fee, renewable annually on December 31 for a \$100 fee;
- (5) Authorizes the commission to cancel, suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue or renew a license;
- (6) Requires a licensee to make provisions for Internet access if a statewide abandoned vehicle database is established;
- (7) Creates within the state treasury the Wrecker License Administration Fund to be used for the administration of the provisions of the bill;
- (8) Prohibits licensees from towing a damaged or disabled vehicle without specific authorization from the owner or operator;
- (9) Requires a licensee to provide the owner or operator of a vehicle it has towed with a written disclosure stating the formal name of the business, address, telephone number, address of the vehicle's location, all costs and fees, and an itemized description of the vehicle owner's or operator's rights;
- (10) Requires licensees to maintain a copy of the completed disclosure records for at least five years;
- (11) Requires all vehicle storage facilities to prominently display a readily visible sign explaining customer rights;
- (12) Prohibits a licensee from having any clause in its towing contract that waives or limits liability;

(13) Requires a licensee, upon towing an abandoned vehicle, to report the activity to a law enforcement agency if the licensee does not have access to the Department of Revenue's online records;

(14) Requires a licensee to maintain consistent storage rates on vehicles and not to differ based on whether the owner has insurance covering the charges; and

(15) Requires a licensee who tows an abandoned vehicle without authorization from a law enforcement agency to enter the appropriate information on the statewide abandoned vehicle database.