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HOUSE BILL NO. 298

Offered January 13, 2010

Prefiled January 11, 2010

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 46.2-1216 of the Code of Virginia, relating to removal or immobilization of motor vehicles with outstanding parking violations.*

Patrons—Torian and Anderson

Referred to Committee on Transportation

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 46.2-1216 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 46.2-1216. Removal or immobilization of motor vehicles against which there are outstanding parking violations; ordinances.

The governing body of any county, city, or town may provide by ordinance that any motor vehicle parked on the public highways or public grounds against which there are three or more unpaid or otherwise unsettled parking violation notices may be removed to a place within such county, city, or town or in an adjacent locality designated by the chief law-enforcement officer for the temporary storage of the vehicle, or the vehicle may be immobilized in a manner which will prevent its removal or operation except by authorized law-enforcement personnel. The governing body of Fairfax County, and any town adjacent to such county, Loudoun County, *Prince William County*, the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park, and Virginia Beach may also provide by ordinance that whenever any motor vehicle against which there are three or more outstanding unpaid or otherwise unsettled parking violation notices is found parked upon private property, including privately owned streets and roads, the vehicle may, by towing or otherwise, be removed or immobilized in the manner provided above; provided that no motor vehicle may be removed or immobilized from property which is owned or occupied as a single family residence. Any such ordinance shall further provide that no such vehicle parked on private property may be removed or immobilized unless written authorization to enforce this section has been given by the owner of the property or an association of owners formed pursuant to Chapter 4.1 (§ 55-79.1 et seq.) or Chapter 4.2 (§ 55-79.39 et seq.) of Title 55 and that the local governing body has provided written assurance to the owner of the property that he will be held harmless from all loss, damage, or expense, including costs and attorney's fees, that may be incurred as a result of the towing or otherwise of any motor vehicle pursuant to this section. The ordinance shall provide that the removal or immobilization of the vehicle shall be by or under the direction of, an officer or employee of the police department or sheriff's office.

Any ordinance shall provide that it shall be the duty of the law-enforcement personnel removing or immobilizing the motor vehicle or under whose direction such vehicle is removed or immobilized, to inform as soon as practicable the owner of the removed or immobilized vehicle of the nature and circumstances of the prior unsettled parking violation notices for which the vehicle was removed or immobilized. In any case involving immobilization of a vehicle pursuant to this section, there shall be placed on the vehicle, in a conspicuous manner, a notice warning that the vehicle has been immobilized and that any attempt to move the vehicle might damage it.

Any ordinance shall provide that the owner of an immobilized vehicle, or other person acting on his behalf, shall be allowed at least twenty-four hours from the time of immobilization to repossess or secure the release of the vehicle. Failure to repossess or secure the release of the vehicle within that time period may result in the removal of the vehicle to a storage area for safekeeping under the direction of law-enforcement personnel.

Any ordinance shall provide that the owner of the removed or immobilized motor vehicle, or other person acting on his behalf, shall be permitted to repossess or to secure the release of the vehicle by payment of the outstanding parking violation notices for which the vehicle was removed or immobilized and by payment of all costs incidental to the immobilization, removal, and storage of the vehicle, and the efforts to locate the owner of the vehicle. Should the owner fail or refuse to pay such fines and costs, or should the identity or whereabouts of the owner be unknown and unascertainable, the ordinance may provide for the sale of the motor vehicle in accordance with the procedures set forth in § 46.2-1213.

INTRODUCED

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