

1 H.346

2 Introduced by Representatives Rachelson of Burlington and LaLonde of South

3 Burlington

4 Referred to Committee on

5 Date:

6 Subject: Motor vehicles; involuntary towing and storage; abandoned vehicles;

7 stolen vehicles; consumer protection

8 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish
9 maximum reasonable rates for the towing and storage of abandoned motor
10 vehicles, relieve crime victims from towing and storage charges related to a
11 vehicle that was towed after being stolen, and establish a working group to
12 examine funding mechanisms to reimburse towing services for costs incurred
13 in towing and storing stolen vehicles.

14 An act relating to charges for towing and storage of motor vehicles
15 belonging to crime victims

16 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

17 Sec. 1. 23 V.S.A. § 2155 is amended to read:

18 § 2155. FEES AND CHARGES

19 (a) Towing fees. For towing an abandoned motor vehicle from private
20 property, a towing service may charge a reasonable fee that is not more than

1 \$130.00 or \$4.50 per mile towed, whichever is greater, to be paid by the
2 vehicle owner or the landowner of the private property.

3 (b) Storage charges. In addition to any towing fee, an owner or lienholder
4 reclaiming an abandoned motor vehicle may be charged and shall pay a fee for
5 the costs of storage of the vehicle that is not more than \$35.00 per day, except
6 that no fee may be charged for storage for any period preceding the date upon
7 which the form for abandoned motor vehicle certification is sent to the
8 Department.

9 (c) Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b) of this section or any other
10 provision of law to the contrary, a person who has submitted a timely report to
11 an appropriate law enforcement agency that a vehicle towed pursuant to the
12 provisions of this subchapter was stolen shall not be liable for:

13 (1) any towing fees assessed pursuant to the provisions of subsection (a)
14 of this section;

15 (2) any storage charges that accrue prior to seven days after the date on
16 which a second notice is sent to the owner of the motor vehicle pursuant to the
17 provisions of subdivision 2154(a)(3) of this subchapter; and

18 (3) any related fees, charges, fines, or penalties assessed pursuant to a
19 municipal parking or abandoned motor vehicle ordinance.

1 (a) Creation. There is created the Costs for Removal and Storage of
2 Abandoned, Stolen Motor Vehicles Working Group to identify funding and a
3 process for reimbursing towing services and municipalities for costs related to
4 the removal and storage of abandoned, stolen motor vehicles.

5 (b) Membership. The Working Group shall be composed of the following
6 members:

7 (1) the Treasurer or designee;

8 (2) the Attorney General or designee;

9 (3) the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles or designee; and

10 (4) the Executive Director for the Center for Crime Victim Services or
11 designee.

12 (c) Powers and duties. The Working Group shall study potential sources of
13 funding and processes for reimbursing towing services and municipalities for
14 fees, charges, and other amounts that the towing service or municipality is
15 unable to collect pursuant to the provisions of 23 V.S.A. § 2155(c).

16 (d) Report. On or before November 15, 2025, the Working Group shall
17 submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Judiciary and
18 on Transportation with its findings and any recommendations for legislative
19 action.

20 (e) Meetings.

1 (1) The Treasurer or designee shall call the first meeting of the Working
2 Group to occur on or before September 1, 2025.

3 (2) The Treasurer or designee shall be the Chair.

4 (3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

5 (4) The Working Group shall cease to exist on December 31, 2025.

6 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATES

7 (a) This section and Sec. 3 of this act shall take effect on passage.

8 (b) Secs. 1 and 2 of this act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.