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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair  
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

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### AB 1153 (Bonta) - Illegal disposal site abatement

**Version:** June 18, 2026

**Urgency:** No

**Hearing Date:** June 29, 2026

**Policy Vote:** E.Q. 7 - 0

**Mandate:** No

**Consultant:** Ashley Ames

**Bill Summary:** This bill would authorize the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) to, upon appropriation, fund the disposal of abandoned recreational vehicles (RVs), and the development of enforcement strategies, including development of local enforcement teams and illegal dumping enforcement officers

#### **Fiscal Impact:**

- Ongoing cost pressure of an unknown but potentially significant amount, possibly in the hundreds of thousands of dollars annually (Solid Waste Disposal Site Cleanup Trust Fund [SWTF]), to CalRecycle's cleanup program in order to fund the removal and disposal of abandoned RVs and for the other purposes stated in this bill.
- Unknown but likely significant ongoing costs, likely in the hundreds of thousands of dollars annually (SWTF or other special fund), for CalRecycle to promulgate regulations, develop grant program criteria and application materials, implement the grant program, and provide ongoing assistance to grantees, among other things.

#### **Background:**

*Illegal dumping technical advisory committee (IDTAC).* In 2006, CalRecycle established a state and local technical advisory committee to assess the extent of illegal dumping and to develop recommendations to improve the effectiveness of local and regional responses to the problem. Originally established as a task force, the group developed recommendations that were presented to the former California Integrated Waste Management Board in 2007. IDTAC is composed of local government entities, state government entities, nonprofit organizations, and others. The Illegal Dumping Toolbox was created by the IDTAC to provide resources to local governments to help combat illegal dumping.

In 2020, IDTAC completed a Work Plan to develop new and expanded resources and objectives to address illegal dumping. The Work Plan includes priorities and objectives in three areas: enforcement, outreach, and standards. In addition to the Work Plan, the IDTAC has focused on, and provides information to local governments and the public about, the topics of homeless encampments and abandoned vehicles.

*Government role.* Local and State policing agencies cite individuals that are caught illegally dumping, but those agencies are not usually responsible for cleanup programs. Instead, different branches of local governments may be responsible for abating and cleaning up illegal dump sites.

Every local government has a different strategy and capacity to address illegal dumping. For example, Los Angeles County has created a web portal for residents to report illegal dumping and prioritizes cleanups of dump sites based in part on the number of residents who report a given site. However, many more counties or cities have no system in place for residents to report illegal dump sites. In some local jurisdictions, local code enforcement is the primary mechanism for abating litter and enforcing cleanups; in others, public work departments have the primary role in organizing cleanups.

However they approach abatement and cleanup activities, local entities are supported in their efforts by CalRecycle, which provides direction, training, and certification of Local Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) that carry out many CalRecycle directives. CalRecycle also administers some limited funding for litter and illegal dumping cleanup projects. These funding opportunities include the Farm and Ranch Grant Program and grants for California Conservation Corps.

*Abandoned vehicles.* According to the US Department of Justice's Problem Oriented Guide for Police: Problem Specific Guides: Abandoned Vehicles (which includes all kinds of vehicles, not just RVs), factors that contribute to abandonment include the costs of operating and maintaining vehicles, regulation and licensing requirements, and other circumstances, such as using them for shelter and difficulty associated with removal.

Removing abandoned vehicles presents both operational and legal challenges. Vehicles are personal property, and there are constitutional and other laws governing their removal. Generally, abandoned vehicles must be tagged or cited, efforts must be undertaken to identify and notice the owner, and specified time periods must pass before they can be removed. Upon removal, they are generally stored for some time before being dismantled or disposed. RVs often require specialized towing and are more costly to remove and store than cars, and costs vary depending on their size, condition, and location. According to one removal service, costs vary from around \$500 to \$2500 for removal. Another removal service charged \$100 per foot (length), for motorhomes. Estimates for the dismantling of inoperable RVs range from approximately \$5,000 to \$9,000 per vehicle.

*Abandoned Vehicle Abatement Program.* The CHP's AVA Program was designed to provide guidance for counties that wish to develop and administer AVA authorities. The AVA Program provides a means to remove abandoned vehicles that create a public nuisance or a health and safety hazard. There are currently 37 counties participating in the AVA Program, and additional counties have expressed interest in sample plans to develop local plans that conform to program guidelines. Counties that participate charge a \$1 vehicle registration fee for all vehicles registered in the county, and that money funds removal of abandoned vehicles.

*Solid Waste Disposal and Codisposal Site Cleanup Program.* CalRecycle administers the solid waste disposal and codisposal site cleanup program, which allocates \$1 million annually for public entities to fund illegally disposed waste removal and disposal, security measures (i.e., fences, signs, etc.), and health and safety measures associated with the cleanup. Grant awards are limited to \$50,000 per applicant per year. According to CalRecycle, the current balance of the Solid Waste Disposal Site Cleanup Trust Fund

(SWTF) is \$1.2 million. The existing grant programs were oversubscribed by an average of 235% over the past three years, with the illegal disposal site abatement grant program oversubscribed by 323%. CalRecycle has utilized approximately 45% of its SWTF budget for department-managed projects, with \$5.3 million in projects currently under development and an additional \$4.2 million in projects under review and for future consideration.

**Proposed Law:** This bill would:

1. This bill authorizes CalRecycle to, upon appropriation, develop regulations and expend funds through grants and existing programs to support local enforcement agencies in the removal and disposal of an abandoned RV, the development of enforcement strategies, and the development of local enforcement teams and illegal dumping enforcement officers.
2. Requires CalRecycle to prioritize projects in disadvantaged communities when implementing this bill.

**Related Legislation:**

SB 1230 (Valladares, 2026) would increase the fines for the illegal dumping of waste matter for repeat offenders and require the CalRecycle to act as a resource for cities and counties to address illegal dumping through the creation of a website.

**Staff Comments:** CalRecycle typically utilizes the entirety of the \$5 million allocated to the cleanup program in the annual budget. Of this total amount, \$2.5 million is allocated to grants, with \$1.5 million for legacy solid waste disposal site remediation grants and \$1 million for illegal disposal site abatement grants.

According to CalRecycle, the current balance of the SWTF is \$1.2 million. The existing grant programs were oversubscribed by an average of 235% over the past three years, with the illegal disposal site abatement grant program oversubscribed by 323%. CalRecycle has utilized approximately 45% of its SWTF budget for department-managed projects, with \$5.3 million in projects currently under development and an additional \$4.2 million in projects under review and for future consideration. Given the high cost of RV removal, this bill has the potential to significantly reduce the amount of funds available for traditional illegal disposal sites.

AB 1153 would authorize CalRecycle to expend funds through grants and existing programs to support local enforcement agencies to clean up abandoned RVs, and to develop enforcement strategies including developing local enforcement teams and illegal dumping enforcement officers. Given that abandoned RVs are expensive to dispose of, any funds from the state to cover disposal costs will benefit the city or county that is currently on the hook for cleanup costs associated with abandoned RVs (assuming that they are not salvageable).

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