

Date of Hearing: January 12, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Lori D. Wilson, Chair

AB 647 (Mark González) – As Amended January 5, 2026

SUBJECT: Abandoned recreational vehicles

SUMMARY: Clarifies that any public agency, or a state agency, within the counties of Alameda and Los Angeles, is authorized to implement a program to remove and dispose of an abandoned recreational vehicle (RV) and extends this authorization until January 1, 2032.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Allows the Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles to implement a program to dispose of RVs subject to the provisions below. (Vehicle Code (VEH) Section 22851.5)
- 2) Requires that whenever a peace officer or other employee authorized by a public agency removes or causes the removal of a RV determined to be abandoned, and the public agency or lienholder determines the estimated value of the RV at \$4,000 or less, the public agency shall do the following:
 - a) The notice placed on an RV subject to removal 72 hours prior to its removal shall additionally include a notification that, if the RV is towed, it can be recovered for at least 30 days after the public agency notifies the registered owner of the RV and specifies that the notice shall include contact information for an individual to learn where their vehicle and other possessions may be recovered; (VEH 22851.5(b)(1))
 - b) If, at the time of removal, the agency performing the removal is unable to collect the information necessary to identify the registered and legal owner of the RV, including, but not limited to, the vehicle identification number, the agency shall place and affix at least two copies of the notice required pursuant to this subdivision within close geographic proximity to the removal location within 48 hours of the removal; (VEH 22851.5(b)(5))
 - c) Provides that the removal agency is responsible for the costs incurred for towing and storage if it is determined in the hearing that the vehicle was not inoperable or was not a hazard to public health, safety and welfare; (VEH 22851.5(b)(8))
 - d) If, after 30 days from the notification date, the RV remains unclaimed and the towing and storage fees have not been paid, and if no request for a post-storage hearing was required or a post-storage hearing was not attended, the public agency that removed, or caused the removal of, the RV shall provide to the lienholder who is storing the RV, on a form approved by the DMV, authorization to dispose of it;
 - e) Authorization to dispose of the RV pursuant to the above provision shall include a verification that the RV is inoperable, and specifies that the lienholder may request the public agency to provide the authorization to dispose of the RV; (VEH 22851.5(b)(10))
 - f) If the RV is operable, the lienholder may request the public agency to provide the authorization to dispose of the RV only if it was towed due to it posing an environmental or public safety hazard;
 - g) If the RV is claimed by the owner or their agency within 30 days of the notice date, the lienholder who is storing the vehicle may collect reasonable fees for services rendered but may not collect lien sale fees; (VEH 22851.5(b)(11)) and,

- h) Each local public agency that is authorized and designated to remove vehicles pursuant to this bill shall report to their governing body, on an annual basis for each notice required to be posted 72 hours prior to the removal of a vehicle in the preceding year, all of the following: (VEH 22851.5(b))
 - i. The number of RVs removed.
 - ii. The number of people found in the RV prior to removal.
 - iii. The number of RVs that were operable.
 - iv. The number of RVs that were inoperable.
- 3) Defines an RV as “inoperable” if it can only be moved by a tow truck. (VEH 22851.5(c)(2))
- 4) States that Vehicle Code Section 22851.5 shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2030. (VEH 22851.5(d))

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: *Existing law.* Public officials who remove or cause the removal of a vehicle must transfer it to a garage or tow yard for storage and safekeeping until the owner collects it or a specified period has elapsed during which the vehicle has gone unclaimed. At the time a vehicle is removed by law enforcement or another local governmental entity, that entity is responsible for determining whether that vehicle falls into one of three “estimated value categories: under \$500, between \$500 and \$4,000, or over \$4,000. This valuation is central to the process of disposing of that vehicle. Existing law grants the owner of the garage or tow yard a lien against the vehicle as a means of providing compensation for towing and storing the vehicle for the period of impoundment. After a specified time period has elapsed, depending on the value of the vehicle and whether the vehicle was abandoned or not, the lienholder may satisfy the lien via a “lien sale,” which is essentially a vehicle auction.

- 1) Existing law sets forth a specific procedure for vehicles that have been removed by law enforcement after being deemed abandoned, and when the vehicle has been determined to be of “low value” (a valuation of \$500 or less). Under this procedure, law enforcement must attach a notice (“pre-removal notice”) to the vehicle at least 72 hours prior to its removal indicating that the removal will take place. Within 48 hours of removal, either the removing agency or the lienholder must send another notice (“post-removal notice”) to the vehicle’s registered owner at their addresses of record with the DMV, with the following information: contact information for the public agency providing the notice, information regarding where the vehicle is being stored, the legal authority for removal, a statement that the vehicle may be disposed of 15 days from the date of notice, and a notice that the owners have the opportunity for a hearing to determine the validity of the storage if a request is made within 10 days of the notice.
- 2) If, after 15 days from the post-removal notification, the vehicle remains unclaimed and the towing and storage fees have not been paid, and no request for post storage hearing was received, the removal agency must provide the lienholder with authorization to dispose of the vehicle. Existing law requires that disposal of the vehicle may only be to a licensed dismantler or scrap iron processor. It is important to note that if the names and addresses of the registered owners of the vehicle are not available from the DMV, the removing agency may immediately authorize the disposal of the vehicle by the lienholder.

Clarifying authority. In 2025, the California Legislature passed AB 630 (Mark Gonzalez) which authorizes the Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles to implement a program to dispose of RVs subject to specified requirements. This bill clarifies that any local agency, or state agency, within the counties of Alameda and Los Angeles have the authority to implement the RV disposal program.

Current lawsuit. On December 9, 2025, the Los Angeles City Council voted to instruct the City Administrative Office, in coordination with the Department of Transportation, Los Angeles Police Department, and the City Attorney, to immediately implement AB 630. On January 5, 2026, a coalition of civil and human rights groups, CD 11 Coalition for Human Rights, filed a lawsuit against the City of Los Angeles in the Superior Court of the State of California in and for the County of Los Angeles. The lawsuit argues that AB 630 authorized the Counties of Los Angeles and Alameda, and not the City of Los Angeles, to implement the RV disposal program.

Extending the pilot. The current law that authorizes this program sunsets on January 1, 2030. This bill extends the sunset for additional two years.

According to the author. “Abandoned and inoperable vehicles pose significant public health, safety, and environmental challenges across California. I authored AB 630 last year to address these issues to allow local agencies in LA County & Alameda County to implement a pilot program to dispose recreational vehicles valued at \$4,000 or less if the vehicle is declared inoperable and is public safety/environmental hazard before disposal. However, due to a drafting error, additional clarity is needed to ensure that local governments within Los Angeles County and Alameda County are allowed to implement this pilot program and AB 647 gives that clarity.”

Arguments in support. According to the City of Los Angeles, the sponsors of this bill, “Unsheltered homelessness can take on many forms, including people living in vehicles. The 2024 Greater Los Angeles Point in Time Count found more than 13,500 vehicles being used as dwellings, including more than 6,800 RVs. These oversized vehicles are designed for recreational use, not long-term urban dwelling, and they pose significant environmental, public health, and safety risks both to those living inside and to all city residents. Most importantly, people living in their RVs deserve access to a safe and affordable home.

AB 647 clarifies that the authority created under AB 630 may be utilized by local agencies within Los Angeles and Alameda Counties. It also amends AB 630’s sunset date of January 1, 2030 to January 1, 2032 to maintain the pilot program’s intended implementation time of 5 years. For these reasons, I am proud to SPONSOR AB 647 and respectfully request your support of this essential bill.”

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

City of Los Angeles (sponsor)

Opposition

None on file

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