

THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 647
Author: Mark González (D)
Amended: 1/5/26 in Assembly
Vote: 21

SENATE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE: 6-0, 6/9/26
AYES: Arreguín, Seyarto, Caballero, Cortese, Pérez, Wiener

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26
AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 68-0, 1/26/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Abandoned recreational vehicles

SOURCE: Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass

DIGEST: This bill specifies that any public agency within the Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles, including a state agency, may implement a program to dispose of recreational vehicles within those counties pursuant to specified requirements.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Authorizes a peace officer or other traffic enforcer of a local jurisdiction to remove a vehicle in many circumstances, including if it is left unattended, as specified, parked on a highway so as to obstruct traffic or create a hazard, illegally parked, as specified, stopped or parked for more than four hours upon the right-of-way of a freeway and the driver cannot move the vehicle, parked or left standing on a highway for 72 or more consecutive hours in violation of a local ordinance, and others. (Vehicle (Veh.) Code, § 22651.)

- 2) Authorizes any state, county or city authority charged with the maintenance of any highway to move any vehicle which is disabled or abandoned or which constitutes an obstruction to traffic from the place where it is located on a highway to the nearest available position on the same highway as may be necessary to keep the highway open or safe for public travel. (Veh. Code, § 22654, subd. (c).)
- 3) Authorizes a city, county, or city and county to adopt an ordinance establishing procedures for the abatement and removal, as public nuisances, of abandoned, wrecked, dismantled, or inoperative vehicles or parts of an inoperative vehicle from private or public property. (Veh. Code, § 22660.)
- 4) Requires the public agency causing the removal of a vehicle to determine, for lien sale purposes, whether its value is under \$500, between \$500 and \$4,000, or over \$4,000. (Veh. Code, § 22670.)
- 5) Specifies that whenever a vehicle has been removed to a garage, the keeper shall have a lien dependent upon possession for his or her compensation for towage and for caring for and keeping safe the vehicle for a period not exceeding 60 days, as specified, and provides that no lien shall attach to any personal property in or on the vehicle, as specified. (Veh. Code, § 22851, subds. (a), (b).)
- 6) Provides that whenever a peace officer or any other employee of an authorized public agency as specified removes, or causes the removal of a vehicle determined to be abandoned and the public agency, or at the request of the public agency, the lienholder determines the estimated value of the vehicle is \$500 or less, the public agency that removed, or caused the removal of vehicle shall cause the disposal of the vehicle, subject to specified requirements. (Veh. Code, § 22851.3.)
- 7) Authorizes the Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles to implement a program to dispose of abandoned recreational vehicles, subject to the requirements specified below. (Veh. Code, § 22851.5, subd. (a).)
- 8) Provides that whenever a peace officer or other authorized employee of a public agency removes or causes the removal of a recreational vehicle (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 cause the disposal of the RV pursuant to several specified requirements, including:

- a) Not less than 72 hours before the recreational vehicle is removed, the peace officer or the authorized public employee has securely attached to the recreational vehicle a distinctive notice which states that the recreational vehicle will be removed by the public agency and that if the recreational vehicle is towed, it can be recovered for at least 30 days after the public agency notifies the registered owner.
- b) Within 48 hours of the removal, the public agency that removed the recreational vehicle or, at the request of the public agency, the lienholder shall send a notice to the registered and legal owners at their addresses of record with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), and to any other person known to have an interest in the recreational vehicle, which must include specified information, including that the owners and interested persons have the opportunity for a poststorage hearing before the public agency that removed the vehicle.
- c) If the agency performing the removal is unable to collect the information necessary to identify the registered and legal owner of the recreational vehicle, including, but not limited to, the vehicle identification number, and is consequently unable to send the notice described above, the agency shall instead place and affix at least two copies of the notice within close geographic proximity to the removal location within 48 hours of the removal.
- d) A requested hearing shall be conducted within 48 hours of the request, as specified.
- e) The public agency that removed the recreational vehicle and that directed any towing and storage is responsible for the costs incurred for towing and storage if it is determined in the hearing that the recreational vehicle was not inoperable or was not a hazard to public health, safety, and welfare.
- f) If, after 30 days from the notification date, the recreational vehicle remains unclaimed and the towing and storage fees have not been paid, and if no poststorage hearing was requested or a poststorage hearing was not attended, the public agency that removed, or caused the removal of, the recreational vehicle shall provide to the lienholder who is storing the recreational vehicle, on a form approved by the Department of Motor Vehicles, authorization to dispose of the recreational vehicle, which shall include a verification that the recreational vehicle is inoperable.

- i. If the recreational vehicle is operable, the public agency may authorize the disposal of the recreational vehicle only if it was towed due to it posing an environmental or public safety hazard.
 - g) Local public agencies authorized and designated to remove recreational vehicles pursuant to the above shall annually report to their governing body specified information regarding recreational vehicles removed in the preceding year.
- 9) Sunsets the above provisions related to the removal of recreational vehicles in Alameda and Los Angeles Counties on January 1, 2030.

This bill:

- 1) Specifies that any public agency within the Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles, or a state agency, may implement an abandoned recreational vehicle disposal program in those counties pursuant to the requirements specified above.
- 2) Extends the sunset date for the authorization to implement a recreational vehicle disposal program as described above from January 1, 2030 to January 1, 2032.

Comments

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. 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.

Last year, the author of this bill authored AB 630 (Gonzalez, Chapter 699, Statutes of 2025), which sought to apply a modified version of this framework to abandoned recreational vehicles. The stated objective of AB 630 was to prevent abandoned and towed RVs from being resold to so-called “vanlords” who purchase RVs during a lien sale and “return them to the streets, perpetuating the cycle of unsafe housing and environmental hazards.” Toward that end, AB 630 authorized the Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles to implement a pilot program, running through January 1, 2030, for the expedited disposal of abandoned recreational vehicles. Specifically, under this pilot program, Alameda and Los Angeles Counties may dispose of RVs valued at \$4,000 or less, a substantial increase from the statewide “low value” threshold of \$500 or less. AB 630 allows these counties to bypass the lien sale process and dispose of abandoned RVs via dismantling within 30 days of notifying the registered owner that the vehicle was towed. However, prior to dismantling an abandoned RV, the public agency that towed the vehicle must comply with a host of procedural requirements – modeled after those related to standard vehicles and referenced in the preceding paragraph – intended to protect the owner’s interest in the vehicle, including provide a 72-hour notice prior to towing and an opportunity to challenged the removal of the vehicle at a poststorage hearing.

In December 2025, the Los Angeles City Council voted 12-3 to instruct City Attorney Hydee Feldstein Soto to immediately implement AB 630 and report back within 30 days to provide an implementation plan and “operational procedures for identifying, valuing and processing abandoned recreational vehicles.” Shortly thereafter, a coalition of human rights groups filed a lawsuit challenging AB 630 on the grounds that because the bill authorized “the Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles” to implement the abandoned RV removal pilot, the City of Los Angeles had no legal authority to implement an AB 630 program. On February 19, 2026, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Curtis Kin agreed with the coalition and issued a ruling striking down Los Angeles’ plan to implement AB 630. In his ruling, Judge Kin noted that:

The City [of Los Angeles] does not contest that it lacks authority under AB 630 to implement a program to dispose of recreational vehicles with an estimated value of \$4,000 or less. Nor could it. AB 630 unambiguously states that “[t]he Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles may implement a program to dispose of recreational vehicles.” AB 630 provides no such authority to the City of Los Angeles. Indeed [...] newly proposed legislation (AB 647) recognizes that AB 630 authorizes only the Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles to implement programs to dispose of abandoned recreational vehicles, as the new legislation

specifically and explicitly authorizes public agencies within those counties to implement such programs.

Accordingly, this bill authorizes any public agency within the Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles, including a stage agency, to implement an abandoned recreational vehicle disposal program in those counties pursuant to the provisions of AB 630, and extends AB 630's original sunset date from January 1, 2030 to January 1, 2032.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- Unknown, potentially significant costs to the courts to adjudicate petitions for a writ of mandate challenging agency decisions to dispose of recreational vehicles. As a result of likely increased towing and disposal of recreational vehicles this bill may lead to additional case filings that otherwise would not have commenced with attendant workload and resource costs to the court. The fiscal impact will depend on the number of petitions filed and the factors unique to each case. One hour of court time is estimated at \$1,300. While the courts are not funded on a workload basis, an increase in workload could result in delayed court services and cost pressure to fund additional staff and resources. The FY 2026-07 Budget Act provides \$70 million for that purpose (Trial Court Trust Fund, General Fund).
- Minor costs to the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to the extent recreational vehicles are removed, which requires the removing agency to provide a written report identifying the vehicle and its location to the CHP (Motor Vehicle Account).
- Unknown, likely minor cost pressure to the Department of Justice (DOJ) due to increased notifications by public agencies to the Stolen Vehicle System, a secured statewide database, within the DOJ (General Fund).
- Unknown, likely minor cost pressure to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to the extent additional lienholders are required to obtain copies of the names and addresses of all persons having an interest in the recreational vehicles from the DMV (Motor Vehicle Account).

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/13/26)

Office of Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass (Source)
City of Los Angeles

City of Norwalk

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/13/26)

ACLU California Action

Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment Action

Buccola Family Homeless Advocacy Clinic

California Coalition for Housing and Survivor Justice

California Public Defenders Association

Cd11 Coalition for Human Rights

Cd11 Coalition for Social Justice

Change Begins With Me (INDIVISIBLE)

Citizens' Climate Lobby Santa Cruz

City of Carson

City of Lakewood

Coalition for Social Justice

Coalition on Homelessness

Corporation for Supportive Housing

Costa Mesa Affordable Housing Coalition

Disability Rights California

Ella Baker Center for Human Rights

Equal Rights for Every Neighbor

Food Not Bombs

Glide

Homeless United for Friendship and Freedom

Housing California

Housing Is a Human Right - Orange County

Initiate Justice

Justice2jobs Coalition

LA Defensa

LA Progressive

LA Raza Community Resource Center

LA Street Care & Mutual Aid

Medic Coalition of Santa Cruz County

National Alliance to End Homelessness

National Homelessness Law Center

National Vehicle Residency Coalition

NCH

Neighborhood Organizing Circle

Noho Home Alliance

Peer Voices United-sacramento

People's Homeless Task Force
Restoring Hope California
Right Livelihood
Sacramento Regional Coalition to End Homelessness
Sacred Heart Community Center
Sacred Heart Community Service
San Francisco Public Defender's Office
Santa Cruz Bread and Roses
Santa Cruz Fulltimers
Serf City Times
Starting Over INC.
Starting Over Strong
The Bride's Chamber
University of California Los Angeles
Venice Justice Committee
We are Not Invisible
Welcoming Neighbors Home
Western Center on Law & Poverty
Western Regional Advocacy Project
Wood Street Commons

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 68-0, 1/26/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Calderon, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Lackey, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Patterson, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Arambula, Bonta, Bryan, Caloza, Kalra, Krell, Lee, Papan, Patel, Pellerin, Celeste Rodriguez, Ta

Prepared by: Alex Barnett / PUB. S. /916-951-4118
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