

SENATE THIRD READING

SB 692 (Arreguín)

As Amended June 25, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Creates a process for a public agency to dismantle an abandoned vehicle in the place where it was abandoned if the vehicle has been declared a nuisance or hazard and cannot be towed or otherwise moved, among other changes.

Major Provisions

- 1) States that if an abandoned vehicle cannot be towed or otherwise moved and the abandoned vehicle has been declared a nuisance or hazard by the fire marshal, environmental health director, or public health officer of the city or county in which the public agency is located, the public agency may dismantle, or cause the dismantlement of, the vehicle in the place that it was abandoned, if all of the following requirements are met:
 - a) Except when performing emergency summary abatement pursuant to state law or local ordinance, as specified, at least 15 days prior to dismantlement of the abandoned vehicle, the peace officer or other authorized employee of a public agency shall securely attach a distinctive notice to the vehicle that states the vehicle will be dismantled by the public agency if the hazard is not abated.
 - b) Immediately after identifying the abandoned vehicle for dismantlement and posting the public notice on the vehicle, the public agency that seeks to dismantle, or cause the dismantlement of, the abandoned vehicle, shall notify the Stolen Vehicle System of the Department of Justice in Sacramento of the intent to dismantle.
 - c) The public agency that seeks to dismantle, or cause the dismantlement of, the abandoned vehicle or, at the request of the public agency, the lienholder shall obtain a copy of the names and addresses of all persons having an interest in the vehicle, if any, from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) either directly or by use of the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS), although the public agency or lienholder is not required to obtain a copy of the actual record on file at the DMV.
 - d) Within 48 hours of the posting of the distinctive notice, excluding weekends and holidays, the public agency that seeks to dismantle, or cause the dismantlement of, the vehicle shall send a notice to the registered and legal owners at their addresses of record with the DMV, and to any other person known to have an interest in the vehicle.
 - e) The notice sent by the public agency shall be sent by certified or first-class mail, and a notice sent by the lienholder shall be sent by certified mail, and shall include the following information:
 - i) The name, address, and telephone number of the public agency providing the notice.
 - ii) The location of the vehicle and description of the vehicle that shall include, if available, the vehicle make, license plate number, vehicle identification number, and mileage.

- iii) The authority and purpose for the removal of the vehicle.
 - iv) A statement that the vehicle may be disposed of at least 15 days from the date of the notice.
 - v) A statement that the owners and interested persons, or their agents, have the opportunity for a hearing before the public agency that seeks to dismantle, or cause the dismantlement of, the vehicle to determine the validity of the determination if a request for a hearing is made in person, in writing, or by telephone within 10 days from the date of notice.
 - vi) The statement must also advise that if the owner or interested person, or their agent, disagrees with the decision of the public agency, the decision may be reviewed, as specified, and the statement shall further include that during the time of the initial hearing, or during the time the decision is being reviewed, as specified, the vehicle in question may not be disposed of.
 - f) A requested hearing shall be conducted within five business days of the request, excluding weekends and holidays, and the public agency that seeks to dismantle the vehicle may authorize its own officers to conduct the hearing if the hearing officer is not the same person who directed the storage of the vehicle.
 - g) Failure of either the registered or legal owner or interested person, or their agent, to request or to attend a scheduled hearing shall satisfy the hearing requirement of this bill.
 - h) An authorization for disposal may not be issued by the public agency prior to the conclusion of a requested hearing or any judicial review of that hearing.
 - i) If, after at least 15 days from the notification, the vehicle remains unclaimed and if no request for a hearing was made or a hearing was not attended, the public agency that sought to dismantle, or sought to cause the dismantlement of, the vehicle shall provide to the lienholder, on a form approved by the DMV, authorization to dismantle the vehicle, and the lienholder may request the public agency to provide the authorization to dismantle the vehicle.
 - j) If the names and addresses of the registered and legal owners of the vehicle are not available from the records of the DMV, either directly or by use of the CLETS, the public agency may dismantle or cause the dismantlement of the vehicle at any time after the 15th day from the date of the notice.
- 2) States that a vehicle disposed of pursuant to the above dismantle-in-place process shall not be reconstructed or made operable, unless it is a vehicle that qualifies for either horseless carriage license plates or historical vehicle license plates, as specified, in which case the vehicle may be reconstructed or made operable.
- 3) States that the above dismantle-in-place provisions do not prevent a local government from performing emergency summary abatement of an abandoned vehicle that is creating imminent health and safety hazards pursuant to state law or local ordinance.

- 4) Defines "abandoned vehicle," for purposes of the above dismantle-in-place process, to mean any of the following:
 - a) A vehicle that does not have signs of human habitation and where the city or county reasonably believes the vehicle is not being used for human habitation based on recently conducted outreach; or
 - b) The vehicle is inoperable due to the absence of a motor, transmission, or wheels and incapable of being towed.
- 5) Specifies that the provisions required to be included in any city, county, or city and county ordinance establishing procedures for the removal of abandoned vehicles also apply to an ordinance establishing procedures for the removal of inoperable vehicles.
- 6) Provides the following, for purposes of what must be included in an ordinance establishing procedures for the removal of abandoned or inoperable vehicles:
 - a) Expands specified requirements governing the removal of inoperable vehicles located on land zoned for agricultural use or not improved with a residential structure, such as the requirement that a 10-day notice of intention to remove a vehicle as a public nuisance be issued, to apply to the removal of abandoned and inoperable vehicles more generally.
 - b) Authorizes removal of a vehicle located on agriculturally-zoned land or land not improved with a residential dwelling unit, as a public nuisance, without issuing a prior 10 day notice of intention if the vehicle is inoperable due to the absence of a motor, transmission, or wheels, valued at less than \$200 by a specified person, and if *either* the vehicle is determined to be a public nuisance presenting an imminent threat to public health or safety, *or* the owner has signed a release authorizing removal and waiving their interest in the vehicle (rather than requiring both pursuant to existing law).
 - c) Exempts local agencies from the requirement that final disposition of a vehicle may only occur 12 days after notifying the owner, in cases where the owner signs a release waiving the 12-day waiting period.

COMMENTS

According to the Author

"SB 692 allows local governments the ability to abate and remove abandoned or inoperable vehicles that are valued at less than \$200 and pose an imminent threat to public health or safety while still ensuring adequate noticing and hearing requirements are followed.

"When an individual experiencing homelessness is moved indoors, these abandoned, and oftentimes inoperable, vehicles remain on the street. In many cases, these vehicles are in such poor condition and pose serious health and safety risks to the community, with local towing companies refusing to take the vehicles given the conditions. The current Vehicle Code prohibits local governments from abating and addressing imminent health and safety risks when these conditions occur in a vehicle.

"SB 692 is a moderate change in the Vehicle Code that will allow local governments to take action when an abandoned or inoperable vehicle is posing an imminent threat to public health or safety, thereby delivering the results that California communities are demanding."

Arguments in Support

According to the *League of California Cities*, SB 692 "would provide local governments with additional tools to dismantle abandoned vehicles.

"Specifically, SB 692 would authorize local governments to carry out emergency summary abatement and removal of abandoned or inoperable vehicles that present an imminent threat to public safety.

"California's cities are on the front lines of addressing homelessness, helping connect residents to housing and services. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, unsheltered homelessness includes individuals living in vehicles—66% of California's homeless population is unsheltered. As cities transition unsheltered residents indoors, their abandoned, often inoperable vehicles remain, creating health and safety hazards. Many tow companies refuse to remove them due to their condition, and current law prevents local governments from taking action.

"SB 692 would provide cities with more tools and flexibility to address abandoned vehicles, helping to keep our streets and public spaces clean and safe for all."

Arguments in Opposition

According to *ACLU California Action*, SB 692 "would authorize local government authorities to remove or dismantle abandoned vehicles that cannot be towed or otherwise be moved, creates a health or safety hazards, has been declared a nuisance, and allows emergency summary abatement...

"For many people, their vehicle is their home. When local governments remove and dispose of people's vehicles, people experiencing homelessness who are living in their vehicles not only lose their mode of transportation, but they also lose their home and all of their possessions, including documents they need to get housed, personal items, and often all that they have of value and meaning, without any recourse.

"Further, due to the significant substantial amendments taken to the bill since July 16, 2025, the new language should be heard in a policy committee for a full opportunity for all stakeholder organizations, advocates, and community members to have time to weigh in publicly on the new language.

"The most recent June 25, 2026 amendments would create a new California Vehicle Code section 22851.35, which creates a new definition of "abandoned vehicles" and procedures to dismantle vehicles. Creating a new vehicle code section makes a significant policy change in how the entire state must adhere to a new law for defining and dismantling abandoned vehicles. Therefore, all stakeholders should be provided with the opportunity to publicly discuss in a policy committee.

"Moreover, this new definition of "abandoned vehicle" and new procedure for removing vehicles is unnecessary because the California Vehicle Code already contains two procedures for

removing abandoned vehicles. California Vehicle Code section 226691 and section 22851.32 sets forth procedures for removing abandoned vehicles parked on the public roadway."

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- 1) Minor costs to the Department of Motor Vehicles (Motor Vehicle Account) to approve the form authorizing dismantlement and to process requests for vehicle ownership records, likely absorbable within existing resources.
- 2) Cost pressures (Trial Court Trust Fund) of an unknown, but likely minor amount, to the extent owners or interested persons seek judicial review of local dismantlement decisions pursuant to Government Code Section 11523.

VOTES

SENATE FLOOR: 38-0-2

YES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

ABS, ABST OR NV: Hurtado, Reyes

ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 9-0-0

YES: Schultz, Alanis, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Lackey, Nguyen, Ramos, Sharp-Collins

ASM TRANSPORTATION: 16-0-0

YES: Wilson, Davies, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Carrillo, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Jackson, Lackey, Lowenthal, Macedo, Papan, Ransom, Rogers, Ward

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

UPDATED

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