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Press Release

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House Votes to Crack Down on Predatory Towing

Bill would change notification requirements for towed vehicles to protect consumers from "patrol towing"

Salem –The House today passed House Bill 2578, carried by Representative Chuck Riley (D-Hillsboro), which would require towing companies to contact the owner of the property or the tenant before towing a vehicle and would allow the owner of the vehicle, if present, to move the vehicle without fees beyond those for the initial towing hookup. The bill would also require photographic evidence that the vehicle was illegally parked.

“This legislation will protect people from abusive towing practices,” said Riley. “Under the table dealings between towing operations and landlords have been common, violating consumer rights. It is time to regulate these practices.”

The bill is an attempt to prevent so-called “patrol towing” in which a property owner and a towing company make an agreement allowing all unauthorized vehicles to be towed without any notification to the vehicle’s owner in exchange for a commission. Exceptions will exist for those vehicles that constitute immediate safety hazards or are parked in restricted areas.

“No one should return to their vehicle after a few minutes only to find it has been towed without any warning,” said Representative Michael Dembrow (D-NE Portland/Parkrose/Maywood Park). “Those who continue to tow vehicles under predatory practices will be held accountable.”

The legislation also requires that restrictions on parking be clearly posted by landlords, especially limitations on guest parking. In areas where there are fewer parking spaces than the number of residences, notifications of the consequences of parking in the lot must be posted and parking tags will be required.

Property managers, towing companies, and consumers all agree that HB 2578 will end predatory towing throughout the state.

HB 2578 now moves to the Senate.

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