

SENATE BILL NO. 248

INTRODUCED BY J. COHENOUR

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A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REVISING LAWS REGARDING ABANDONED VEHICLES; AUTHORIZING LAW ENFORCEMENT TO TAKE CUSTODY OF ANY VEHICLES ABANDONED FOR CERTAIN PERIODS OF TIME; AND AMENDING SECTION 61-12-401, MCA."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 61-12-401, MCA, is amended to read:

"61-12-401. Taking vehicle into custody. (1) The following law enforcement agencies may take into custody any ~~motor~~ vehicle found abandoned for a period of 48 hours or more on a public highway or for a period of 5 days or more on a city street, public property, or private property:

- (a) the Montana highway patrol if the vehicle is ~~upon~~ on the right-of-way of any public highway other than a county road;
- (b) the sheriff of the county if the vehicle is ~~upon~~ on the right-of-way of any county road;
- (c) the city police if the vehicle is ~~upon~~ on a city street.

(2) The Montana highway patrol, sheriff of the county, or city police may use their personnel, equipment, and facilities for the removal and storage of the vehicle or may hire other personnel, equipment, and facilities for those purposes.

(3) If the Montana highway patrol, the sheriff of the county, or the chief of police of the city in which the vehicle is being stored has hired other personnel, equipment, and facilities to remove and store a vehicle, the Montana highway patrol, sheriff, or chief of police shall ~~either~~:

- (a) pay the person hired to remove the vehicle an amount not to exceed the amount for a removal charge established by rules adopted by the department of environmental quality and may request reimbursement of the hired removal charge from the motor vehicle recycling and disposal program of the department of environmental quality in an amount and manner established by rules adopted by the department of environmental quality for this purpose; or
- (b) authorize the person hired to remove the vehicle to submit directly to the department of environmental quality a claim for payment to be made directly to the person hired to remove the vehicle.

