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###### **THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

**COMMITTEE REPORT OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE DIVISION**

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##### committee ON Transportation

##### HON. ydanis rodriguez, CHAIR

##### May 26, 2021

**PROPOSED INT. NO. 176-A:** By Council Members Maisel, Holden, Chin, Adams, Kallos, Miller and Ulrich

**TITLE:** A Local Law in relation to creating an interagency task force on removing certain vehicles from public streets

**INTRODUCTION**

On May 26, 2021, the Committee on Transportation, chaired by Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, will convene to conduct a vote on Proposed Int. No. 176-A, a Local Law in relation to creating an interagency task force on removing certain vehicles from public streets. This is the second hearing that the committee has had on this legislative item. The first hearing on Int. No. 176 was held on April 29, 2019. At that hearing, the committee heard testimony from the New York City (NYC) Department of Transportation, the NYC Department of Finance, transportation advocates and other interested parties.

**BACKGROUND**

*Abandoned and Unregistered Vehicles*

Curb space is in high demand in the City, especially in certain residential and commercial areas. Residents of the Bronx have frequently complained about vehicles being parked without license plates for long periods of time. Auto body repair shops are reportedly removing license plates from motor vehicles and parking these motor vehicles in the street.[[1]](#footnote-2) This problem is not limited to the Bronx, as residents in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn have also complained about cars without license plates parked for extended periods of time in the street, taking up valuable street parking.[[2]](#footnote-3) Additionally, Staten Island and Queens residents have had similar complaints.[[3]](#footnote-4) Several months after the initial hearing on Int. No. 176, it was reported that there had been a surge in abandoned vehicles in several eastern Brooklyn neighborhoods, including Canarsie, East New York, and Brownsville.[[4]](#footnote-5)

Under state law, a motor vehicle cannot be operatedwithout being registered by the state, or parked without proof of registration.[[5]](#footnote-6) Registration is evidenced by a registration sticker. Motor vehicles are also required to have license plates with numbers that match the motor vehicle’s registration number.[[6]](#footnote-7) The registration sticker must also have the motor vehicle’s vehicle identification number.[[7]](#footnote-8) By parking motor vehicles with neither a registration sticker nor a license plate, it is difficult for NYPD to identify the owners of, and therefore ticket, these motor vehicles.[[8]](#footnote-9)

A vehicle with either one or two license plates can be reported as abandoned if it is left on public property for at least 48 hours.[[9]](#footnote-10) An individual can call the local police precinct or file a complaint with 311 to have the vehicle towed.[[10]](#footnote-11) The vehicle’s owner is responsible for towing and storage fees. If a vehicle is reported on City property without license plates, the NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY) will investigate the complaint to determine whether or not the vehicle is so dilapidated that it should be disposed of.[[11]](#footnote-12) If DSNY determines it is in fact derelict, they will tag the vehicle and the vehicle will be picked up within three business days.[[12]](#footnote-13) If DSNY does not view the vehicle as derelict, they will tag the vehicle and refer it to the local police precinct.[[13]](#footnote-14) Despite residents’ complaints, they often find nothing is done to remove these vehicles.[[14]](#footnote-15)

**ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED INT. NO. 176-A**

Proposed Int. No. 176-A would create an interagency task force to study the City’s existing system of removing from public streets vehicles that have been abandoned or parked without license plates or proper registration. The task force would develop recommendations to improve existing removal practices, particularly in response to complaints from local residents. The task force would include the Commissioner of Transportation, the Commissioner of Sanitation, and the Police Commissioner, or their respective designee, as well as two additional members appointed by the Mayor. The task force would also invite representatives from the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, the New York State Department of Transportation, and representatives of any other relevant state agency, as identified by the task force, to participate. The task force would meet at least five times, convene at least one public hearing in each of the five boroughs, and submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Mayor and Speaker of the City Council. The task force would end upon the submission of the required report.

Proposed Int. No. 176-A

By Council Members Maisel, Holden, Chin, Adams, Kallos, Miller and Ulrich

..Title

A Local Law in relation to creating an interagency task force on removing certain vehicles from public streets

..Body

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Vehicle removal task force. a. There shall be an interagency task force to examine existing procedures or requirements for removing from city streets vehicles that are abandoned or parked without a license plate or valid registration. Such task force shall develop recommendations to improve existing removal practices in response to complaints from local residents, including, but not limited to, recommendations for rules or legislation regarding removing such vehicles from public streets.

b. The task force shall consist of the commissioner of transportation, the commissioner of sanitation, and the police commissioner, or the respective designee of each such commissioner, and two additional members appointed by the mayor. The mayor shall designate one member to serve as the chair of the task force. Any vacancy on the task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. All members of the task force shall serve without compensation, except that each member shall be allowed actual and necessary expenses, to be audited in the same manner as other city expenses.

c. The task force shall invite representatives from the New York state department of motor vehicles, the New York state department of transportation or any other relevant state agency identified by the task force, to participate in at least one task force meeting or to review the report required by subdivision e of this section.

d. The task force shall meet at least five times and shall convene at least one public hearing in each of the five boroughs. The chair of the task force shall convene the first meeting no later than 90 days after the date this local law takes effect.

e. No later than one year after the date this local law takes effect, the task force shall submit a report to the mayor and the speaker of the council setting forth its recommendations as described in subdivision a of this section.

f. The task force shall terminate upon the submission of the report required by subdivision e of this section.

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

GZ/JSA

RM/gz

LS #11863/Int. No. 1824/2017

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LS# 619

1. Arnold Diaz, *Auto Body Shops Take up Street Parking in the Bronx*, Pix 11, May 16, 2018, <https://pix11.com/2018/05/16/auto-body-shops-take-up-street-parking-in-the-bronx>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Eric Jankiewicz, *How To Make Hell For Auto Dealers Who Illegally Use Street Parking*, Bklyner., Jan. 7, 2014, <https://bklyner.com/how-to-make-hell-for-car-dealers-sheepshead-bay>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Jessica Borg, *Staten Island Residents Fed Up With Abandoned Mystery Vehicles*, CBS Local, June 2, 2017, <https://newyork.cbslocal.com/2017/06/02/staten-island-mystery-vehicles> and

   Christopher Barca, *Illegally parked cars towed from auto shop*, Queens Chron.,June 11, 2015, <http://www.qchron.com/editions/central/illegally-parked-cars-towed-from-auto-shop/article_c1c9af26-2984-5e89-8da4-5ad41ad5fba6.html.> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Jose Martinez, *East Brooklyn Drives Surge in Abandoned Vehicle Complaints,* The City, September 5, 2019, <https://www.thecity.nyc/government/2019/9/5/21210843/east-brooklyn-drives-surge-in-abandoned-vehicle-complaints> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. *See* Veh. & Traf. Law §§401(1)(a), 401(4). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. *See* Veh. & Traf. Law §402(1)(a). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. <https://dmv.ny.gov/registration/sample-registration-documents-0> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Cars that lack a registration sticker or license plate may still be ticketed. *See* Veh. & Traf. §238(2-a.)(a) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Abandoned Vehicle, <https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-02130> (*last accessed* May 24, 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. *Id.*; Admin Code §16-128. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Abandoned Vehicle, <https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-02130> (*last accessed* May 24, 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. *Id*. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. *Id*. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Jessica Borg, *Staten Island Residents Fed Up With Abandoned Mystery Vehicles*, CBS Local, June 2, 2017, <https://newyork.cbslocal.com/2017/06/02/staten-island-mystery-vehicles> [↑](#footnote-ref-15)