

VETO MESSAGE ON SB 5649

May 18, 1999

To the Honorable President and Members,  
The Senate of the State of Washington  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to section 8, Engrossed Senate Bill No. 5649 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to vehicle impound notices, security, and auctions;"

Engrossed Senate Bill No. 5649 helps make vehicle impoundment and release more efficient, provides protections for tow truck operators, and enacts several related miscellaneous provisions.

Under current law, when a tow truck operator auctions an abandoned vehicle, any proceeds above towing and storage charges must be sent to the Department of Licensing for deposit in the Motor Vehicle Fund. The owner who abandoned the auctioned vehicle can recover the proceeds by filing a claim within one year " however, most do not.

Section 8 of ESB 5649 would require tow truck operators to send excess auction proceeds directly to the owner of the abandoned vehicle, instead of the Motor Vehicle Fund. However, there is no provision for disposition of the proceeds if the owner cannot be located. This change would reduce Motor Vehicle Fund revenue by nearly \$700,000 in the next biennium, depriving the state of funds for needed transportation projects. Present law sufficiently protects owners who care to file claims for excess auction proceeds.

For these reasons, I have vetoed section 8 of Engrossed Senate Bill No. 5649.

With the exception of section 8, Engrossed Senate Bill No. 5649 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gary Locke  
Governor