

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2024 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 5672

By Delegate Howell

[Introduced February 13, 2024; Referred to the
Committee on Technology and Infrastructure]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,
 2 designated §17C-14-16, relating to the transportation, towing, repair, dismantling, and
 3 storage of damaged electric motor vehicles; and authorizing the Division of Motor Vehicles
 4 and the State Fire Marshal to promulgate safety rules for the implementation of these
 5 protections.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 14. MISCELLANEOUS RULES.
§17C-14-16. Handling of damaged electric motor vehicles.

1 (a) Legislative findings. —The Legislature finds that the emergence of electric vehicles on
 2 the roads and highways in this state bring forth new concerns about the safety regarding the
 3 handling of damaged electric vehicles. The emergence of damaged electric vehicles and the
 4 transportation, handling, and storage of damaged electric vehicles has led to fire hazards, and
 5 risks of spontaneous combustion in other states where electric vehicles are more prevalent and
 6 have a longer history. The Legislature further finds that to protect the public and the citizens of
 7 West Virginia, safety standards and requirements for the handling and storage of damaged
 8 electric vehicles need to be established.

9 (b) Enactment. —The Division of Motor Vehicles and the State Fire Marshall shall
 10 promulgate safety requirements guidelines and standards for the transportation, towing, repairing,
 11 dismantling, disposal, and storage of damaged electric vehicles that incorporate recognized
 12 electronic vehicle standards and practices, which shall include, but not be limited to the following:

13 (1) Requiring tow operators to tow the vehicle to an offsite location. Once there, the vehicle
 14 shall be inspected for evidence of battery damage, including internal battery leaks, which could
 15 lead to short circuits or loss of high voltage isolation, loss of mechanical integrity of the high
 16 voltage system. If airbags are deployed, further diagnostic steps shall be conducted to assess the
 17 integrity of the high voltage system, including measuring the battery temperature.

18 (2) Requiring tow operators to tow a damaged electric vehicle on a flatbed, to avoid

19 generating voltage from the turning wheels. If the vehicle's wheels must be turned, the speed shall
20 be kept below 5 mph. After being loaded onto a tow truck, the vehicle's structural integrity shall be
21 checked. If the vehicle rolls while it is on the tow truck, the inspection steps listed above shall be
22 repeated.

23 (3) A two-barrier method for an electric vehicle during storage shall be implemented
24 including the following provisions:

25 (A) Separate the vehicle from combustibles and structures by 50 feet on all sides, or
26 (B) Create a barrier of earth, steel, concrete, or solid masonry around the vehicle.

NOTE: The purpose of this generally relates to the transportation, towing, repair, dismantling and storage of damaged electric motor vehicles. The bill authorizes the Division of Motor Vehicles and the State Fire Marshal to promulgate safety rules for the implementation of these protections.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.