

ASCCA Legislative Update – by Jack Molodanof

Below is the February Regulatory and Legislative Report:

Regulations:

California Energy Commission (CEC) – Replacement Tire Regulations

We have heard that the California Energy Commission (CEC) plans to move forward this year with replacement tire efficiency regulations. These regulations would require tire retailers—including all automotive repair dealers that sell or replace tires—to display signage, provide tire efficiency disclosures to consumers, include this information in advertising, and ensure retailers receive training on the sale of these new, more efficient tires. The regulations are expected to be released mid to late this year. We will continue to monitor developments and provide updates as they become available. For more details, see the link:

<https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/replacement-tire-efficiency-program>

BAR Airbag Safety Regulations

BAR is proposing regulations that would prohibit an automotive repair shop from installing or using any component designed to mislead a vehicle owner into believing a functional airbag has been installed. Shops would be required to restore any airbag that is part of an inflatable restraint system to its original operating condition, as designed by the original equipment manufacturer. In addition, shops would be required to purchase all airbag replacement parts or components from the manufacturer or an authorized supplier or reseller and retain receipts for all parts purchased and received. For more details, see the link (pages 13-14):

<https://www.bar.ca.gov/pdf/bag/202601/legislation-regulations.pdf>

BAR Vehicle Storage Fee Regulations

The BAR has released proposed regulations that would significantly impact how automotive repair dealers charge vehicle storage fees and set a troubling precedent for the future. The proposal raises several concerns, including allowing BAR to publicly survey and post vehicle storage rates, imposing an unrealistic one-day customer notification requirement, and effectively requiring repair shops to provide at least three days of free storage before fees may accrue. We have submitted written comments outlining concerns.

For more details, see the link: <https://www.bar.ca.gov/public-workshops/>

BAR Tear Down and Towing Regulations – Proposed Amendments

New BAR regulations impose requirements on automotive repair dealers, including, but not limited to, requiring shops that arrange towing on behalf of a customer to list towing fees on a separate document rather than including them in the repair estimate. Due to concerns raised about the towing fee documentation requirements, BAR has indicated that it plans to make changes to these provisions. We are working with BAR to address these concerns. See the link for the full regulatory text:

<https://www.bar.ca.gov/pdf/regulatory-actions/tear-down-2024/approved-text.pdf>

BAR Internet-Based Advertising Regulations – Proposed Clarification

These new regulations require all shops to clearly display in any internet-based advertising the following 1) the Business name; 2) the ARD registration number and 3) the phone number registered with BAR. Due to questions and concerns regarding phone numbers, BAR has indicated that they were going to provide further clarification through possible revised regulations and/or FAQs with examples to the industry. We will work with BAR to make sure clarification is provided for the industry.

Legislation:

Vehicle Glass Repair Shops

SB 988 – Motor Vehicle Glass Act – Concerns. This bill would, among other things, impose new disclosure and documentation requirements on glass repair shops, including advance notice about advanced driver assistance systems, calibration needs, written confirmation of calibration results, and itemized invoices and receipts. The bill would also limit when repair shops can contract for insured work, requiring a filed insurance claim, a claim or referral number, and a good-faith cost estimate before services are provided. Status: Senate Insurance Committee.

Electric Vehicle Batteries

SB 615 – Electric Vehicle Batteries – Concerns. This bill, among other things, requires that automotive repair dealers who remove electric battery from a vehicle for repair, remanufacturing, or recycling must ensure that the battery is disposed of properly, adhering to the end-of-life requirements specified in the legislation. Status: Assembly Floor - Inactive File.

Employment

AB 1234 – Employment – Nonpayment of Wages. Concerns. This bill would impose up to a 30% administrative penalty fee on every order, decision, or award issued by the Labor Commissioner. Status: Senate Floor – Inactive File.

AB 1331 – Workplace Surveillance – Concerns. This bill would limit the use of workplace surveillance tools, as defined, by employers, including by prohibiting an employer from monitoring or surveilling workers in employee-only, employer-designated areas, as specified. The bill would provide workers with the right to leave behind workplace surveillance tools that are on their person or in their possession when entering certain employee-only areas and public bathrooms and during off-duty hours, as specified. The bill would prohibit a worker from removing or physically tampering with any component of a workplace surveillance tool that is part of or embedded in employer equipment or vehicles. Status: Senate Floor – Inactive File.

Vehicle Emissions

SB 712 – Smog Check: Exemption - Watch. This bill, known as the Jay “Leno’s Law”, would, commencing on January 1, 2027, fully exempt from the smog check requirements, both biennially and at transfer, a motor vehicle that is at least 35 model years old, *was manufactured prior to the 1981 model year*, has been assigned a special identification plate indicating that it is a historical vehicle, and is insured as a collector motor vehicle. *vehicle, as specified. The bill, beginning January 1, 2028, would expand this exemption by one model year, every year, for 5 years.* Status: Assembly Appropriations Committee – Held in Committee.

Other Bills of Interest

AB 1421 – Road Usage Charge – Watch. This bill will limit the warranty benefit to the actual cost of replacing the catalytic converter if the warranty covers only the vehicle's catalytic converter. Status: Assembly Appropriations Committee – Held in Committee.

SB 354 – Insurance Consumer Privacy Protection Act of 2025 – Watch. This bill would create and update standards for the collection, processing, retaining, or sharing, collectively known as “processing”, of consumers’ personal information by licensees and their third-party service providers. Status: Assembly Insurance Committee.
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