

Assembly Bill No. 1178

Passed the Assembly September 10, 2015

Chief Clerk of the Assembly

Passed the Senate September 9, 2015

Secretary of the Senate

This bill was received by the Governor this _____ day
of _____, 2015, at _____ o'clock ____M.

Private Secretary of the Governor

CHAPTER _____

An act to amend Section 11713.3 of, to amend, repeal, and add Sections 3050, 3050.1, and 3050.7 of, and to add and repeal Article 6 (commencing with Section 3085) to Chapter 6 of Division 2 of, the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1178, Achadjian. Vehicles: manufacturers and distributors.

Existing law establishes the New Motor Vehicle Board in the Department of Motor Vehicles, and requires the board to hear and decide certain protests presented by a motor vehicle franchisee in regard to a dispute with the vehicle manufacturer.

This bill would, until January 1, 2019, authorize the board to hear protests by an association challenging the legality of an export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy of a manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch, and would establish procedures for hearing those protests, as specified.

Existing law generally requires a manufacturer, distributor, transporter, or dealer of vehicles to be licensed by the Department of Motor Vehicles. Under existing law, it is unlawful for a manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch to engage in specified practices, including taking or threatening to take any adverse action against a dealer pursuant to an export or sale-for-resale prohibition because the dealer sold or leased a vehicle to a customer who either exported the vehicle to a foreign country or resold the vehicle in violation of the prohibition, unless the export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy was provided to the dealer in writing prior to the sale or lease, and the dealer knew or reasonably should have known of the customer's intent to export or resell the vehicle in violation of the prohibition at the time of sale or lease. Existing law further provides that if the dealer causes the vehicle to be registered in this or any other state, and collects or causes to be collected any applicable sales or use tax due to this state, a rebuttable presumption is established that the dealer did not have reason to know of the customer's intent to export or resell the vehicle. A violation of these provisions is a crime.

This bill would recast the provisions relating to export and sale-for-resale prohibitions described above to provide that it would be unlawful to take or threaten to take any adverse action against a dealer pursuant to an export or sale-for-resale prohibition because the dealer sold or leased a vehicle to a customer who either exported the vehicle to a foreign country or resold the vehicle in violation of the prohibition unless the export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy was provided to the dealer in writing at least 48 hours before the sale or lease of the vehicle and the dealer knew or reasonably should have known of the customer's intent to export or resell the vehicle in violation of the prohibition. The bill would provide that a rebuttable presumption is established that the dealer did not have reason to know of the customer's intent to export or resell the vehicle if the dealer causes the vehicle to be registered in this or any other state, and collects or causes to be collected any applicable sales or use tax due to this state. By expanding the scope of an existing crime, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program. The bill would, in any proceeding in which a challenge to an adverse action is at issue, require the burden of proof to be on the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch. This bill would make additional technical, nonsubstantive changes to those provisions and make related findings and declarations.

This bill would incorporate additional changes to Sections 3050.7 and 11713.3 of the Vehicle Code made by this bill and AB 759 to take effect if both bills are chaptered and this bill is chaptered last.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) The distribution, sale, and service of new motor vehicles in the State of California vitally affects the general economy of this state and the public welfare.

(b) The new motor vehicle franchise system, which operates within a strictly defined and highly regulated statutory scheme, assures the consuming public of a well-organized distribution system for the availability and sale of new motor vehicles throughout the state, provides a network of quality warranty, recall, and repair facilities to maintain those vehicles, and creates a cost-effective method for the state to police those systems through the licensing and regulation of private sector franchisors and franchisees.

(c) Franchisors sometimes establish strict export policies when a paid sales incentive is subject to being charged back or new vehicle allocation is reduced when a vehicle is exported or resold, even when the dealership did not know, or in the exercise of reasonable diligence should not have known, of the intended exportation or resale. In response, California franchise laws were recently updated to prohibit chargebacks and other adverse actions in circumstances in which the dealer did not have knowledge of, or reason to know of, the intended exportation or resale.

(d) Despite California's franchise law acknowledging that the dealer did not have knowledge or reason to know that a vehicle would be exported or resold, at least one manufacturer is disregarding this franchise law by imposing a strict liability export and sale-for-resale policy against dealers. These actions impose severe sanctions on dealers regardless of the fact that dealers are collecting sales tax and registering these vehicles in California and have no reasonable knowledge of the future fate of those vehicles.

(e) It is the intent of this act to ensure that new motor vehicle dealers are treated fairly by their franchisors, to prohibit franchisors from avoiding state franchise laws, and to ensure that dealers are not subject to adverse action when the dealer did not know or have reason to know vehicles are exported or resold.

SEC. 2. Section 3050 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:
3050. The board shall do all of the following:

(a) Adopt rules and regulations in accordance with Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code governing those matters that are specifically committed to its jurisdiction.

(b) Hear and determine, within the limitations and in accordance with the procedure provided, an appeal presented by an applicant for, or holder of, a license as a new motor vehicle dealer,

manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, distributor branch, or representative when the applicant or licensee submits an appeal provided for in this chapter from a decision arising out of the department.

(c) Consider any matter concerning the activities or practices of any person applying for or holding a license as a new motor vehicle dealer, manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, distributor branch, or representative pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 11700) of Division 5 submitted by any person. A member of the board who is a new motor vehicle dealer may not participate in, hear, comment, advise other members upon, or decide, any matter considered by the board pursuant to this subdivision that involves a dispute between a franchisee and franchisor. After that consideration, the board may do any one or any combination of the following:

(1) Direct the department to conduct investigation of matters that the board deems reasonable, and make a written report on the results of the investigation to the board within the time specified by the board.

(2) Undertake to mediate, arbitrate, or otherwise resolve any honest difference of opinion or viewpoint existing between any member of the public and any new motor vehicle dealer, manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, distributor branch, or representative.

(3) Order the department to exercise any and all authority or power that the department may have with respect to the issuance, renewal, refusal to renew, suspension, or revocation of the license of any new motor vehicle dealer, manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, distributor branch, or representative as that license is required under Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 11700) of Division 5.

(d) Hear and decide, within the limitations and in accordance with the procedure provided, a protest presented by a franchisee pursuant to Section 3060, 3062, 3064, 3065, 3065.1, 3070, 3072, 3074, 3075, or 3076. A member of the board who is a new motor vehicle dealer may not participate in, hear, comment, advise other members upon, or decide, any matter involving a protest filed pursuant to Article 4 (commencing with Section 3060), unless all parties to the protest stipulate otherwise.

(e) Hear and decide, within the limitations and in accordance with the procedure provided, a protest presented by an association challenging a policy of a manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor or distributor branch pursuant to Section 3085. A member of the board who is a new motor vehicle dealer may not participate in, hear, comment, advise other members upon, or decide, any matter involving a protest filed pursuant to Article 6 (commencing with Section 3085), unless all participants to the protest stipulate otherwise.

(f) Notwithstanding subdivisions (c), (d), and (e), the courts have jurisdiction over all common law and statutory claims originally cognizable in the courts. For those claims, a party may initiate an action directly in any court of competent jurisdiction.

(g) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2019, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2019, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 3. Section 3050 is added to the Vehicle Code, to read:

3050. The board shall do all of the following:

(a) Adopt rules and regulations in accordance with Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code governing those matters that are specifically committed to its jurisdiction.

(b) Hear and determine, within the limitations and in accordance with the procedure provided, an appeal presented by an applicant for, or holder of, a license as a new motor vehicle dealer, manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, distributor branch, or representative when the applicant or licensee submits an appeal provided for in this chapter from a decision arising out of the department.

(c) Consider any matter concerning the activities or practices of any person applying for or holding a license as a new motor vehicle dealer, manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, distributor branch, or representative pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 11700) of Division 5 submitted by any person. A member of the board who is a new motor vehicle dealer may not participate in, hear, comment, advise other members upon, or decide any matter considered by the board pursuant to this subdivision that involves a dispute between a franchisee and franchisor. After that consideration, the board may do any one or any combination of the following:

(1) Direct the department to conduct investigation of matters that the board deems reasonable, and make a written report on the results of the investigation to the board within the time specified by the board.

(2) Undertake to mediate, arbitrate, or otherwise resolve any honest difference of opinion or viewpoint existing between any member of the public and any new motor vehicle dealer, manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, distributor branch, or representative.

(3) Order the department to exercise any and all authority or power that the department may have with respect to the issuance, renewal, refusal to renew, suspension, or revocation of the license of any new motor vehicle dealer, manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, distributor branch, or representative as that license is required under Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 11700) of Division 5.

(d) Hear and decide, within the limitations and in accordance with the procedure provided, a protest presented by a franchisee pursuant to Section 3060, 3062, 3064, 3065, 3065.1, 3070, 3072, 3074, 3075, or 3076. A member of the board who is a new motor vehicle dealer may not participate in, hear, comment, advise other members upon, or decide, any matter involving a protest filed pursuant to Article 4 (commencing with Section 3060), unless all parties to the protest stipulate otherwise.

(e) Notwithstanding subdivisions (c) and (d), the courts have jurisdiction over all common law and statutory claims originally cognizable in the courts. For those claims, a party may initiate an action directly in any court of competent jurisdiction.

(f) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2019.

SEC. 4. Section 3050.1 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

3050.1. (a) In a proceeding, hearing, or in the discharge of duties imposed under this chapter, the board, its executive director, or an administrative law judge designated by the board may administer oaths, take depositions, certify to official acts, and issue subpoenas to compel attendance of witnesses and the production of books, records, papers, and other documents in any part of the state.

(b) For purposes of discovery, the board or its executive director may, if deemed appropriate and proper under the circumstances,

authorize the parties to engage in the civil action discovery procedures in Title 4 (commencing with Section 2016.010) of Part 4 of the Code of Civil Procedure, excepting the provisions of Chapter 13 (commencing with Section 2030.010) of that title. Discovery shall be completed no later than 15 days prior to the commencement of the proceeding or hearing before the board. This subdivision shall apply only to those proceedings or hearings involving a petition filed pursuant to subdivision (c), or protest filed pursuant to subdivision (d) or (e) of Section 3050. The board, its executive director, or an administrative law judge designated by the board may issue subpoenas to compel attendance at depositions of persons having knowledge of the acts, omissions, or events that are the basis for the proceedings, as well as the production of books, records, papers, and other documents.

(c) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2019, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2019, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 5. Section 3050.1 is added to the Vehicle Code, to read:

3050.1. (a) In a proceeding, hearing, or in the discharge of duties imposed under this chapter, the board, its executive director, or an administrative law judge designated by the board may administer oaths, take depositions, certify to official acts, and issue subpoenas to compel attendance of witnesses and the production of books, records, papers, and other documents in any part of the state.

(b) For purposes of discovery, the board or its executive director may, if deemed appropriate and proper under the circumstances, authorize the parties to engage in the civil action discovery procedures in Title 4 (commencing with Section 2016.010) of Part 4 of the Code of Civil Procedure, excepting the provisions of Chapter 13 (commencing with Section 2030.010) of that title. Discovery shall be completed no later than 15 days prior to the commencement of the proceeding or hearing before the board. This subdivision shall apply only to those proceedings or hearings involving a petition or protest filed pursuant to subdivision (c) or (d) of Section 3050. The board, its executive director, or an administrative law judge designated by the board may issue subpoenas to compel attendance at depositions of persons having knowledge of the acts, omissions, or events that are the basis for

the proceedings, as well as the production of books, records, papers, and other documents.

(c) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2019.

SEC. 6. Section 3050.7 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

3050.7. (a) The board may adopt stipulated decisions and orders, without a hearing pursuant to Section 3066 or 3085.2, to resolve one or more issues raised by a protest or petition filed with the board. Whenever the parties to a protest or petition submit a proposed stipulated decision and order of the board, a copy of the proposed stipulated decision and order shall be transmitted by the executive director of the board to each member of the board. The proposed stipulated decision and order shall be deemed to be adopted by the board unless a member of the board notifies the executive director of the board of an objection thereto within 10 days after that board member has received a copy of the proposed stipulated decision and order.

(b) If the board adopts a stipulated decision and order to resolve a protest filed pursuant to Section 3060 or 3070 in which the parties stipulate that good cause exists for the termination of the franchise of the protestant, and the order provides for a conditional or unconditional termination of the franchise of the protestant, paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 3060 and paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 3070, which require a hearing to determine whether good cause exists for termination of the franchise, is inapplicable to the proceedings. If the stipulated decision and order provides for an unconditional termination of the franchise, the franchise may be terminated without further proceedings by the board. If the stipulated decision and order provides for the termination of the franchise, conditioned upon the failure of a party to comply with specified conditions, the franchise may be terminated upon a determination, according to the terms of the stipulated decision and order, that the conditions have not been met. If the stipulated decision and order provides for the termination of the franchise conditioned upon the occurrence of specified conditions, the franchise may be terminated upon a determination, according to the terms of the stipulated decision and order, that the stipulated conditions have occurred.

(c) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2019, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2019, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 6.1. Section 3050.7 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

3050.7. (a) The board may adopt stipulated decisions and orders, without a hearing pursuant to Section 3066, 3080, or 3085.2, to resolve one or more issues raised by a protest or petition filed with the board. Whenever the parties to a protest or petition submit a proposed stipulated decision and order of the board, a copy of the proposed stipulated decision and order shall be transmitted by the executive director of the board to each member of the board. The proposed stipulated decision and order shall be deemed to be adopted by the board unless a member of the board notifies the executive director of the board of an objection thereto within 10 days after that board member has received a copy of the proposed stipulated decision and order.

(b) If the board adopts a stipulated decision and order to resolve a protest filed pursuant to Section 3060 or 3070 in which the parties stipulate that good cause exists for the termination of the franchise of the protestant, and the order provides for a conditional or unconditional termination of the franchise of the protestant, paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 3060 and paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 3070, which require a hearing to determine whether good cause exists for termination of the franchise, is inapplicable to the proceedings. If the stipulated decision and order provides for an unconditional termination of the franchise, the franchise may be terminated without further proceedings by the board. If the stipulated decision and order provides for the termination of the franchise, conditioned upon the failure of a party to comply with specified conditions, the franchise may be terminated upon a determination, according to the terms of the stipulated decision and order, that the conditions have not been met. If the stipulated decision and order provides for the termination of the franchise conditioned upon the occurrence of specified conditions, the franchise may be terminated upon a determination, according to the terms of the stipulated decision and order, that the stipulated conditions have occurred.

(c) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2019, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2019, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 7. Section 3050.7 is added to the Vehicle Code, to read:

3050.7. (a) The board may adopt stipulated decisions and orders, without a hearing pursuant to Section 3066, to resolve one or more issues raised by a protest or petition filed with the board. Whenever the parties to a protest or petition submit a proposed stipulated decision and order of the board, a copy of the proposed stipulated decision and order shall be transmitted by the executive director of the board to each member of the board. The proposed stipulated decision and order shall be deemed to be adopted by the board unless a member of the board notifies the executive director of the board of an objection thereto within 10 days after that board member has received a copy of the proposed stipulated decision and order.

(b) If the board adopts a stipulated decision and order to resolve a protest filed pursuant to Section 3060 or 3070 in which the parties stipulate that good cause exists for the termination of the franchise of the protestant, and the order provides for a conditional or unconditional termination of the franchise of the protestant, paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 3060 and paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 3070, which require a hearing to determine whether good cause exists for termination of the franchise, is inapplicable to the proceedings. If the stipulated decision and order provides for an unconditional termination of the franchise, the franchise may be terminated without further proceedings by the board. If the stipulated decision and order provides for the termination of the franchise, conditioned upon the failure of a party to comply with specified conditions, the franchise may be terminated upon a determination, according to the terms of the stipulated decision and order, that the conditions have not been met. If the stipulated decision and order provides for the termination of the franchise conditioned upon the occurrence of specified conditions, the franchise may be terminated upon a determination, according to the terms of the stipulated decision and order, that the stipulated conditions have occurred.

(c) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2019.

SEC. 7.1. Section 3050.7 is added to the Vehicle Code, to read:

3050.7. (a) The board may adopt stipulated decisions and orders, without a hearing pursuant to Section 3066 or 3080, to resolve one or more issues raised by a protest or petition filed with the board. Whenever the parties to a protest or petition submit a proposed stipulated decision and order of the board, a copy of the proposed stipulated decision and order shall be transmitted by the executive director of the board to each member of the board. The proposed stipulated decision and order shall be deemed to be adopted by the board unless a member of the board notifies the executive director of the board of an objection thereto within 10 days after that board member has received a copy of the proposed stipulated decision and order.

(b) If the board adopts a stipulated decision and order to resolve a protest filed pursuant to Section 3060 or 3070 in which the parties stipulate that good cause exists for the termination of the franchise of the protestant, and the order provides for a conditional or unconditional termination of the franchise of the protestant, paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 3060 and paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 3070, which require a hearing to determine whether good cause exists for termination of the franchise, is inapplicable to the proceedings. If the stipulated decision and order provides for an unconditional termination of the franchise, the franchise may be terminated without further proceedings by the board. If the stipulated decision and order provides for the termination of the franchise, conditioned upon the failure of a party to comply with specified conditions, the franchise may be terminated upon a determination, according to the terms of the stipulated decision and order, that the conditions have not been met. If the stipulated decision and order provides for the termination of the franchise conditioned upon the occurrence of specified conditions, the franchise may be terminated upon a determination, according to the terms of the stipulated decision and order, that the stipulated conditions have occurred.

(c) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2019.

SEC. 8. Article 6 (commencing with Section 3085) is added to Chapter 6 of Division 2 of the Vehicle Code, to read:

Article 6. Export and Sale-for-Resale Prohibition Hearings

3085. (a) An association may bring a protest challenging the legality of an export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy of a manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch at any time on behalf of two or more dealers subject to the challenged policy pursuant to subdivision (y) of Section 11713.3.

(b) For the purpose of this article, an association is an organization primarily owned by, or comprised of, new motor vehicle dealers and that primarily represents the interests of dealers.

(c) Relief for a protest pursuant to this section is limited to a declaration that an export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy of a manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch violates the prohibitions of subdivision (y) of Section 11713.3. No monetary relief may be sought on behalf of the association or any dealers represented by the association.

(d) In a protest pursuant to this section, the association shall have the burden of proof to show that the challenged export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy violates subdivision (y) of Section 11713.3.

3085.2. (a) Upon receiving a protest pursuant to Section 3085, the board shall fix a time and place of hearing within 60 days, and shall send by certified mail a copy of the order to the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, distributor branch, the protesting association, and all individuals and groups that have requested notification by the board of protests and decisions of the board. The board or an administrative law judge designated by the board shall hear and consider the oral and documented evidence introduced by the parties and other interested individuals and groups, and the board shall make its decision solely on the record so made. Chapter 4.5 (commencing with Section 11400) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code and Sections 11507.3, 11507.6, 11507.7, 11511, 11511.5, 11513, 11514, 11515, and 11517 of the Government Code apply to these proceedings.

(b) In a hearing on a protest filed pursuant to Section 3085, the association shall have the burden of proof to establish a violation of the applicable section by the subject manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch.

(c) A member of the board who is a new motor vehicle dealer may not participate in, hear, comment, or advise other members

upon, or decide, a matter involving a protest filed pursuant to this article unless all parties to the protest stipulate otherwise.

3085.4. (a) The decision of the board shall be in writing and shall contain findings of fact and a determination of the issues presented. The decision shall sustain, conditionally sustain, overrule, or conditionally overrule the protest. Conditions imposed by the board shall be for the purpose of assuring performance of binding contractual agreements between franchisees and franchisors or otherwise serving the purposes of this article. The board shall act within 30 days after the hearing, within 30 days after the board receives a proposed decision when the case is heard before an administrative law judge alone, or within a period necessitated by Section 11517 of the Government Code, or as may be mutually agreed upon by the parties. Copies of the board's decision shall be delivered to the parties personally or sent to them by certified mail, as well as to all individuals and groups that have requested notification by the board of protests and decisions by the board. The board's decision shall be final upon its delivery or mailing and a reconsideration or rehearing is not permitted.

(b) Notwithstanding subdivision (c) of Section 11517 of the Government Code, if a protest is heard by an administrative law judge alone, 10 days after receipt by the board of the administrative law judge's proposed decision, a copy of the proposed decision shall be filed by the board as a public record and a copy shall be served by the board on each party and his or her attorney.

3085.6. Either party may seek judicial review of final decisions of the board. An appeal shall be filed within 45 days from the date on which the final order of the board is made public and is delivered to the parties personally or is sent to them by certified mail.

3085.8. The provisions of this article shall be applicable to any association which is primarily owned by or comprised of new motor vehicle dealers and acts on behalf of its new motor vehicle franchisees.

3085.10. This article shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2019, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2019, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 9. Section 11713.3 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

11713.3. It is unlawful and a violation of this code for a manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch licensed pursuant to this code to do, directly or indirectly through an affiliate, any of the following:

(a) To refuse or fail to deliver in reasonable quantities and within a reasonable time after receipt of an order from a dealer having a franchise for the retail sale of a new vehicle sold or distributed by the manufacturer or distributor, a new vehicle or parts or accessories to new vehicles as are covered by the franchise, if the vehicle, parts, or accessories are publicly advertised as being available for delivery or actually being delivered. This subdivision is not violated, however, if the failure is caused by acts or causes beyond the control of the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch.

(b) To prevent or require, or attempt to prevent or require, by contract or otherwise, a change in the capital structure of a dealership or the means by or through which the dealer finances the operation of the dealership, if the dealer at all times meets reasonable capital standards agreed to by the dealer and the manufacturer or distributor, and if a change in capital structure does not cause a change in the principal management or have the effect of a sale of the franchise without the consent of the manufacturer or distributor.

(c) To prevent or require, or attempt to prevent or require, a dealer to change the executive management of a dealership, other than the principal dealership operator or operators, if the franchise was granted to the dealer in reliance upon the personal qualifications of that person.

(d) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (t), to prevent or require, or attempt to prevent or require, by contract or otherwise, a dealer, or an officer, partner, or stockholder of a dealership, the sale or transfer of a part of the interest of any of them to another person. A dealer, officer, partner, or stockholder shall not, however, have the right to sell, transfer, or assign the franchise, or a right thereunder, without the consent of the manufacturer or distributor except that the consent shall not be unreasonably withheld.

(2) (A) For the transferring franchisee to fail, prior to the sale, transfer, or assignment of a franchisee or the sale, assignment, or transfer of all, or substantially all, of the assets of the franchised business or a controlling interest in the franchised business to

another person, to notify the manufacturer or distributor of the franchisee's decision to sell, transfer, or assign the franchise. The notice shall be in writing and shall include all of the following:

- (i) The proposed transferee's name and address.
- (ii) A copy of all of the agreements relating to the sale, assignment, or transfer of the franchised business or its assets.
- (iii) The proposed transferee's application for approval to become the successor franchisee. The application shall include forms and related information generally utilized by the manufacturer or distributor in reviewing prospective franchisees, if those forms are readily made available to existing franchisees. As soon as practicable after receipt of the proposed transferee's application, the manufacturer or distributor shall notify the franchisee and the proposed transferee of information needed to make the application complete.

(B) For the manufacturer or distributor, to fail, on or before 60 days after the receipt of all of the information required pursuant to subparagraph (A), or as extended by a written agreement between the manufacturer or distributor and the franchisee, to notify the franchisee of the approval or the disapproval of the sale, transfer, or assignment of the franchise. The notice shall be in writing and shall be personally served or sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by guaranteed overnight delivery service that provides verification of delivery and shall be directed to the franchisee. A proposed sale, assignment, or transfer shall be deemed approved, unless disapproved by the franchisor in the manner provided by this subdivision. If the proposed sale, assignment, or transfer is disapproved, the franchisor shall include in the notice of disapproval a statement setting forth the reasons for the disapproval.

(3) In an action in which the manufacturer's or distributor's withholding of consent under this subdivision or subdivision (e) is an issue, whether the withholding of consent was unreasonable is a question of fact requiring consideration of all the existing circumstances.

(e) To prevent, or attempt to prevent, a dealer from receiving fair and reasonable compensation for the value of the franchised business. There shall not be a transfer or assignment of the dealer's franchise without the consent of the manufacturer or distributor. The manufacturer or distributor shall not unreasonably withhold

consent or condition consent upon the release, assignment, novation, waiver, estoppel, or modification of a claim or defense by the dealer.

(f) To obtain money, goods, services, or another benefit from a person with whom the dealer does business, on account of, or in relation to, the transaction between the dealer and that other person, other than for compensation for services rendered, unless the benefit is promptly accounted for, and transmitted to, the dealer.

(g) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (3), to obtain from a dealer or enforce against a dealer an agreement, provision, release, assignment, novation, waiver, or estoppel that does any of the following:

(A) Modifies or disclaims a duty or obligation of a manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, distributor branch, or representative, or a right or privilege of a dealer, pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 11700) of Division 5 or Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 3000) of Division 2.

(B) Limits or constrains the right of a dealer to file, pursue, or submit evidence in connection with a protest before the board.

(C) Requires a dealer to terminate a franchise.

(D) Requires a controversy between a manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, distributor branch, or representative and a dealer to be referred to a person for a binding determination. However, this subparagraph does not prohibit arbitration before an independent arbitrator, provided that whenever a motor vehicle franchise contract provides for the use of arbitration to resolve a controversy arising out of, or relating to, that contract, arbitration may be used to settle the controversy only if, after the controversy arises, all parties to the controversy consent in writing to use arbitration to settle the controversy. For the purpose of this subparagraph, the terms “motor vehicle” and “motor vehicle franchise contract” shall have the same meaning as defined in Section 1226 of Title 15 of the United States Code. If arbitration is elected to settle a dispute under a motor vehicle franchise contract, the arbitrator shall provide the parties to the arbitration with a written explanation of the factual and legal basis for the award.

(2) An agreement, provision, release, assignment, novation, waiver, or estoppel prohibited by this subdivision shall be unenforceable and void.

(3) This subdivision does not do any of the following:

(A) Limit or restrict the terms upon which parties to a protest before the board, civil action, or other proceeding can settle or resolve, or stipulate to evidentiary or procedural matters during the course of, a protest, civil action, or other proceeding.

(B) Affect the enforceability of any stipulated order or other order entered by the board.

(C) Affect the enforceability of any provision in a contract if the provision is not prohibited under this subdivision or any other law.

(D) Affect the enforceability of a provision in any contract entered into on or before December 31, 2011.

(E) Prohibit a dealer from waiving its right to file a protest pursuant to Section 3065.1 if the waiver agreement is entered into after a franchisor incentive program claim has been disapproved by the franchisor and the waiver is voluntarily given as part of an agreement to settle that claim.

(F) Prohibit a voluntary agreement supported by valuable consideration, other than granting or renewing a franchise, that does both of the following:

(i) Provides that a dealer establish or maintain exclusive facilities, personnel, or display space or provides that a dealer make a material alteration, expansion, or addition to a dealership facility.

(ii) Contains no waiver or other provision prohibited by subparagraph (A), (B), (C), or (D) of paragraph (1).

(G) Prohibit an agreement separate from the franchise agreement that implements a dealer's election to terminate the franchise if the agreement is conditioned only on a specified time for termination or payment of consideration to the dealer.

(H) (i) Prohibit a voluntary waiver agreement, supported by valuable consideration, other than the consideration of renewing a franchise, to waive the right of a dealer to file a protest under Section 3062 for the proposed establishment or relocation of a specific proposed dealership, if the waiver agreement provides all of the following:

(I) The approximate address at which the proposed dealership will be located.

(II) The planning potential used to establish the proposed dealership's facility, personnel, and capital requirements.

(III) An approximation of projected vehicle and parts sales, and number of vehicles to be serviced at the proposed dealership.

(IV) Whether the franchisor or affiliate will hold an ownership interest in the proposed dealership or real property of the proposed dealership, and the approximate percentage of any franchisor or affiliate ownership interest in the proposed dealership.

(V) The line-makes to be operated at the proposed dealership.

(VI) If known at the time the waiver agreement is executed, the identity of the dealer who will operate the proposed dealership.

(VII) The date the waiver agreement is to expire, which may not be more than 30 months after the date of execution of the waiver agreement.

(ii) Notwithstanding the provisions of a waiver agreement entered into pursuant to the provisions of this subparagraph, a dealer may file a protest under Section 3062 if any of the information provided pursuant to clause (i) has become materially inaccurate since the waiver agreement was executed. Any determination of the enforceability of a waiver agreement shall be determined by the board and the franchisor shall have the burden of proof.

(h) To increase prices of motor vehicles that the dealer had ordered for private retail consumers prior to the dealer's receipt of the written official price increase notification. A sales contract signed by a private retail consumer is evidence of the order. In the event of manufacturer price reductions, the amount of the reduction received by a dealer shall be passed on to the private retail consumer by the dealer if the retail price was negotiated on the basis of the previous higher price to the dealer. Price reductions apply to all vehicles in the dealer's inventory that were subject to the price reduction. Price differences applicable to new model or series motor vehicles at the time of the introduction of new models or series shall not be considered a price increase or price decrease. This subdivision does not apply to price changes caused by either of the following:

(1) The addition to a motor vehicle of required or optional equipment pursuant to state or federal law.

(2) Revaluation of the United States dollar in the case of a foreign-make vehicle.

(i) To fail to pay to a dealer, within a reasonable time following receipt of a valid claim by a dealer thereof, a payment agreed to

be made by the manufacturer or distributor to the dealer by reason of the fact that a new vehicle of a prior year model is in the dealer's inventory at the time of introduction of new model vehicles.

(j) To deny the widow, widower, or heirs designated by a deceased owner of a dealership the opportunity to participate in the ownership of the dealership or successor dealership under a valid franchise for a reasonable time after the death of the owner.

(k) To offer refunds or other types of inducements to a person for the purchase of new motor vehicles of a certain line-make to be sold to the state or a political subdivision of the state without making the same offer to all other dealers in the same line-make within the relevant market area.

(l) To modify, replace, enter into, relocate, terminate, or refuse to renew a franchise in violation of Article 4 (commencing with Section 3060) of Chapter 6 of Division 2.

(m) To employ a person as a representative who has not been licensed pursuant to Article 3 (commencing with Section 11900) of Chapter 4 of Division 5.

(n) To deny a dealer the right of free association with another dealer for a lawful purpose.

(o) (1) To compete with a dealer in the same line-make operating under an agreement or franchise from a manufacturer or distributor in the relevant market area.

(2) A manufacturer, branch, or distributor, or an entity that controls or is controlled by a manufacturer, branch, or distributor, shall not, however, be deemed to be competing in the following limited circumstances:

(A) Owning or operating a dealership for a temporary period, not to exceed one year at the location of a former dealership of the same line-make that has been out of operation for less than six months. However, after a showing of good cause by a manufacturer, branch, or distributor that it needs additional time to operate a dealership in preparation for sale to a successor independent franchisee, the board may extend the time period.

(B) Owning an interest in a dealer as part of a bona fide dealer development program that satisfies all of the following requirements:

(i) The sole purpose of the program is to make franchises available to persons lacking capital, training, business experience, or other qualities ordinarily required of prospective franchisees

and the dealer development candidate is an individual who is unable to acquire the franchise without assistance of the program.

(ii) The dealer development candidate has made a significant investment subject to loss in the franchised business of the dealer.

(iii) The program requires the dealer development candidate to manage the day-to-day operations and business affairs of the dealer and to acquire, within a reasonable time and on reasonable terms and conditions, beneficial ownership and control of a majority interest in the dealer and disassociation of any direct or indirect ownership or control by the manufacturer, branch, or distributor.

(C) Owning a wholly owned subsidiary corporation of a distributor that sells motor vehicles at retail, if, for at least three years prior to January 1, 1973, the subsidiary corporation has been a wholly owned subsidiary of the distributor and engaged in the sale of vehicles at retail.

(3) (A) A manufacturer, branch, and distributor that owns or operates a dealership in the manner described in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2) shall give written notice to the board, within 10 days, each time it commences or terminates operation of a dealership and each time it acquires, changes, or divests itself of an ownership interest.

(B) A manufacturer, branch, and distributor that owns an interest in a dealer in the manner described in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2) shall give written notice to the board, annually, of the name and location of each dealer in which it has an ownership interest, the name of the bona fide dealer development owner or owners, and the ownership interests of each owner expressed as a percentage.

(p) To unfairly discriminate among its franchisees with respect to warranty reimbursement or authority granted to its franchisees to make warranty adjustments with retail customers.

(q) To sell vehicles to a person not licensed pursuant to this chapter for resale.

(r) To fail to affix an identification number to a park trailer, as described in Section 18009.3 of the Health and Safety Code, that is manufactured on or after January 1, 1987, and that does not clearly identify the unit as a park trailer to the department. The configuration of the identification number shall be approved by the department.

(s) To dishonor a warranty, rebate, or other incentive offered to the public or a dealer in connection with the retail sale of a new motor vehicle, based solely upon the fact that an autobroker arranged or negotiated the sale. This subdivision shall not prohibit the disallowance of that rebate or incentive if the purchaser or dealer is ineligible to receive the rebate or incentive pursuant to any other term or condition of a rebate or incentive program.

(t) To exercise a right of first refusal or other right requiring a franchisee or an owner of the franchise to sell, transfer, or assign to the franchisor, or to a nominee of the franchisor, all or a material part of the franchised business or of the assets of the franchised business unless all of the following requirements are met:

(1) The franchise authorizes the franchisor to exercise a right of first refusal to acquire the franchised business or assets of the franchised business in the event of a proposed sale, transfer, or assignment.

(2) The franchisor gives written notice of its exercise of the right of first refusal no later than 45 days after the franchisor receives all of the information required pursuant to subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2) of subdivision (d).

(3) The sale, transfer, or assignment being proposed relates to not less than all or substantially all of the assets of the franchised business or to a controlling interest in the franchised business.

(4) The proposed transferee is neither a family member of an owner of the franchised business, nor a managerial employee of the franchisee owning 15 percent or more of the franchised business, nor a corporation, partnership, or other legal entity owned by the existing owners of the franchised business. For purposes of this paragraph, a “family member” means the spouse of an owner of the franchised business, the child, grandchild, brother, sister, or parent of an owner, or a spouse of one of those family members. This paragraph does not limit the rights of the franchisor to disapprove a proposed transferee as provided in subdivision (d).

(5) Upon the franchisor’s exercise of the right of first refusal, the consideration paid by the franchisor to the franchisee and owners of the franchised business shall equal or exceed all consideration that each of them were to have received under the terms of, or in connection with, the proposed sale, assignment, or transfer, and the franchisor shall comply with all the terms and

conditions of the agreement or agreements to sell, transfer, or assign the franchised business.

(6) The franchisor shall reimburse the proposed transferee for expenses paid or incurred by the proposed transferee in evaluating, investigating, and negotiating the proposed transfer to the extent those expenses do not exceed the usual, customary, and reasonable fees charged for similar work done in the area in which the franchised business is located. These expenses include, but are not limited to, legal and accounting expenses, and expenses incurred for title reports and environmental or other investigations of real property on which the franchisee's operations are conducted. The proposed transferee shall provide the franchisor a written itemization of those expenses, and a copy of all nonprivileged reports and studies for which expenses were incurred, if any, within 30 days of the proposed transferee's receipt of a written request from the franchisor for that accounting. The franchisor shall make payment within 30 days of exercising the right of first refusal.

(u) (1) To unfairly discriminate in favor of a dealership owned or controlled, in whole or in part, by a manufacturer or distributor or an entity that controls or is controlled by the manufacturer or distributor. Unfair discrimination includes, but is not limited to, the following:

(A) The furnishing to a franchisee or dealer that is owned or controlled, in whole or in part, by a manufacturer, branch, or distributor of any of the following:

(i) A vehicle that is not made available to each franchisee pursuant to a reasonable allocation formula that is applied uniformly, and a part or accessory that is not made available to all franchisees on an equal basis when there is no reasonable allocation formula that is applied uniformly.

(ii) A vehicle, part, or accessory that is not made available to each franchisee on comparable delivery terms, including the time of delivery after the placement of an order. Differences in delivery terms due to geographic distances or other factors beyond the control of the manufacturer, branch, or distributor shall not constitute unfair competition.

(iii) Information obtained from a franchisee by the manufacturer, branch, or distributor concerning the business affairs or operations of a franchisee in which the manufacturer, branch, or distributor does not have an ownership interest. The information includes,

but is not limited to, information contained in financial statements and operating reports, the name, address, or other personal information or buying, leasing, or service behavior of a dealer customer, and other information that, if provided to a franchisee or dealer owned or controlled by a manufacturer or distributor, would give that franchisee or dealer a competitive advantage. This clause does not apply if the information is provided pursuant to a subpoena or court order, or to aggregated information made available to all franchisees.

(iv) Sales or service incentives, discounts, or promotional programs that are not made available to all California franchises of the same line-make on an equal basis.

(B) Referring a prospective purchaser or lessee to a dealer in which a manufacturer, branch, or distributor has an ownership interest, unless the prospective purchaser or lessee resides in the area of responsibility assigned to that dealer or the prospective purchaser or lessee requests to be referred to that dealer.

(2) This subdivision does not prohibit a franchisor from granting a franchise to prospective franchisees or assisting those franchisees during the course of the franchise relationship as part of a program or programs to make franchises available to persons lacking capital, training, business experience, or other qualifications ordinarily required of prospective franchisees.

(v) (1) To access, modify, or extract information from a confidential dealer computer record, as defined in Section 11713.25, without obtaining the prior written consent of the dealer and without maintaining administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to protect the security, confidentiality, and integrity of the information.

(2) Paragraph (1) does not limit a duty that a dealer may have to safeguard the security and privacy of records maintained by the dealer.

(w) (1) To use electronic, contractual, or other means to prevent or interfere with any of the following:

(A) The lawful efforts of a dealer to comply with federal and state data security and privacy laws.

(B) The ability of a dealer to do either of the following:

(i) Ensure that specific data accessed from the dealer's computer system is within the scope of consent specified in subdivision (v).

(ii) Monitor specific data accessed from or written to the dealer's computer system.

(2) Paragraph (1) does not limit a duty that a dealer may have to safeguard the security and privacy of records maintained by the dealer.

(x) (1) To unfairly discriminate against a franchisee selling a service contract, debt cancellation agreement, maintenance agreement, or similar product not approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate. For purposes of this subdivision, unfair discrimination includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

(A) Express or implied statements that the dealer is under an obligation to exclusively sell or offer to sell service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, or similar products approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate.

(B) Express or implied statements that selling or offering to sell service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, maintenance agreements, or similar products not approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate, or the failure to sell or offer to sell service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, maintenance agreements, or similar products approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate will have any negative consequences for the dealer.

(C) Measuring a dealer's performance under a franchise agreement based upon the sale of service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, or similar products approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate.

(D) Requiring a dealer to actively promote the sale of service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, or similar products approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate.

(E) Conditioning access to vehicles or parts, or vehicle sales or service incentives upon the sale of service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, or similar products approved, endorsed,

sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate.

(2) Unfair discrimination does not include, and nothing shall prohibit a manufacturer from, offering an incentive program to vehicle dealers who voluntarily sell or offer to sell service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, or similar products approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate, if the program does not provide vehicle sales or service incentives.

(3) This subdivision does not prohibit a manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch from requiring a franchisee that sells a used vehicle as “certified” under a certified used vehicle program established by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch to provide a service contract approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch.

(4) Unfair discrimination does not include, and nothing shall prohibit a franchisor from requiring a franchisee to provide, the following notice prior to the sale of the service contract if the service contract is not provided or backed by the franchisor and the vehicle is of the franchised line-make:

“Service Contract Disclosure

The service contract you are purchasing is not provided or backed by the manufacturer of the vehicle you are purchasing. The manufacturer of the vehicle is not responsible for claims or repairs under this service contract.

Signature of Purchaser”

(y) (1) To take or threaten to take any adverse action against a dealer pursuant to an export or sale-for-resale prohibition because the dealer sold or leased a vehicle to a customer who either exported the vehicle to a foreign country or resold the vehicle in violation of the prohibition, unless the export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy was provided to the dealer in writing at least 48 hours before the sale or lease of the vehicle, and the dealer knew or reasonably should have known of the customer’s intent to export or resell the vehicle in violation of the prohibition. If the dealer

causes the vehicle to be registered in this or any other state, and collects or causes to be collected any applicable sales or use tax due to this state, a rebuttable presumption is established that the dealer did not have reason to know of the customer's intent to export or resell the vehicle. In a proceeding in which a challenge to an adverse action is at issue, the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch shall have the burden of proof by a preponderance of the evidence to show that the vehicle was exported or resold in violation of an export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy, that the prohibition policy was provided to the dealer in writing at least 48 hours prior to the sale or lease, and that the dealer knew or reasonably should have known of the customer's intent to export the vehicle to a foreign country at the time of the sale or lease.

(2) An export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy shall not include a provision that expressly or implicitly requires a dealer to make further inquiries into a customer's intent, identity, or financial ability to purchase or lease a vehicle based on any of the customer's characteristics listed or defined in Section 51 of the Civil Code. A policy that is in violation of this paragraph is void and unenforceable.

(3) An export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy shall expressly include a provision stating the dealer's rebuttable presumption if the dealer causes the vehicle to be registered in this or any other state and collects or causes to be collected any applicable sales or use tax. A policy that is in violation of this paragraph is void and unenforceable.

(z) As used in this section, "area of responsibility" means a geographic area specified in a franchise that is used by the franchisor for the purpose of evaluating the franchisee's performance of its sales and service obligations.

SEC. 9.1. Section 11713.3 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

11713.3. It is unlawful and a violation of this code for a manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch licensed pursuant to this code to do, directly or indirectly through an affiliate, any of the following:

(a) To refuse or fail to deliver in reasonable quantities and within a reasonable time after receipt of an order from a dealer having a franchise for the retail sale of a new vehicle sold or distributed by

the manufacturer or distributor, a new vehicle or parts or accessories to new vehicles as are covered by the franchise, if the vehicle, parts, or accessories are publicly advertised as being available for delivery or actually being delivered. This subdivision is not violated, however, if the failure is caused by acts or causes beyond the control of the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch.

(b) To prevent or require, or attempt to prevent or require, by contract or otherwise, a change in the capital structure of a dealership or the means by or through which the dealer finances the operation of the dealership, if the dealer at all times meets reasonable capital standards agreed to by the dealer and the manufacturer or distributor, and if a change in capital structure does not cause a change in the principal management or have the effect of a sale of the franchise without the consent of the manufacturer or distributor.

(c) To prevent or require, or attempt to prevent or require, a dealer to change the executive management of a dealership, other than the principal dealership operator or operators, if the franchise was granted to the dealer in reliance upon the personal qualifications of that person.

(d) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (t), to prevent or require, or attempt to prevent or require, by contract or otherwise, a dealer, or an officer, partner, or stockholder of a dealership, the sale or transfer of a part of the interest of any of them to another person. A dealer, officer, partner, or stockholder shall not, however, have the right to sell, transfer, or assign the franchise, or a right thereunder, without the consent of the manufacturer or distributor except that the consent shall not be unreasonably withheld.

(2) (A) For the transferring franchisee to fail, prior to the sale, transfer, or assignment of a franchisee or the sale, assignment, or transfer of all, or substantially all, of the assets of the franchised business or a controlling interest in the franchised business to another person, to notify the manufacturer or distributor of the franchisee's decision to sell, transfer, or assign the franchise. The notice shall be in writing and shall include all of the following:

- (i) The proposed transferee's name and address.
- (ii) A copy of all of the agreements relating to the sale, assignment, or transfer of the franchised business or its assets.

(iii) The proposed transferee's application for approval to become the successor franchisee. The application shall include forms and related information generally utilized by the manufacturer or distributor in reviewing prospective franchisees, if those forms are readily made available to existing franchisees. As soon as practicable after receipt of the proposed transferee's application, the manufacturer or distributor shall notify the franchisee and the proposed transferee of information needed to make the application complete.

(B) For the manufacturer or distributor, to fail, on or before 60 days after the receipt of all of the information required pursuant to subparagraph (A), or as extended by a written agreement between the manufacturer or distributor and the franchisee, to notify the franchisee of the approval or the disapproval of the sale, transfer, or assignment of the franchise. The notice shall be in writing and shall be personally served or sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by guaranteed overnight delivery service that provides verification of delivery and shall be directed to the franchisee. A proposed sale, assignment, or transfer shall be deemed approved, unless disapproved by the franchisor in the manner provided by this subdivision. If the proposed sale, assignment, or transfer is disapproved, the franchisor shall include in the notice of disapproval a statement setting forth the reasons for the disapproval.

(3) In an action in which the manufacturer's or distributor's withholding of consent under this subdivision or subdivision (e) is an issue, whether the withholding of consent was unreasonable is a question of fact requiring consideration of all the existing circumstances.

(e) To prevent, or attempt to prevent, a dealer from receiving fair and reasonable compensation for the value of the franchised business. There shall not be a transfer or assignment of the dealer's franchise without the consent of the manufacturer or distributor. The manufacturer or distributor shall not unreasonably withhold consent or condition consent upon the release, assignment, novation, waiver, estoppel, or modification of a claim or defense by the dealer.

(f) To obtain money, goods, services, or another benefit from a person with whom the dealer does business, on account of, or in relation to, the transaction between the dealer and that other person,

other than for compensation for services rendered, unless the benefit is promptly accounted for, and transmitted to, the dealer.

(g) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (3), to obtain from a dealer or enforce against a dealer an agreement, provision, release, assignment, novation, waiver, or estoppel that does any of the following:

(A) Modifies or disclaims a duty or obligation of a manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, distributor branch, or representative, or a right or privilege of a dealer, pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 11700) of Division 5 or Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 3000) of Division 2.

(B) Limits or constrains the right of a dealer to file, pursue, or submit evidence in connection with a protest before the board.

(C) Requires a dealer to terminate a franchise.

(D) Requires a controversy between a manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, distributor branch, or representative and a dealer to be referred to a person for a binding determination. However, this subparagraph does not prohibit arbitration before an independent arbitrator, provided that whenever a motor vehicle franchise contract provides for the use of arbitration to resolve a controversy arising out of, or relating to, that contract, arbitration may be used to settle the controversy only if, after the controversy arises, all parties to the controversy consent in writing to use arbitration to settle the controversy. For the purpose of this subparagraph, the terms “motor vehicle” and “motor vehicle franchise contract” shall have the same meaning as defined in Section 1226 of Title 15 of the United States Code. If arbitration is elected to settle a dispute under a motor vehicle franchise contract, the arbitrator shall provide the parties to the arbitration with a written explanation of the factual and legal basis for the award.

(2) An agreement, provision, release, assignment, novation, waiver, or estoppel prohibited by this subdivision shall be unenforceable and void.

(3) This subdivision does not do any of the following:

(A) Limit or restrict the terms upon which parties to a protest before the board, civil action, or other proceeding can settle or resolve, or stipulate to evidentiary or procedural matters during the course of, a protest, civil action, or other proceeding.

(B) Affect the enforceability of any stipulated order or other order entered by the board.

(C) Affect the enforceability of any provision in a contract if the provision is not prohibited under this subdivision or any other law.

(D) Affect the enforceability of a provision in any contract entered into on or before December 31, 2011.

(E) Prohibit a dealer from waiving its right to file a protest pursuant to Section 3065.1 if the waiver agreement is entered into after a franchisor incentive program claim has been disapproved by the franchisor and the waiver is voluntarily given as part of an agreement to settle that claim.

(F) Prohibit a voluntary agreement supported by valuable consideration, other than granting or renewing a franchise, that does both of the following:

(i) Provides that a dealer establish or maintain exclusive facilities, personnel, or display space or provides that a dealer make a material alteration, expansion, or addition to a dealership facility.

(ii) Contains no waiver or other provision prohibited by subparagraph (A), (B), (C), or (D) of paragraph (1).

(G) Prohibit an agreement separate from the franchise agreement that implements a dealer's election to terminate the franchise if the agreement is conditioned only on a specified time for termination or payment of consideration to the dealer.

(H) (i) Prohibit a voluntary waiver agreement, supported by valuable consideration, other than the consideration of renewing a franchise, to waive the right of a dealer to file a protest under Section 3062 for the proposed establishment or relocation of a specific proposed dealership, if the waiver agreement provides all of the following:

(I) The approximate address at which the proposed dealership will be located.

(II) The planning potential used to establish the proposed dealership's facility, personnel, and capital requirements.

(III) An approximation of projected vehicle and parts sales, and number of vehicles to be serviced at the proposed dealership.

(IV) Whether the franchisor or affiliate will hold an ownership interest in the proposed dealership or real property of the proposed

dealership, and the approximate percentage of any franchisor or affiliate ownership interest in the proposed dealership.

(V) The line-makes to be operated at the proposed dealership.

(VI) If known at the time the waiver agreement is executed, the identity of the dealer who will operate the proposed dealership.

(VII) The date the waiver agreement is to expire, which may not be more than 30 months after the date of execution of the waiver agreement.

(ii) Notwithstanding the provisions of a waiver agreement entered into pursuant to the provisions of this subparagraph, a dealer may file a protest under Section 3062 if any of the information provided pursuant to clause (i) has become materially inaccurate since the waiver agreement was executed. Any determination of the enforceability of a waiver agreement shall be determined by the board and the franchisor shall have the burden of proof.

(h) To increase prices of motor vehicles that the dealer had ordered for private retail consumers prior to the dealer's receipt of the written official price increase notification. A sales contract signed by a private retail consumer is evidence of the order. In the event of manufacturer price reductions, the amount of the reduction received by a dealer shall be passed on to the private retail consumer by the dealer if the retail price was negotiated on the basis of the previous higher price to the dealer. Price reductions apply to all vehicles in the dealer's inventory that were subject to the price reduction. Price differences applicable to new model or series motor vehicles at the time of the introduction of new models or series shall not be considered a price increase or price decrease. This subdivision does not apply to price changes caused by either of the following:

(1) The addition to a motor vehicle of required or optional equipment pursuant to state or federal law.

(2) Revaluation of the United States dollar in the case of a foreign-make vehicle.

(i) To fail to pay to a dealer, within a reasonable time following receipt of a valid claim by a dealer thereof, a payment agreed to be made by the manufacturer or distributor to the dealer by reason of the fact that a new vehicle of a prior year model is in the dealer's inventory at the time of introduction of new model vehicles.

(j) To deny the widow, widower, or heirs designated by a deceased owner of a dealership the opportunity to participate in the ownership of the dealership or successor dealership under a valid franchise for a reasonable time after the death of the owner.

(k) To offer refunds or other types of inducements to a person for the purchase of new motor vehicles of a certain line-make to be sold to the state or a political subdivision of the state without making the same offer to all other dealers in the same line-make within the relevant market area.

(l) To modify, replace, enter into, relocate, terminate, or refuse to renew a franchise in violation of Article 4 (commencing with Section 3060) or Article 5 (commencing with Section 3070) of Chapter 6 of Division 2.

(m) To employ a person as a representative who has not been licensed pursuant to Article 3 (commencing with Section 11900) of Chapter 4 of Division 5.

(n) To deny a dealer the right of free association with another dealer for a lawful purpose.

(o) (1) To compete with a dealer in the same line-make operating under an agreement or franchise from a manufacturer or distributor in the relevant market area.

(2) A manufacturer, branch, or distributor, or an entity that controls or is controlled by a manufacturer, branch, or distributor, shall not, however, be deemed to be competing in the following limited circumstances:

(A) Owning or operating a dealership for a temporary period, not to exceed one year at the location of a former dealership of the same line-make that has been out of operation for less than six months. However, after a showing of good cause by a manufacturer, branch, or distributor that it needs additional time to operate a dealership in preparation for sale to a successor independent franchisee, the board may extend the time period.

(B) Owning an interest in a dealer as part of a bona fide dealer development program that satisfies all of the following requirements:

(i) The sole purpose of the program is to make franchises available to persons lacking capital, training, business experience, or other qualities ordinarily required of prospective franchisees and the dealer development candidate is an individual who is unable to acquire the franchise without assistance of the program.

(ii) The dealer development candidate has made a significant investment subject to loss in the franchised business of the dealer.

(iii) The program requires the dealer development candidate to manage the day-to-day operations and business affairs of the dealer and to acquire, within a reasonable time and on reasonable terms and conditions, beneficial ownership and control of a majority interest in the dealer and disassociation of any direct or indirect ownership or control by the manufacturer, branch, or distributor.

(C) Owning a wholly owned subsidiary corporation of a distributor that sells motor vehicles at retail, if, for at least three years prior to January 1, 1973, the subsidiary corporation has been a wholly owned subsidiary of the distributor and engaged in the sale of vehicles at retail.

(3) (A) A manufacturer, branch, and distributor that owns or operates a dealership in the manner described in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2) shall give written notice to the board, within 10 days, each time it commences or terminates operation of a dealership and each time it acquires, changes, or divests itself of an ownership interest.

(B) A manufacturer, branch, and distributor that owns an interest in a dealer in the manner described in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2) shall give written notice to the board, annually, of the name and location of each dealer in which it has an ownership interest, the name of the bona fide dealer development owner or owners, and the ownership interests of each owner expressed as a percentage.

(p) To unfairly discriminate among its franchisees with respect to warranty reimbursement or authority granted to its franchisees to make warranty adjustments with retail customers.

(q) To sell vehicles to a person not licensed pursuant to this chapter for resale.

(r) To fail to affix an identification number to a park trailer, as described in Section 18009.3 of the Health and Safety Code, that is manufactured on or after January 1, 1987, and that does not clearly identify the unit as a park trailer to the department. The configuration of the identification number shall be approved by the department.

(s) To dishonor a warranty, rebate, or other incentive offered to the public or a dealer in connection with the retail sale of a new motor vehicle, based solely upon the fact that an autobroker

arranged or negotiated the sale. This subdivision shall not prohibit the disallowance of that rebate or incentive if the purchaser or dealer is ineligible to receive the rebate or incentive pursuant to any other term or condition of a rebate or incentive program.

(t) To exercise a right of first refusal or other right requiring a franchisee or an owner of the franchise to sell, transfer, or assign to the franchisor, or to a nominee of the franchisor, all or a material part of the franchised business or of the assets of the franchised business unless all of the following requirements are met:

(1) The franchise authorizes the franchisor to exercise a right of first refusal to acquire the franchised business or assets of the franchised business in the event of a proposed sale, transfer, or assignment.

(2) The franchisor gives written notice of its exercise of the right of first refusal no later than 45 days after the franchisor receives all of the information required pursuant to subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2) of subdivision (d).

(3) The sale, transfer, or assignment being proposed relates to not less than all or substantially all of the assets of the franchised business or to a controlling interest in the franchised business.

(4) The proposed transferee is neither a family member of an owner of the franchised business, nor a managerial employee of the franchisee owning 15 percent or more of the franchised business, nor a corporation, partnership, or other legal entity owned by the existing owners of the franchised business. For purposes of this paragraph, a “family member” means the spouse of an owner of the franchised business, the child, grandchild, brother, sister, or parent of an owner, or a spouse of one of those family members. This paragraph does not limit the rights of the franchisor to disapprove a proposed transferee as provided in subdivision (d).

(5) Upon the franchisor’s exercise of the right of first refusal, the consideration paid by the franchisor to the franchisee and owners of the franchised business shall equal or exceed all consideration that each of them were to have received under the terms of, or in connection with, the proposed sale, assignment, or transfer, and the franchisor shall comply with all the terms and conditions of the agreement or agreements to sell, transfer, or assign the franchised business.

(6) The franchisor shall reimburse the proposed transferee for expenses paid or incurred by the proposed transferee in evaluating,

investigating, and negotiating the proposed transfer to the extent those expenses do not exceed the usual, customary, and reasonable fees charged for similar work done in the area in which the franchised business is located. These expenses include, but are not limited to, legal and accounting expenses, and expenses incurred for title reports and environmental or other investigations of real property on which the franchisee's operations are conducted. The proposed transferee shall provide the franchisor a written itemization of those expenses, and a copy of all nonprivileged reports and studies for which expenses were incurred, if any, within 30 days of the proposed transferee's receipt of a written request from the franchisor for that accounting. The franchisor shall make payment within 30 days of exercising the right of first refusal.

(u) (1) To unfairly discriminate in favor of a dealership owned or controlled, in whole or in part, by a manufacturer or distributor or an entity that controls or is controlled by the manufacturer or distributor. Unfair discrimination includes, but is not limited to, the following:

(A) The furnishing to a franchisee or dealer that is owned or controlled, in whole or in part, by a manufacturer, branch, or distributor of any of the following:

(i) A vehicle that is not made available to each franchisee pursuant to a reasonable allocation formula that is applied uniformly, and a part or accessory that is not made available to all franchisees on an equal basis when there is no reasonable allocation formula that is applied uniformly.

(ii) A vehicle, part, or accessory that is not made available to each franchisee on comparable delivery terms, including the time of delivery after the placement of an order. Differences in delivery terms due to geographic distances or other factors beyond the control of the manufacturer, branch, or distributor shall not constitute unfair competition.

(iii) Information obtained from a franchisee by the manufacturer, branch, or distributor concerning the business affairs or operations of a franchisee in which the manufacturer, branch, or distributor does not have an ownership interest. The information includes, but is not limited to, information contained in financial statements and operating reports, the name, address, or other personal information or buying, leasing, or service behavior of a dealer customer, and other information that, if provided to a franchisee

or dealer owned or controlled by a manufacturer or distributor, would give that franchisee or dealer a competitive advantage. This clause does not apply if the information is provided pursuant to a subpoena or court order, or to aggregated information made available to all franchisees.

(iv) Sales or service incentives, discounts, or promotional programs that are not made available to all California franchises of the same line-make on an equal basis.

(B) Referring a prospective purchaser or lessee to a dealer in which a manufacturer, branch, or distributor has an ownership interest, unless the prospective purchaser or lessee resides in the area of responsibility assigned to that dealer or the prospective purchaser or lessee requests to be referred to that dealer.

(2) This subdivision does not prohibit a franchisor from granting a franchise to prospective franchisees or assisting those franchisees during the course of the franchise relationship as part of a program or programs to make franchises available to persons lacking capital, training, business experience, or other qualifications ordinarily required of prospective franchisees.

(v) (1) To access, modify, or extract information from a confidential dealer computer record, as defined in Section 11713.25, without obtaining the prior written consent of the dealer and without maintaining administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to protect the security, confidentiality, and integrity of the information.

(2) Paragraph (1) does not limit a duty that a dealer may have to safeguard the security and privacy of records maintained by the dealer.

(w) (1) To use electronic, contractual, or other means to prevent or interfere with any of the following:

(A) The lawful efforts of a dealer to comply with federal and state data security and privacy laws.

(B) The ability of a dealer to do either of the following:

(i) Ensure that specific data accessed from the dealer's computer system is within the scope of consent specified in subdivision (v).

(ii) Monitor specific data accessed from or written to the dealer's computer system.

(2) Paragraph (1) does not limit a duty that a dealer may have to safeguard the security and privacy of records maintained by the dealer.

(x) (1) To unfairly discriminate against a franchisee selling a service contract, debt cancellation agreement, maintenance agreement, or similar product not approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate. For purposes of this subdivision, unfair discrimination includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

(A) Express or implied statements that the dealer is under an obligation to exclusively sell or offer to sell service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, or similar products approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate.

(B) Express or implied statements that selling or offering to sell service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, maintenance agreements, or similar products not approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate, or the failure to sell or offer to sell service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, maintenance agreements, or similar products approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate will have any negative consequences for the dealer.

(C) Measuring a dealer's performance under a franchise agreement based upon the sale of service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, or similar products approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate.

(D) Requiring a dealer to actively promote the sale of service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, or similar products approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate.

(E) Conditioning access to vehicles or parts, or vehicle sales or service incentives upon the sale of service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, or similar products approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate.

(2) Unfair discrimination does not include, and nothing shall prohibit a manufacturer from, offering an incentive program to vehicle dealers who voluntarily sell or offer to sell service contracts, debt cancellation agreements, or similar products

approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch or affiliate, if the program does not provide vehicle sales or service incentives.

(3) This subdivision does not prohibit a manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch from requiring a franchisee that sells a used vehicle as “certified” under a certified used vehicle program established by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch to provide a service contract approved, endorsed, sponsored, or offered by the manufacturer, manufacturer branch, distributor, or distributor branch.

(4) Unfair discrimination does not include, and nothing shall prohibit a franchisor from requiring a franchisee to provide, the following notice prior to the sale of the service contract if the service contract is not provided or backed by the franchisor and the vehicle is of the franchised line-make:

“Service Contract Disclosure

The service contract you are purchasing is not provided or backed by the manufacturer of the vehicle you are purchasing. The manufacturer of the vehicle is not responsible for claims or repairs under this service contract.

Signature of Purchaser”

(y) (1) To take or threaten to take any adverse action against a dealer pursuant to an export or sale-for-resale prohibition because the dealer sold or leased a vehicle to a customer who either exported the vehicle to a foreign country or resold the vehicle in violation of the prohibition, unless the export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy was provided to the dealer in writing at least 48 hours before the sale or lease of the vehicle, and the dealer knew or reasonably should have known of the customer’s intent to export or resell the vehicle in violation of the prohibition. If the dealer causes the vehicle to be registered in this or any other state, and collects or causes to be collected any applicable sales or use tax due to this state, a rebuttable presumption is established that the dealer did not have reason to know of the customer’s intent to export or resell the vehicle. In a proceeding in which a challenge to an adverse action is at issue, the manufacturer, manufacturer

branch, distributor, or distributor branch shall have the burden of proof by a preponderance of the evidence to show that the vehicle was exported or resold in violation of an export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy, that the prohibition policy was provided to the dealer in writing at least 48 hours prior to the sale or lease, and that the dealer knew or reasonably should have known of the customer's intent to export the vehicle to a foreign country at the time of the sale or lease.

(2) An export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy shall not include a provision that expressly or implicitly requires a dealer to make further inquiries into a customer's intent, identity, or financial ability to purchase or lease a vehicle based on any of the customer's characteristics listed or defined in Section 51 of the Civil Code. A policy that is in violation of this paragraph is void and unenforceable.

(3) An export or sale-for-resale prohibition policy shall expressly include a provision stating the dealer's rebuttable presumption if the dealer causes the vehicle to be registered in this or any other state and collects or causes to be collected any applicable sales or use tax. A policy that is in violation of this paragraph is void and unenforceable.

(z) As used in this section, "area of responsibility" means a geographic area specified in a franchise that is used by the franchisor for the purpose of evaluating the franchisee's performance of its sales and service obligations.

SEC. 10. (a) Sections 6.1 and 7.1 of this bill incorporates changes to Section 3050.7 of the Vehicle Code proposed by both this bill and Assembly Bill 759. These sections shall only become operative if (1) both bills are enacted and become effective on or before January 1, 2016, (2) each bill amends or adds Section 3050.7 of the Vehicle Code, and (3) this bill is enacted after Assembly Bill 759, in which case Sections 6 and 7 of this bill shall not become operative.

(b) Section 9.1 of this bill incorporates amendments to Section 11713.3 of the Vehicle Code proposed by both this bill and Assembly Bill 759. It shall only become operative if (1) both bills are enacted and become effective on or before January 1, 2016, (2) each bill amends Section 11713.3 of the Vehicle Code, and (3) this bill is enacted after Assembly Bill 759, in which case Section 9 of this bill shall not become operative.

SEC. 11. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.

Approved _____, 2015

Governor