

Senate Bill No. 690

CHAPTER 356

An act to amend Sections 3050 and 3066 of the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

[Approved by Governor August 25, 1997. Filed with Secretary of State August 26, 1997.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 690, Polanco. Vehicles: Department of Motor Vehicles: New Motor Vehicle Board.

Existing law creates within the Department of Motor Vehicles a New Motor Vehicle Board, which adjudicates disputes between new motor vehicle franchisees and their respective franchisors and hears appeals on decisions of the department affecting new motor vehicle dealers. The board also mediates disputes between consumers of new motor vehicles and the vehicle dealers, distributors, and manufacturers.

This bill would revise procedures applicable to the board's proceedings.

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

SECTION 1. 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 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, or 3065.1. 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.

SEC. 2. Section 3066 of the Vehicle Code, as amended by Section 89 of Chapter 938 of the Statutes of 1995, is amended to read:

3066. (a) Upon receiving a notice of protest pursuant to Section 3060, 3062, 3064, 3065, or 3065.1, the board shall fix a time, which shall be within 60 days of the order, and place of hearing, and shall send by registered mail a copy of the order to the franchisor, the protesting franchisee, and all individuals and groups which have requested notification by the board of protests and decisions of the board. Except in any case involving a franchisee who deals exclusively in motorcycles, the board or its secretary may, upon a showing of good cause, accelerate or postpone the date initially established for a hearing, but in no event shall the hearing be rescheduled more than 90 days after the board's initial order. For the purpose of accelerating or postponing a hearing date, "good cause" includes, but is not limited to, the effects upon, and any irreparable harm to, the parties or interested persons or groups if the request for a change in hearing



date is not granted. The board, or a hearing officer 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, 11513, 11514, 11515, and 11517 of the Government Code apply to these proceedings.

(b) In any hearing on a protest filed pursuant to Section 3060 or 3062, the franchisor shall have the burden of proof to establish that there is good cause to modify, replace, terminate, or refuse to continue a franchise. The franchisee shall have the burden of proof to establish that there is good cause not to enter into a franchise establishing or relocating an additional motor vehicle dealership.

(c) In any hearing on a protest alleging a violation of, or filed pursuant to, Section 3064, 3065, or 3065.1, the franchisee shall have the burden of proof.

(d) 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, any matter involving a protest filed pursuant to this article.

