1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA 2 1st Session of the 58th Legislature (2021) 3 SENATE BILL 901 By: Leewright 4 5 6 AS INTRODUCED 7 An Act relating to motor vehicle dealers and factories; amending 47 O.S. 2011, Section 565, as 8 last amended by Section 2, Chapter 79, O.S.L. 2019 (47 O.S. Supp. 2020, Section 565), which relates to 9 denial, revocation or suspension of licenses and penalties; prohibiting denial or chargeback of a 10 certain claim for failure of certain purchasers to obtain title or registration; and providing an 11 effective date. 12 13 14 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA: 15 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 47 O.S. 2011, Section 565, as last 16 amended by Section 2, Chapter 79, O.S.L. 2019 (47 O.S. Supp. 2020, 17 Section 565), is amended to read as follows: 18 Section 565. A. The Oklahoma Motor Vehicle Commission may deny 19 an application for a license, or revoke or suspend a license or 20 impose a fine not to exceed Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) 21 against a manufacturer or distributor or a fine not to exceed One 22 Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) against a dealer per occurrence that

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of this title is violated or for any of the following reasons:

any provision of Sections 561 through 567, 572, 578.1, 579 and 579.1

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- 1. On satisfactory proof of unfitness of the applicant in any application for any license under the provisions of Section 561 et seq. of this title;
- 2. For any material misstatement made by an applicant in any application for any license under the provisions of Section 561 et seq. of this title;
- 3. For any failure to comply with any provision of Section 561 et seq. of this title or any rule promulgated by the Commission under authority vested in it by Section 561 et seq. of this title;
- 4. A change of condition after license is granted resulting in failure to maintain the qualifications for license;
 - 5. Being a new motor vehicle dealer who:
 - a. has required a purchaser of a new motor vehicle, as a condition of sale and delivery thereof, to also purchase special features, appliances, accessories or equipment not desired or requested by the purchaser and installed by the dealer,
 - uses any false or misleading advertising in connection
 with business as a new motor vehicle dealer,
 - c. has committed any unlawful act which resulted in the revocation of any similar license in another state,
 - d. has failed or refused to perform any written agreement with any retail buyer involving the sale of a motor vehicle,

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- e. has been convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude,
- f. has committed a fraudulent act in selling, purchasing or otherwise dealing in new motor vehicles or has misrepresented the terms and conditions of a sale, purchase or contract for sale or purchase of a new motor vehicle or any interest therein including an option to purchase such vehicle,
- g. has failed to meet or maintain the conditions and requirements necessary to qualify for the issuance of a license, or
- h. completes any sale or transaction of an extended service contract, extended maintenance plan, or similar product using contract forms that do not conspicuously disclose the identity of the service contract provider;
- 6. Being a new motor vehicle salesperson who is not employed as such by a licensed new motor vehicle dealer;
 - 7. Being a new motor vehicle dealer who:
 - a. does not have an established place of business,
 - b. does not provide for a suitable repair shop separate from the display room with ample space to repair or recondition one or more vehicles at the same time, and which is equipped with such parts, tools and equipment

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as may be requisite for the servicing of motor vehicles in such a manner as to make them comply with the safety laws of this state and to properly fulfill the dealer's or manufacturer's warranty obligation,

- c. does not hold a franchise in effect with a manufacturer or distributor of new or unused motor vehicles for the sale of the same and is not authorized by the manufacturer or distributor to render predelivery preparation of such vehicles sold to purchasers and to perform any authorized post-sale work pursuant to the manufacturer's or distributor's warranty,
- d. employs or utilizes the services of used motor vehicle lots or dealers or other unlicensed persons in connection with the sale of new motor vehicles,
- e. does not properly service a new motor vehicle before delivery of same to the original purchaser thereof, or
- f. fails to order and stock a reasonable number of new motor vehicles necessary to meet customer demand for each of the new motor vehicles included in the new motor vehicle dealer's franchise agreement, unless the new motor vehicles are not readily available from the manufacturer or distributor due to limited production;
- 3. Being a factory that has:

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- a. either induced or attempted to induce by means of coercion or intimidation, any new motor vehicle dealer:
 - (1) to accept delivery of any motor vehicle or vehicles, parts or accessories therefor, or any other commodities including advertising material which shall not have been ordered by the new motor vehicle dealer,
 - (2) to order or accept delivery of any motor vehicle with special features, appliances, accessories or equipment not included in the list price of the motor vehicles as publicly advertised by the manufacturer thereof, or
 - (3) to order or accept delivery of any parts, accessories, equipment, machinery, tools, appliances or any commodity whatsoever, or
- b. induced under threat or discrimination by the withholding from delivery to a motor vehicle dealer certain models of motor vehicles, changing or amending unilaterally the dealer's allotment of motor vehicles and/or withholding and delaying delivery of such vehicles out of the ordinary course of business, in order to induce by such coercion any such dealer to participate or contribute to any local or national

advertising fund controlled directly or indirectly by the factory or for any other purposes such as contest, "give-aways" or other so-called sales promotional devices and/or change of quotas in any sales contest; or has required motor vehicle dealers, as a condition to receiving their vehicle allotment, to order a certain percentage of the vehicles with optional equipment not specified by the new motor vehicle dealer; however, nothing in this section shall prohibit a factory from supporting an advertising association which is open to all dealers on the same basis;

9. Being a factory that:

- a. has attempted to coerce or has coerced any new motor
 vehicle dealer to enter into any agreement or to
 cancel any agreement, or fails to act in good faith
 and in a fair, equitable and nondiscriminatory manner;
 or has directly or indirectly coerced, intimidated,
 threatened or restrained any motor vehicle dealer; or
 has acted dishonestly, or has failed to act in
 accordance with the reasonable standards of fair
 dealing,
- b. has failed to compensate its dealers for the work and services they are required to perform in connection

with the dealer's delivery and preparation obligations according to the agreements on file with the Commission which must be found by the Commission to be reasonable, or fail to adequately and fairly compensate its dealers for labor, parts and other expenses incurred by such dealer to perform under and comply with manufacturer's warranty agreements. Adequate and fair compensation for parts shall be established by the dealer submitting to the manufacturer or distributor one hundred sequential nonwarranty customer-paid service repair orders which contain warranty-like parts, or ninety (90) consecutive days of nonwarranty customer-paid service repair orders which contain warranty-like parts, whichever is less, covering repairs made no more than one hundred eighty (180) days before the submission and declaring the average percentage markup. and fair compensation for labor shall be established by the dealer submitting to the manufacturer or distributor one hundred sequential customer-paid service repair orders which contain labor charges, or ninety (90) consecutive days of customer-paid service repair orders which contain labor charges, whichever is less. When submitting repair orders to calculate a

labor rate, a dealer need not include repair orders for routine maintenance. A manufacturer or distributor may, not later than thirty (30) days after submission, rebut that declared rate in writing by reasonably substantiating that the rate is inaccurate or unreasonable in light of the practices of all other franchised motor vehicle dealers in an economically similar part of the state offering the same line-make vehicles. The retail rate shall go into effect thirty (30) days following the approval by the manufacturer, subject to audit of the submitted repair orders by the franchisor and a rebuttal of the declared rate as described above. If the declared rate is rebutted, the manufacturer or distributor shall propose an adjustment in writing of the average percentage markup based on that rebuttal not later than thirty (30) days after submission. If the dealer does not agree with the proposed average percentage markup, the dealer may file a protest with the Commission not later than thirty (30) days after receipt of that proposal by the manufacturer or distributor. In the event a protest is filed, the manufacturer or distributor shall have the burden of proof to establish the new motor vehicle dealer's submitted rate was inaccurate or unreasonable

in light of the practices of all other franchised motor vehicle dealers in an economically similar part of the state. A manufacturer or distributor may not retaliate against any new motor vehicle dealer seeking to exercise its rights under this provision. manufacturer or distributor may require a dealer to submit repair orders in accordance with this section in order to validate a dealer's retail rate for parts or labor not more often than once every twelve (12) months. All claims made by dealers for compensation for delivery, preparation and warranty work shall be paid within thirty (30) days after approval and shall be approved or disapproved within thirty (30) days after receipt. When any claim is disapproved, the dealer shall be notified in writing of the grounds for disapproval. The dealer's delivery, preparation and warranty obligations as filed with the Commission shall constitute the dealer's sole responsibility for product liability as between the dealer and manufacturer. A factory may reasonably and periodically audit a new motor vehicle dealer to determine the validity of paid claims for dealer compensation or any charge-backs chargebacks for warranty parts or service compensation. Except in

cases of suspected fraud, audits of warranty payments shall only be for the one-year period immediately following the date of the payment. A manufacturer shall reserve the right to reasonable, periodic audits to determine the validity of paid claims for dealer compensation or any charge-backs chargebacks for consumer or dealer incentives. Except in cases of suspected fraud, audits of incentive payments shall only be for a one-year period immediately following the date of the payment. A factory shall not deny a claim or charge a new motor vehicle dealer back subsequent to the payment of the claim unless the factory can show that the claim was false or fraudulent or that the new motor vehicle dealer failed to reasonably substantiate the claim by the written reasonable procedures of the factory. A factory shall not deny a claim or implement a chargeback against a new motor vehicle dealer after payment of a claim in the event a purchaser of a new vehicle that is the subject of a claim fails to comply with titling or registration laws of this state and is not prevented from compliance by any action of the dealer. factory shall provide written notice to a dealer of a proposed charge-back chargeback that is the result of

an audit along with the specific audit results and proposed charge-back chargeback amount. A dealer that receives notice of a proposed charge-back chargeback pursuant to a factory's audit has the right to file a protest with the Commission within thirty (30) days after receipt of the notice of the charge-back chargeback or audit results, whichever is later. The factory is prohibited from implementing the charge-back chargeback or debiting the dealer's account until either the time frame for filing a protest has passed or a final adjudication is rendered by the Commission, whichever is later, unless the dealer has agreed to the charge-back chargeback or chargebacks,

c. unreasonably fails or refuses to offer to its same line-make franchised dealers all models manufactured for that line-make, or unreasonably requires a dealer to pay any extra fee, purchase unreasonable advertising displays or other materials, or remodel, renovate, or recondition the dealer's existing facilities as a prerequisite to receiving a model or series of vehicles. The failure to deliver any such new motor vehicle shall not be considered a violation of the section if the failure is not arbitrary or is

due to lack of manufacturing capacity or to a strike or labor difficulty, a shortage of materials, a freight embargo or other cause over which the manufacturer has no control. However, this subparagraph shall not apply to recreational vehicles or limited production model vehicles,

d. except as necessary to comply with a health or safety law, or to comply with a technology requirement which is necessary to sell or service a motor vehicle that the franchised motor vehicle dealer is authorized or licensed by the franchisor to sell or service, requires a new motor vehicle dealer to construct a new facility or substantially renovate the new motor vehicle dealer's existing facility unless the facility construction or renovation is justified by the economic conditions existing at the time, as well as the reasonably foreseeable projections, in the automotive industry. However, this subparagraph shall not apply if the factory provides money, credit, allowance, reimbursement, or additional vehicle allocation to a dealer to compensate the dealer for the cost of, or a portion of the cost of, the facility construction or renovation,

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- e. requires a new motor vehicle dealer to establish an exclusive facility, unless supported by reasonable business, market and economic considerations; provided, that this provision shall not restrict the terms of any agreement for such exclusive facility voluntarily entered into and supported by valuable consideration separate from the new motor vehicle dealer's right to sell and service motor vehicles for the franchisor,
- f. requires a new motor vehicle dealer to enter into a site-control agreement covering any or all of the new motor vehicle dealer's facilities or premises; provided, that this provision shall not restrict the terms of any site-control agreement voluntarily entered into and supported by valuable consideration separate from the new motor vehicle dealer's right to sell and service motor vehicles for the franchisor. Notwithstanding the foregoing or the terms of any site-control agreement, a site-control agreement automatically extinguishes if all of the factory's franchises that operated from the location that are the subject of the site-control agreement are terminated by the factory as part of the discontinuance of a product line, or

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requires a new motor vehicle dealer to purchase goods q. or services for the construction, renovation, or improvement of the dealer's facility from a vendor chosen by the factory if goods or services available from other sources are of substantially similar quality and design and comply with all applicable laws; provided, however, that such goods are not subject to the factory's intellectual property or trademark rights and the new motor vehicle dealer has received the factory's approval, which approval may not be unreasonably withheld. Nothing in this subparagraph may be construed to allow a new motor vehicle dealer to impair or eliminate a factory's intellectual property, trademark rights or trade dress usage guidelines. Nothing in this section prohibits the enforcement of a voluntary agreement between the factory and the new motor vehicle dealer where separate and valuable consideration has been offered and accepted;

10. Being a factory that establishes a system of motor vehicle allocation or distribution which is unfair, inequitable or unreasonably discriminatory. Upon the request of any dealer franchised by it, a factory shall disclose in writing to the dealer

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the basis upon which new motor vehicles are allocated, scheduled and delivered among the dealers of the same line-make for that factory;

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- Being a factory that sells directly or indirectly new motor vehicles to any retail consumer in the state except through a new motor vehicle dealer holding a franchise for the line-make that includes the new motor vehicle. This paragraph does not apply to factory sales of new motor vehicles to its employees, family members of employees, retirees and family members of retirees, not-forprofit organizations or the federal, state or local governments. The provisions of this paragraph shall not preclude a factory from providing information to a consumer for the purpose of marketing or facilitating a sale of a new motor vehicle or from establishing a program to sell or offer to sell new motor vehicles through participating dealers;
 - Being a factory which directly or indirectly:
 - (1)owns any ownership interest or has any financial interest in a new motor vehicle dealer or any person who sells products or services to the public,
 - (2) operates or controls a new motor vehicle dealer, or
 - acts in the capacity of a new motor vehicle (3) dealer.

- b. (1) This paragraph does not prohibit a factory from owning or controlling a new motor vehicle dealer while in a bona fide relationship with a dealer development candidate who has made a substantial initial investment in the franchise and whose initial investment is subject to potential loss. The dealer development candidate can reasonably expect to acquire full ownership of a new motor vehicle dealer within a reasonable period of time not to exceed ten (10) years and on reasonable terms and conditions. The ten-year acquisition period may be expanded for good cause shown.
 - Owning, operating, controlling or acting in the capacity of a motor vehicle dealer for a period not to exceed twelve (12) months during the transition from one dealer to another dealer if the dealership is for sale at a reasonable price and on reasonable terms and conditions to an independent qualified buyer. On showing by a factory of good cause, the Oklahoma Motor Vehicle Commission may extend the time limit set forth above; extensions may be granted for periods not to exceed twelve (12) months.

- (3) This paragraph does not prohibit a factory from owning, operating or controlling or acting in the capacity of a motor vehicle dealer which was in operation prior to January 1, 2000.
- (4) This paragraph does not prohibit a factory from owning, directly or indirectly, a minority interest in an entity that owns, operates or controls motor vehicle dealerships of the same line-make franchised by the manufacturer, provided that each of the following conditions are met:
 - (a) all of the motor vehicle dealerships selling the motor vehicles of that manufacturer in this state trade exclusively in the line-make of that manufacturer,
 - (b) all of the franchise agreements of the manufacturer confer rights on the dealer of the line-make to develop and operate, within a defined geographic territory or area, as many dealership facilities as the dealer and manufacturer shall agree are appropriate,
 - (c) at the time the manufacturer first acquires an ownership interest or assumes operation, the distance between any dealership thus

owned or operated and the nearest unaffiliated motor vehicle dealership trading in the same line-make is not less than seventy (70) miles,

- (d) during any period in which the manufacturer has such an ownership interest, the manufacturer has no more than three franchise agreements with new motor vehicle dealers licensed by the Oklahoma Motor Vehicle Commission to do business within the state, and
- have furnished or made available to prospective motor vehicle dealers an offering-circular in accordance with the Trade Regulation Rule on Franchising of the Federal Trade Commission, and any guidelines and exemptions issued thereunder, which disclose the possibility that the factory may from time to time seek to own or acquire, directly or indirectly, ownership interests in retail dealerships;
- 13. Being a factory which directly or indirectly makes available for public disclosure any proprietary information provided

to the factory by a new motor vehicle dealer, other than in composite form to dealers in the same line-make or in response to a subpoena or order of the Commission or a court. Proprietary information includes, but is not limited to, information based on:

- a. any information derived from monthly financial statements provided to the factory, and
- b. any information regarding any aspect of the profitability of a particular new motor vehicle dealer;
- 14. Being a factory which does not provide or direct leads in a fair, equitable and timely manner. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to require a factory to disregard the preference of a consumer in providing or directing a lead;
- 15. Being a factory which used the customer list of a new motor vehicle dealer for the purpose of unfairly competing with dealers;
- 16. Being a factory which prohibits a new motor vehicle dealer from relocating after a written request by such new motor vehicle dealer if:
 - a. the facility and the proposed new location satisfies or meets the written reasonable guidelines of the factory. Reasonable guidelines do not include site control unless agreed to as set forth in subparagraphs e and f of paragraph 9 of this subsection,

- b. the proposed new location is within the area of responsibility of the new motor vehicle dealer pursuant to Section 578.1 of this title, and
- c. the factory has sixty (60) days from receipt of the new motor vehicle dealer's relocation request to approve or deny the request. The failure to approve or deny the request within the sixty-day time frame shall constitute approval of the request;
- 17. Being a factory which prohibits a new motor vehicle dealer from adding additional line-makes to its existing facility, if, after adding the additional line-makes, the facility satisfies the written reasonable capitalization standards and facility guidelines of each factory. Reasonable facility guidelines do not include a requirement to maintain site control unless agreed to by the dealer as set forth in subparagraphs e and f of paragraph 9 of this subsection;
- 18. Being a factory that increases prices of new motor vehicles which the new motor vehicle dealer had ordered for retail consumers and notified the factory prior to the dealer's receipt of the written official price increase notification. A sales contract signed by a retail consumer accompanied with proof of order submission to the factory shall constitute evidence of each such order, provided that the vehicle is in fact delivered to the customer. Price differences applicable to new models or series

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motor vehicles at the time of the introduction of new models or series shall not be considered a price increase for purposes of this paragraph. Price changes caused by any of the following shall not be subject to the provisions of this paragraph:

- a. the addition to a motor vehicle of required or optional equipment pursuant to state or federal law,
- b. revaluation of the United States dollar in the case of foreign-made vehicles or components, or
- c. an increase in transportation charges due to increased rates imposed by common or contract carriers;
- 19. Being a factory that requires a new motor vehicle dealer to participate monetarily in an advertising campaign or contest, or purchase any promotional materials, showroom or other display decoration or materials at the expense of the new motor vehicle dealer without consent of the dealer, which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld;
- 20. Being a factory that denies any new motor vehicle dealer the right of free association with any other new motor vehicle dealer for any lawful purpose, unless otherwise permitted by this chapter; or
- 21. Being a factory that requires a new motor vehicle dealer to sell, offer to sell or sell exclusively an extended service contract, extended maintenance plan or similar product, such as gap

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products offered, endorsed or sponsored by the factory by the following means:

- a. by an act or statement from the factory that will in any manner adversely impact the dealer,
- b. by measuring the dealer's performance under the franchise based on the sale of extended service contracts, extended maintenance plans or similar products offered, endorsed or sponsored by the manufacturer or distributor.
- B. Notwithstanding the terms of any franchise agreement, in the event of a proposed sale or transfer of a dealership, the manufacturer or distributor shall be permitted to exercise a right of first refusal to acquire the assets or ownership interest of the dealer of the new vehicle dealership, if such sale or transfer is conditioned upon the manufacturer or dealer entering into a dealer agreement with the proposed new owner or transferee, only if all the following requirements are met:
- 1. To exercise its right of first refusal, the factory must notify the dealer in writing within sixty (60) days of receipt of the completed proposal for the proposed sale transfer;
- 2. The exercise of the right of first refusal will result in the dealer and the owner of the dealership receiving the same or greater consideration as they have contracted to receive in connection with the proposed change of ownership or transfer;

3. The proposed sale or transfer of the assets of the dealership does not involve the transfer or sale to a member or members of the family of one or more dealer owners, or to a qualified manager or a partnership or corporation controlled by such persons; and

- 4. The factory agrees to pay the reasonable expenses including attorney fees which do not exceed the usual, customary and reasonable fees charged for similar work done for other clients incurred by the proposed new owner and transferee prior to the exercise by the factory of its right of first refusal in negotiating and implementing the contract for the proposed sale or transfer of the dealership or dealership assets. Notwithstanding the foregoing, no payment of expenses and attorney fees shall be required if the proposed new dealer or transferee has not submitted or caused to be submitted an accounting of those expenses within thirty (30) days of receipt of the written request of the factory for such an accounting. The accounting may be requested by a factory before exercising its right of first refusal.
- C. Nothing in this section shall prohibit, limit, restrict or impose conditions on:
- 1. Business activities including without limitation the dealings with motor vehicle manufacturers and the representatives and affiliates of motor vehicle manufacturers, of any person that is primarily engaged in the business of short-term, not to exceed

1 twelve (12) months, rental of motor vehicles and industrial and 2 construction equipment and activities incidental to that business, 3 provided that: 4 any motor vehicle sold by that person is limited to 5 used motor vehicles that have been previously used 6 exclusively and regularly by that person in the 7 conduct of business and used motor vehicles traded in 8 on motor vehicles sold by that person, 9 b. warranty repairs performed by that person on motor 10 vehicles are limited to those motor vehicles that it 11 owns, previously owned or takes in trade, and 12 motor vehicle financing provided by that person to C. 13 retail consumers for motor vehicles is limited to used 14 vehicles sold by that person in the conduct of 15 business; or 16 2. The direct or indirect ownership, affiliation or control of 17 a person described in paragraph 1 of this subsection. 18 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2021. 19 20 58-1-1102 QD 1/21/2021 4:32:59 PM 21 22 23 24