

March 29, 2022

Chair Zack Stephenson and Members of the Committee
Committee on Commerce, Finance, and Policy
Minnesota House of Representatives

RE: HF 4205 – Automobile Theft Prevention Program Funding - SUPPORT

Dear Chair Stephenson and Members of the Committee:

The National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) is a national, century-old, not-for-profit organization supported by approximately 1,200 property and casualty insurance companies, including many who write business in Minnesota. Working hand-in-hand with our member companies and Minnesota law enforcement, we help to detect, prevent, and deter insurance crimes, including vehicle theft. While NICB provides value to our member companies, we also serve a significant public benefit by helping to stem the estimated billions of dollars in economic harm that insurance crime causes to individual policyholders across the country every year.

Nationally, car thefts are up almost 30% as of 2021 compared with data from 2017. In 2020, the nation saw the most vehicle thefts in more than decade. And thefts increased an additional 5% from 2020 to 2021. Minnesota has mirrored this disturbing trend: auto thefts have increased 34% in the state from 2019 to 2021.

Beyond the loss to an owner and the resulting financial impacts – including in the form of higher insurance premiums for Minnesota consumers – vehicle thefts often have serious second-order effects on society. For example, vehicles are frequently stolen under violent conditions resulting in physical harm to car owners and other victims. Additionally, organized criminal rings are increasingly stealing cars as an alternative revenue stream as well as to commit other violent crimes.

House File 4205 would provide an additional \$1,700,000 for fiscal year 2023 to the Automobile Theft Prevention Program. This additional funding would go a long way towards helping stem the tide of increased automobile thefts in Minnesota.

Accordingly, we ask for your strong support in favor of HF 4205.

We thank you for this scheduling a hearing and for considering our views as you deliberate the merits of the bill. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at csepich@nicb.org or (847) 772-7667.

Sincerely,

Craig Sepich

Craig Sepich
Senior Legislative Analyst
Strategy, Policy, and Government Affairs
National Insurance Crime Bureau