

MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE

Stopping Auto Theft Before It Starts: Requiring Stronger Anti-Theft Technologies in New Vehicles

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SUMMARY:

Auto theft remains a serious public safety concern in Toronto and across Canada, posing significant risks to residents, communities, and law enforcement while imposing substantial costs on vehicle owners, insurers, businesses, and governments. Far more than a property crime, auto theft fuels organized criminal activity, supports other illegal enterprises, places increasing demands on police resources, and creates dangerous situations during thefts, investigations, and vehicle recoveries.

Toronto Police Service data shows that auto theft remains a significant public safety challenge, despite meaningful progress achieved through targeted enforcement and coordinated action. In 2025, reported auto thefts declined by nearly 24 per cent compared to the previous year, reflecting the success of dedicated enforcement initiatives, intelligence-led investigations, and collaboration with policing and government partners. However, the Toronto Police Service has consistently emphasized that organized criminal networks continue to exploit vulnerabilities in vehicle security systems and that enforcement alone cannot fully address the problem. While police have made important gains in disrupting these criminal organizations, stronger preventative measures at the vehicle manufacturing stage are needed to reduce opportunities for theft before they occur.

As auto theft methods continue to evolve, stronger preventative measures are needed at the vehicle design and manufacturing stage. Criminals increasingly exploit vulnerabilities in electronic key systems, vehicle communications, and onboard technologies, enabling some vehicles to be stolen within minutes. Automobile manufacturers have a critical role to play by incorporating more effective anti-theft technologies into every new vehicle sold in Canada.

The Government of Canada should require automobile manufacturers to make enhanced anti-theft technologies standard equipment in all new vehicles, including improved immobilization systems, stronger encryption, more secure keyless entry systems, advanced authentication

technologies, and other innovations that prevent unauthorized vehicle access and operation. Strengthening national vehicle security standards would complement police enforcement efforts, improve public safety, reduce opportunities for organized crime, better protect Canadian consumers, and help reduce the social and economic impacts of auto theft.

Reason for Urgency: Seven thousand, four hundred and twenty-one (7,421) auto thefts occurred across Toronto in 2025 and we need to pursue every auto theft prevention measure possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. City Council request the Government of Canada, through the Minister of Transport, to amend the Motor Vehicle Safety Regulations under the *Motor Vehicle Safety Act* to require that all new motor vehicles sold in Canada be equipped with enhanced anti-theft technologies as standard equipment, including improved immobilization systems, vehicle locating technology, stronger encryption, more secure keyless entry systems, advanced authentication technologies, and other vehicle security measures designed to prevent unauthorized access and theft.

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