

The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc
Minister of Public Safety
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON

January 26, 2024

Dear Minister LeBlanc,

I write to you today on behalf of the Ontario Auto Mayors regarding the high level of auto theft in our communities. At our annual fall meeting held in November, the Auto Mayors continued discussions around auto theft in our province and the impact on our communities. We agreed that the solution requires all levels of government and stakeholders to actively work to stop auto theft. We request the Federal government take a more aggressive approach to stop auto thefts and strengthen the security of the Port of Montreal by enabling the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) with more resources.

In Ontario, a vehicle is stolen every 14 minutes and the number of auto thefts is up 72 per cent year over year from 2014 to 2022. According to Ontario's Solicitor General, thefts have jumped 31 per cent in the first half of 2023 compared with the year before. Auto theft has also become an issue of personal safety, with increased levels of home invasions and car jackings. Theft of automobiles is not a victimless crime. Health care, court, policing, legal, insurance premiums, and out-of-pocket costs associated with auto theft cost Ontarians millions per year. In 2022, police and insurers reported there was a billion dollars' worth of cars stolen in Canada, reaching never-before-seen levels of theft. Powerful incentives are driving the crisis in auto thefts. When caught, punishment is light and profits are high and easy. Overseas demand for vehicles can fetch two times their value. Crime groups use auto theft profits to fuel their exploitation of the public with drugs, guns, and human trafficking.

Canada's automotive manufacturing sector is intensifying its efforts to make its models more resistant to auto theft technologies; however, thieves quickly adapt and invent or discover ways around new anti-theft measures. The Ontario government recently announced 21 projects to help to reduce auto theft, which will provide more resources at a local level. At the federal level, more work is required between the federal government and the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA), to tighten security at the Port of Montreal which, as noted by the Équité Association, is a major point of departure for stolen vehicles.

The other participants in the fight against auto theft, such as the automotive industry, insurance industry, and organizations such as the Auto Mayors and the Canadian Automobile Association, which represents millions of Canadian drivers, will welcome and thank you for stepping up and doing your part to the auto theft epidemic.

We welcome your announcement of the upcoming National Summit on Combatting Auto Theft and look forward to the development of further initiatives to combat auto theft in Canada. The Auto Mayors support you and the broader stakeholder community in the fight against auto theft and we look forward to the good results that will always result when we all work together to solve problems.

Sincerely,



Mayor Rob Burton
Chair
Ontario Auto Mayors
www.automayors.ca

cc:

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Henry
Regional Municipality of
Durham

Regional Chair Gary
Carr
Regional Municipality of
Halton

Regional Chair Jim
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About the Ontario Auto Mayors:

The Ontario Auto Mayors work collaboratively at the provincial and federal levels to promote awareness, advocacy and strategic policy initiatives to strengthen the Canadian economy by keeping the automotive sector as a driver of employment, innovation and productivity advances across the Canadian economy.

For more information about the Ontario Auto Mayors, please visit automayors.ca.