



February 27, 2023

Colorado State Senate  
Colorado Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Senator Julie Gonzales, Chair

**Support Statement: Senate Bill 23-097**

Dear Chair Gonzales 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 Colorado. Working together with our member companies and Colorado 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, auto thefts have increased dramatically. In 2021, over 930,000 automobiles were stolen across the United States. This represents a six percent increase over 2020 and a 17 percent increase since 2019. **In 2021, Colorado ranked #1 nationally in the number of car thefts with 660 thefts per 100,000 population which was a 32% rise from 2020. In addition, Denver ranked #2 nationally among major population centers for vehicle theft.**

Beyond the loss to an owner and the resulting financial impacts – including in the form of higher insurance premiums for Colorado 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.

**NICB strongly supports Senate Bill 23-097 which increases penalties for vehicle theft to felony crimes under Colorado criminal law.**

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 [tlynch@nicb.org](mailto:tlynch@nicb.org).

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim Lynch", is written over a horizontal line.

Tim Lynch  
Senior Director  
Strategy, Policy and Government Affairs  
National Insurance Crime Bureau