

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 3577

To provide funding to State and local law enforcement agencies to combat auto theft and stolen automobile trafficking, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 18, 2025

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. MORENO, and Ms. ROSEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To provide funding to State and local law enforcement agencies to combat auto theft and stolen automobile trafficking, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Auto Theft Prevention
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
2 the Director of the Office of Community Oriented
3 Policing Services of the Department of Justice.

4 (2) GRANT YEAR.—The term “grant year”
5 means the year during which the applicable grant is
6 to be disbursed under the Program.

7 (3) LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY.—The
8 term “local law enforcement agency” means any en-
9 tity administered by a locality that exists primarily
10 to prevent and detect crime and enforce criminal
11 laws.

12 (4) LOCALITY.—The term “locality” means any
13 city, county, township, town, borough, parish, vil-
14 lage, or other general purpose political subdivision of
15 a State.

16 (5) PROGRAM.—The term “Program” means
17 the auto theft prevention grant program established
18 under section 3(a).

19 (6) RECIPIENT STATE.—The term “recipient
20 State” means a State that is awarded a grant under
21 the Program.

22 (7) STATE.—The term “State” means any
23 State of the United States, the District of Columbia,
24 the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United
25 States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and

1 the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Is-
2 lands.

3 (8) STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY.—The
4 term “State law enforcement agency” means any
5 State entity that exists primarily to prevent and de-
6 tect crime and enforce criminal laws.

7 **SEC. 3. AUTO THEFT PREVENTION GRANT PROGRAM.**

8 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 60 days after
9 the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall estab-
10 lish an auto theft prevention grant program to provide
11 funding to State law enforcement agencies and local law
12 enforcement agencies to combat auto theft and stolen vehi-
13 cle trafficking.

14 (b) APPLICATION.—A State desiring a grant under
15 the Program shall submit to the Director an application
16 that includes—

17 (1) evidentiary or other materials, including, as
18 appropriate, State-specific police reports, budget
19 documents, plans, or other documents, dem-
20 onstrating that the State needs Federal assistance to
21 combat auto theft;

22 (2) documentation of the actions taken by the
23 State during the year before the grant year, based
24 on the information in such evidentiary or other ma-

1 materials, to reduce the instances of auto theft in the
2 State; and

3 (3) a plan indicating how the State will—

4 (A) use amounts received under the Pro-
5 gram to implement auto theft prevention activi-
6 ties in accordance with subsections (d) and (e);
7 and

8 (B) evaluate the success of the activities
9 carried out using amounts received under the
10 Program.

11 (c) AWARDS.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Director may make a
13 grant under the Program to the Attorney General of
14 any State which has submitted an application that
15 complies with the requirements under subsection (b).

16 (2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In determining whether
17 to make a grant to a State under the Program and
18 the amount of a grant under the Program, the Di-
19 rector shall—

20 (A) consider the information provided in
21 the application of the State; and

22 (B) endeavor to prioritize States with a
23 higher overall level of auto thefts during the
24 year before the grant year.

25 (d) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—

1 (1) LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.—

2 The Attorney General of a recipient State shall
3 make not less than 50 percent of the amount of a
4 grant awarded under the Program available as com-
5 petitive subgrants to local law enforcement agencies
6 within the recipient State to combat auto theft, with
7 the amount awarded determined by prioritizing lo-
8 calities with a higher overall level of auto thefts dur-
9 ing the year before the grant year.

10 (2) STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.—

11 The Attorney General of a recipient State shall
12 make not less than 25 percent of the amount of a
13 grant awarded under the Program available to State
14 law enforcement agencies of the recipient State to
15 combat auto theft.

16 (3) OTHER AMOUNTS.—

17 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General
18 of a recipient State shall make any amounts re-
19 ceived under a grant under the Program that
20 are not allocated under paragraph (1) or (2)
21 available as competitive subgrants to local law
22 enforcement agencies or to State law enforce-
23 ment agencies of the recipient State.

24 (B) PRIORITIZATION FOR LOCALITIES.—

25 The amount of any subgrant made under this

1 paragraph to a local law enforcement agency
2 shall follow the prioritization under paragraph
3 (1).

4 (e) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—Amounts received under
5 a grant under the Program may only be used for the pur-
6 pose of combating auto theft and combating stolen auto-
7 mobile trafficking, including—

8 (1) purchasing equipment used to combat auto
9 theft, such as law enforcement vehicles and license
10 plate readers;

11 (2) funding costs associated with equipment de-
12 scribed in paragraph (1), such as subscription fees
13 and data storage fees for license plate readers;

14 (3) hiring additional law enforcement officers
15 and support staff to combat auto theft;

16 (4) funding overtime costs and additional com-
17 pensation for law enforcement officers and support
18 staff involved in combating auto theft;

19 (5) providing training for law enforcement offi-
20 cers and support staff to combat auto theft;

21 (6) providing resources for joint task forces es-
22 tablished to combat auto theft;

23 (7) funding law enforcement data collection,
24 data storage, or research activities related to com-
25 bating auto theft; and

1 (8) funding for the administrative costs of ap-
 2 plying for and implementing the grant, which shall
 3 not exceed 5 percent of the grant amount.

4 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
 5 authorized to be appropriated \$30,000,000 for each of fis-
 6 cal years 2026 through 2030 to carry out the Program.

7 **SEC. 4. ADDITIONAL AUTHORIZED USES OF COPS GRANT**
 8 **PROGRAM FUNDS.**

9 Section 1701(b) of the Omnibus Crime Control and
 10 Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10381(b)) is amend-
 11 ed—

12 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (23) and (24)
 13 as paragraphs (24) and (25), respectively;

14 (2) by inserting after paragraph (22), the fol-
 15 lowing:

16 “(23) to combat auto thefts and stolen auto-
 17 mobile trafficking by purchasing equipment, hiring
 18 law enforcement officers and support staff, funding
 19 overtime and officer compensation costs, expanding
 20 access to training initiatives, funding joint task
 21 forces, and funding law enforcement data collection
 22 or research activities related to auto thefts;” and

23 (3) in paragraph (24), as so redesignated, by
 24 striking “(22)” and inserting “(23)”.

○