

February 10, 2025

Chair Susan Humphries and Members of the Committee
Committee on Judiciary
Kansas House of Representatives

RE: H.B. 2349 – Scrap Metal Theft – SUPPORT

Dear Chair Humphries 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 Kansas. Working hand-in-hand with our member companies and Kansas law enforcement, we help to detect, prevent, and deter insurance crimes. 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.

Catalytic converter theft has skyrocketed in recent years in part due to the significant rise in the price of various precious metals, including rhodium, platinum, and palladium. All are used in the construction of catalytic converters. Criminals are seizing the opportunity to profit from these increased prices by removing the catalytic converter from vehicles – in relatively easy fashion – and selling the stolen part on the black market.

Installing a replacement catalytic converter can cost thousands of dollars. Because thieves try to remove the converters as quickly as possible, their hastiness often causes higher repair costs due to incidental damage. Moreover, businesses with large vehicle fleets, such as vehicle dealerships or utility companies, are often targeted due to the number of potential catalytic converters in a small area. Thefts from commercial carriers can lead to replacement costs in excess of tens of thousands of dollars, and additional lost revenue due to halted operations.

House Bill 2349 protects consumers from catalytic convert theft and other scrap metal thefts by empowering law enforcement to conduct investigations of violations of the Scrap Metal Theft Reduction Act. Further, this bill increases penalties for anyone who knowingly violates the law. These commonsense reforms will go a long way to toward combating catalytic converter and scrap metal theft.

Accordingly, we respectfully request your support for H.B. 2349.

We thank you for considering our views. 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
Director
Office of Strategy, Policy, & Government Affairs
National Insurance Crime Bureau