

119TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

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

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

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

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**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       terials, to reduce the instances of auto theft in the  
2       State; and

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

4                (A) use amount 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)”.