



February 4, 2025

Hon. Matthew Birong and Members of the Committee
Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs
Vermont House of Representatives

RE: H. 72 – Unauthorized Salvage Yards

Dear Chair Birong 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 Vermont. Working together with our member companies and Vermont law enforcement, we help to detect, prevent, and deter insurance crimes, including vehicle thefts.

Vehicle thefts are on the rise across the country, including in Vermont. While 2024 statistics are not yet finalized, vehicle thefts in Vermont increased 155 percent from 2020 to 2023. In 2020, out of the 390 U.S. metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), the Burlington-South Burlington MSA ranked *(adjusted for population)* in the bottom 15 percent for vehicle thefts. By 2023, the Burlington-South Burlington MSA placed in the top third. Vehicle theft impacts not only the victim—leading to missed school, work, or other obligations—but also the surrounding community, as stolen vehicles are often used in support of further crimes.

One important component in the fight against vehicle theft is proper oversight of salvage yards, where stolen vehicles may ultimately end up. Recognizing this, the U.S. Anti-Car Theft Act requires salvage vehicle yards handling five or more vehicles per year to report all such vehicles to the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS)—a key database in the fight against fraud, unsafe vehicles, and the resale of stolen vehicles. Unauthorized salvage yards, however, operate without such critical oversight.

H. 72 will empower Vermont municipalities to rein in unauthorized salvage yards by providing the ability to declare any such salvage yards that are in operation for more than 90 days without authorization a public nuisance. This commonsense measure will help bring salvage yards into compliance with the law, and in turn result in greater oversight against organized vehicle theft.

Accordingly, we urge your support of H. 72.

We thank you for scheduling a hearing and for considering our views. As always, please consider NICB a resource and partner in the fight against insurance crime. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at hhandler@nicb.org or 312-771-3974.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Howard Handler".

Howard Handler, Senior Director
Office of Strategy, Policy and Government Affairs