

**Lori Stegmann**  
**Multnomah County Commissioner**  
Representing East County, District 4



3/21/2019

House Committee on Judiciary  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Williamson and Members of the Committee,

Car thefts have plagued not only Portland but the surrounding communities as well. Last year Portland ranked fifth in the nation for car thefts and is followed closely by Gresham which ranked eighth. These were the only two cities in the state of Oregon to make the top 20 cities nationwide. Prosecuting those who have stolen vehicles has become almost an impossible feat. It is no longer proof enough to be in a stolen vehicle and not be able to say where you got it, or to even be accompanied by tools that are commonly used to steal vehicles.

While crime rates across the board have dropped, vehicle thefts have been the only crime that has continued to rise. The Multnomah County District Attorney's office, as well as multiple law enforcement agencies have identified the loophole that has been continuously abused by those who have stolen vehicles. House Bill 2328 provides clearer definitions for prosecuting an individual who has stolen a vehicle. If passed, this will stop chronic vehicle thieves and reduce the amount of vehicles that are stolen in our community. It closes a loophole that has allowed repeat offenders to continue to take advantage of our justice system, and hurt residents and businesses in our community.

Thank you for your consideration of House Bill 2328. Our communities and local jurisdictions have worked hard to provide safe neighborhoods for everyone to live in. I urge you to vote in favor of House Bill 2328 to close Oregon's vehicle theft loophole and decrease crime in our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Stegmann".

Commissioner Lori Stegmann, Multnomah County District 4