



March 12, 2019

**Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
Policy Position
HB 2328: Relating to Oregon Vehicle Thefts**

Clackamas County supports HB 2328: The Board of County Commissioners supports HB 2328, which modifies the culpable mental state for the crime of unauthorized use of vehicles when a person takes, operates, exercises control over, or otherwise uses a vehicle, boat, or aircraft without consent of owner.

Clackamas County prioritizes safe, healthy and secure communities as a key principle of its strategic plan. Stealing is a crime, and vehicles – old and new – are a significant resource to people who commute to work, school, and other activities. According to the FBI’s National Crime Information Center, Oregon has seen a 53.51% increase in automotive theft – compared to 10.74% nationwide.

Vehicle theft is typically violent in nature and many thefts are performed during the commission of other crimes. Additionally, automotive theft disproportionately affects people in lower socioeconomic situations whose cars are older and do not typically include security chips in their key systems designed to prevent theft.

The increase in vehicle theft in Oregon is regrettably correlated with two notable Oregon Court of Appeals cases that set near-impossible standards for securing convictions against an alleged car thief. HB 2328 takes steps to address an alleged thief’s intent *away from* “knowingly” operating a vehicle without an owner’s consent *to* being “aware of and recklessly disregard(ing) a substantial and unjustifiable risk” of driving a vehicle without the consent of the owner.

Vehicle theft affects real people, communities, and the economy. Clackamas County supports efforts to hold thieves accountable and reduce the number of vehicle thefts in our communities.

We urge a “YES” vote on HB 2328.

Please contact Chris Lyons at clyons@clackamas.us for more information.