



# DAVE YOST

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

April 6, 2022

Chairman Jeff LaRe  
House Criminal Justice Committee  
77 South High St, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman LaRe,

I write today to offer my support for House Bill 408, legislation which would help apply the brakes on catalytic converter theft in Ohio.

Catalytic converter theft has become one of the fastest growing areas of crime and organized crime across our state. According to statistics from the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission (OCIC), catalytic converter theft has nearly doubled every year since 2018 when our local law enforcement partners began tracking this offense. OCIC gathered data points from some of Ohio's largest cities including Akron, Cleveland, Columbus, and Toledo. In 2018 there were 223 reported thefts, 610 in 2019, 1,358 in 2020, and at least 3,999 in 2021 as we are still accumulating data from our partners. These numbers are deeply concerning and represent a fraction of the actual damage this criminal activity is wreaking on our state.

House Bill 408 takes an important step forward by stalling out the supply chain to scrap metal dealers. Under this proposed legislation, a scrap metal dealer or recycler would only be able to accept a catalytic converter if the seller provides genuine proof of ownership. Language of this type has already been successfully implemented as it relates to Ohio's pawn shop industry. Additionally, should a scrap metal dealer decide to accept a catalytic converter without the requisite paperwork, they could face criminal penalties under HB 408. There is no legitimate non-automotive use for a catalytic converter, and by criminalizing the receipt of ill-gotten converters, we can undermine this public nuisance.

I commend Representative Bob Young for his continued leadership on this issue and for bringing House Bill 408 before this committee. I am happy to discuss this issue with you or any members of the House Criminal Justice Committee at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dave Yost".

Dave Yost  
Ohio Attorney General