



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

Senator Klein introduces bill to help stop tire rim theft

JEFFREY D. KLEIN June 8, 2011

Vehicle Identification Numbers would aid law enforcement in tracking stolen wheels

Senator Jeffrey D. Klein, (D-Bronx/Westchester) and Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (D-Bronx) have introduced new legislation that would finally give law enforcement a tool to track down vehicle wheel thieves. The measure would require that vehicle identification numbers be engraved on the wheels of all motor vehicles sold in New York.

This measure, (S.5414/ A.7646), would help deter the theft of alloy wheels, which account for more than 20 percent of all felony thefts in some police precincts in New York City. Current law offers law enforcement no tools to track this type of crime, as vehicle wheels have no identification. Valued anywhere from \$1,000 to \$3,000 for a set of wheels from even a modestly priced vehicle, wheels are the most valuable item that can be removed from a vehicle with relatively little effort. By design, these wheels are easy to quickly remove with standard tools.

Similar measures have been implemented to prevent airbag and stereo theft and have proven widely successful, leaving wheels as the last frontier of accessory theft. This measure would allow citizens to report their wheels stolen and subsequently enable law enforcement to return the stolen goods to their owners. Currently, this is nearly impossible, due to the lack of identification on vehicle wheels. This bill will correct this problem and was crafted in direct consultation with the New York City Police Department to ensure it will accomplish its goals.

"This wave of criminal activity cannot be dismissed as petty thefts," said State Senator Klein. "This legislation will make it tougher for thieves to profit from their crimes, as well as protect residents from having their property taken from them.

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