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**LD 796, “An Act To Restrict Sales of Catalytic Converters Removed from Motor Vehicles”**

**Joint Standing Committee on Transportation  
April 6, 2021**

Senator Diamond, Representative Martin and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation:

I am Jeff Timberlake and I represent Senate District 22, which includes the Towns of Durham, Greene, Leeds, Lisbon, Litchfield, Sabattus, Turner, Wales, and Wayne. It is my pleasure to be here to present LD 796, “An Act To Restrict Sales of Catalytic Converters Removed from Motor Vehicles.”

To put it simply, a catalytic converter is an exhaust emission control device that changes harmful substances in a car’s exhaust gasses, such as carbon monoxide, into less harmful substances like carbon dioxide and water vapor by means of chemical reactions.

Over the last decade or so the theft of catalytic converters has been on the rise. Thieves brazenly and quickly get under a vehicle, remove the converters and sell them, getting a very pretty penny as the price of precious metals has been rising steadily. The cost to the victims and/or insurance companies is enormous – several thousand dollars depending on where the thieves strike. From residential driveways to business lots with numerous vehicles, this crime of opportunity is becoming more and more popular, unfortunately. One of the most discouraging aspects, however, is that charging the perpetrator is extremely difficult because there is no way to identify a catalytic converter.

One suggestion for deterrence is marking the converter. Having a unique marking, such as a serial number, will help law enforcement identify a stolen converter. Another recommendation is to require a seller to have title to the vehicle where the converter came from. I am offering these as starting points for the Committee and I am confident you will hear other ideas from experts in the field. Amended language is certainly welcomed. In working with the Auto Recyclers Association, the International Association of Auto Theft Investigators, law enforcement and others, I am sure you will be able to finalize appropriate language that will deter and combat catalytic converter theft.

Thank you for your time and consideration.