



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0865-2023, **Version:** *

Res. No. 865

Resolution calling on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to institute a recall of Hyundai and Kia models lacking immobilizer technology that are vulnerable to theft.

By Council Members Cabán and Brooks-Powers

Whereas, More than eight million Hyundai and Kia vehicles manufactured between 2011 and 2022 have a vulnerability in their starting systems that allows them to be hotwired and stolen quickly and easily; and

Whereas, A viral social media trend has exposed this vulnerability and exacerbated the problem, with users posting videos that show how to start the cars and challenging others to do the same; and

Whereas, The New York City Police Department reports that about 782 Kia and Hyundai vehicles were reported stolen in 2022, compared with approximately 351 in 2021, and that 977 Hyundai and Kia vehicles were reported stolen in the first four months of 2023, up about 660 percent from the same period in 2022; and

Whereas, In June 2023, New York City sued Kia and Hyundai alleging that the automakers were guilty of negligence by failing to include anti-theft devices in their cars and claiming that the vehicle thefts are straining police department resources and negatively impacting public safety and emergency services; and

Whereas, In July 2023, two teenagers were killed and several others were injured when the driver of a stolen Hyundai ran a red light and collided with another car near East 179th Street and Audobon Avenue in Manhattan; and

Whereas, Kia and Hyundai have offered free software updates to address this vulnerability, but many insurance companies refuse to cover the affected models due to the high risk of theft, according to NPR; and

Whereas, The attorneys general of 17 states including New York have called for a national recall of the affected vehicles, saying the thefts are creating a “safety crisis” on roads; and

Whereas, Unlike voluntary software upgrades, a recall includes mailed notification to all impacted vehicle owners; now, therefore, be it,

Resolved, that the Council of the City of New York calls on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to institute a recall of Hyundai and Kia models lacking immobilizer technology that are vulnerable to theft.

LS # 15225
12/5/23
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