



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 23, 2012

Commissioner Donelon Reports 4-Year Decline of 36.7% in LA Vehicle Thefts

Commissioner of Insurance Jim Donelon reported today that for the four-year period from 2006 through 2010, motor vehicle theft rates significantly declined in Louisiana. According to data from the FBI Uniform Crime Report, the rate of motor vehicles thefts in Louisiana decreased by 15.6 percent from 2009 to 2010, marking the fourth consecutive such year. “This is good news for everyone with comprehensive auto insurance since motor vehicle theft is one of several determining factors considered by insurance companies when setting our auto insurance premiums,” said Commissioner Donelon.

The FBI Uniform Crime Report shows the following for Louisiana’s rate of vehicle thefts over the four year period:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Stolen Vehicles Statewide</u>	<u>Percent Decrease from Previous Year</u>
2006	15,640	
2007	15,180	2006-2007: -2.9%
2008	13,743	2007-2008: -9.5%
2009	11,717	2008-2009: -14.7%
2010	9,893	2009-2010: -15.6%

Commissioner Donelon attributes the continued decline to a combination of factors including the expanded use of technology such as license plate recognition systems and bait cars, proactive law enforcement strategies, increased public awareness and education about vehicle theft prevention and the consequences of vehicle theft, and multi-agency cooperation.

“The work of the Department of Insurance Louisiana Automobile Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Authority (LATIFPA) is having positive results across the state,” Commissioner Donelon said. “LATIFPA has been active in educating consumers, including high school students, about vehicle theft and insurance fraud through a public awareness outreach campaign that began in 2007,” Donelon added.

Protecting Against Auto Theft

Commissioner Donelon reminds citizens to do their part in combating this crime and to protect themselves from becoming a victim of motor vehicle theft. Consider the following auto theft prevention tips when leaving a vehicle unattended:

- Lock your doors and roll up windows

- Park in a well-lighted area, preferably an area watched by surveillance cameras
- Never leave your keys in your vehicle
- When at home, keep your vehicle in your garage
- Do not leave valuables in your vehicle, especially where they are visible

While these tips may ward off amateurs, professional thieves may not be deterred. Consider additional layers of protection from theft, including visible and audible deterrents such as audible alarm systems, steering wheel locks and steering column collars. Immobilizers can be used to stop thieves from hot wiring your vehicle and sometimes include fuel cut-off devices, kill switches or “smart keys” with computer chips that must be present to start the vehicle. If a thief is still successful, tracking systems that emit a signal to the police or a monitoring service when the vehicle is reported stolen can result in a faster recovery of the vehicle. These are only a few of the many ideas you can use to protect your vehicle.

Louisiana is seeing a decline in motor vehicle theft thanks in large part to the efforts of the Louisiana Automobile Theft and Insurance Fraud Prevention Authority (LATIFPA) and its programs. Without the public and private assistance given to LATIFPA, these efforts would not be possible and we would not be seeing the results that we are seeing today. – Denise Cassano, IAATI ATPA Committee Co-Chair.