

August 3, 2022

The Honorable Chris Holden
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 6860
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 986 (Umberg) Vehicles: catalytic converters.
City of South San Francisco – Notice of Support**

Dear Assembly Member Holden,

On behalf of the City of South San Francisco, I write in strong support of SB 986, which would establish methods of tracing for catalytic converters. Specifically, this bill would require core recyclers to provide payment for a catalytic converter only in traceable methods, meaning no cash or checks. Additionally, the bill would prohibit a dealer or retailer from selling a new motor vehicle equipped with a catalytic converter unless the catalytic converter has been engraved or etched with the vehicle identification number of the vehicle to which it is attached.

The City of South San Francisco has seen a drastic uptick in catalytic converter theft in recent years. Stealing catalytic converters has become a common trend as it can take less than 10 minutes to remove one from the underside of a parked car. Scrap metal yards are paying as much as \$1,000 for the stolen converters for their valuable materials such as platinum and palladium, while victims end up paying up to \$3,000 to replace the stolen converter. What's more, manufacturers often exclude serial numbers when making the car part, adding another layer of ease for the criminal activity.

Catalytic converter theft has both large payoffs and often goes undetected because of a lack of tracing methods. When converters are stolen, victims must file police reports in order to activate insurance reimbursement, which strains existing public safety personnel resources, particularly when cases increase drastically.

SB 986 adds common sense tools to prevent catalytic converter theft by adding specific traceable requirements and associating misdemeanor penalties for violators. The bill will help discourage, prevent, and prosecute the growing crime of catalytic converter theft in California.

For these reasons, the City of South San Francisco supports SB 986.

Sincerely,

Mark Nagales
Mayor
City of South San Francisco

