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## OSI's Fraud Bureau Announces Increased Efforts to Combat Rising Auto Theft Crimes in New Mexico

*Santa Fe, NM* – This week, the Office of Superintendent of Insurance's (OSI) Fraud Bureau begins increased efforts to combat rising auto theft crimes. With Governor Susana Martinez's recent signature, [House Bill 173](#), sponsored by Representative William R. Rehm, created a New Mexico Auto Theft Prevention Authority within the jurisdiction of the OSI's Enforcement Division. The bill further supports current statewide law enforcement efforts underway through the multi-jurisdictional Auto Theft Task Force led by the Fraud Bureau by providing an oversight board to provide grant funding for auto theft prevention programs and those prosecuting related crimes.

“Rising auto theft crimes have an impact on our fellow citizens’ budgets through increased auto insurance rates,” Superintendent John G. Franchini said. “This added authority and responsibility allows OSI’s teams to further our statewide work of combating auto theft and insurance fraud crimes, as well as increasing public education efforts.”

Working with local, county, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, the Auto Theft Task Force strives to reduce auto crimes as well as work with statewide district attorneys to prosecute new and backlogged cases. The new authority allows OSI to seek private and grant funding to support the task force’s efforts further.

“Our special agents and prosecutors all live and work in the communities most impacted by auto crimes,” remarked OSI’s Enforcement Division Director Roberta Baca. “Our statewide partners work tirelessly to identify, arrest, and prosecute auto crime offenders. This new authority allows our efforts to be increased in a more official capacity by providing additional funding opportunities to these programs.”

Superintendent Franchini will begin working to establish the Authority’s Board of Directors, and each year will provide reporting to the legislature on the Authority’s impact and progress towards its goals.

If your organization has an auto theft prevention program and you would like to learn of funding opportunities, head to the OSI website at [www.osi.state.nm.us](http://www.osi.state.nm.us) and be sure to “Subscribe to OSI News” for announcements on future grant application periods.

If you suspect insurance fraud or want to report suspicious activity, notify OSI’s Fraud Bureau online at [www.stopfraud.org](http://www.stopfraud.org).

**About the New Mexico Office of the Superintendent of Insurance**

The Office of Superintendent of Insurance was created through New Mexico legislative action in 2012. Article XI, Section 20, of the New Mexico Constitution separated the Insurance Division from the Public Regulation Commission, with the Superintendent of Insurance, John G. Franchini, being appointed by an insurance nominating committee, made of members chosen by the Legislature, governor, and by committee members.

The Office of Superintendent of Insurance Enforcement Division's mission is to investigate criminal and regulatory violations under the NM Insurance Code with the Insurance Fraud Bureau being tasked with detecting, reducing, investigating, and prosecuting violations. Insurance Fraud Bureau officers are sworn members of law enforcement working to protect consumers in New Mexico by participating in joint operations and identifying trends in insurance fraud.

OSI remains committed to consumer protection and fraud prosecution and education, through our mission to provide convenient access to consumers to reliable insurance products which are underwritten by dependable and financially sound companies. We strive to ensure that these companies have a proven history of fair and reasonable rates and are represented by trustworthy and qualified agents. For consumer assistance through the Office of Superintendent of Insurance, please visit [www.osi.state.nm.us](http://www.osi.state.nm.us) or call us at 1-855-857-0972.

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