



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Elizabeth Weigandt Twork  
Office: 248.362.4200  
E-mail: [eweigandt@baileypr.com](mailto:eweigandt@baileypr.com)  
Cell: 248-320-8113

**H.E.A.T. APPLAUDS STATE LEGISLATORS FOR ENDORSING CRIME  
VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK - APRIL 23-29, 2006**  
*H.E.A.T. Urges Community Action Against Neighborhood Crime*

**LIVONIA** (April 23, 2006) – H.E.A.T. (Help Eliminate Auto Thefts) applauds state legislators for their endorsement of Crime Victims' Rights Week from April 23-29, 2006.

“We feel it is extremely important to highlight the impact to victims of auto theft-related crimes,” said Terri Miller, executive director of H.E.A.T. “Auto theft, particularly car jacking, erodes the safety of our communities and increases auto insurance rates. It’s crucial that the community get involved in preventing auto theft in their neighborhoods by anonymously reporting what they know through H.E.A.T.’s confidential tip line, 1-800-242-H.E.A.T.” Miller also credits the efforts of dedicated auto theft prosecutors in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Saginaw and Genesee Counties for obtaining orders of restitution for auto theft victims during the sentencing process.

Recognized nationally, the 2006 theme of Crime Victims' Rights Week is, “Victims' Rights: Strength and Unity.”

To help Michigan residents protect themselves and their property, H.E.A.T. offers the following safety tips:

1. **When shopping, park in well-lit areas, near sidewalks or walkways.** Avoid parking near dumpsters or large vans or trucks. These obstacles decrease your ability to see the space around your vehicle clearly, where thieves or carjackers could be hiding.
2. **Consider using the valet service** if you are out at a shopping center or restaurant alone at night. It may cost money, but your safety is worth more. Leave the valet only the ignition key with no I.D. Keep your registration and proof of insurance in your wallet.
3. **If you have gifts or valuables in your car, place them in the trunk and out of view.** Use a trash bag, blanket or cardboard box to camouflage packages in the back of a van or SUV.
4. **If threatened by a carjacker with a gun or other weapon, GIVE UP THE CAR. DON'T ARGUE.** A life is more important than any car.
5. **If you witness an auto theft or carjacking, call the police immediately.** If you have any information regarding an auto theft, insurance fraud or carjacking, **call the H.E.A.T. tip reward line at 1-800-242-H.E.A.T.**

- more -

**Crime Victims' Rights Week**  
**Page Two**

**About H.E.A.T.**

Since its inception in 1985, H.E.A.T. tips led to the recovery of nearly \$42 million in stolen property and the arrests of nearly 3,000 suspects involved in auto theft rings, chop shops, car jackings, fraudulent car thefts, among other crimes. Also, H.E.A.T. has paid nearly \$2.9 million in rewards over the last 20 years.

Anyone with information on auto theft, car jacking, chop shops and auto insurance fraud in Michigan is encouraged to call the H.E.A.T. tip line, 1-800-242-H.E.A.T., to provide a confidential report. H.E.A.T. works with Michigan law enforcement agencies to follow up on tips. Tipsters are awarded up to \$1,000 if their tip leads to the arrest and prosecution of a suspected car thief or a person suspected of auto theft-related insurance fraud. Rewards of up to \$10,000 are issued if a tip results in the arrest and binding over for trial of a suspected theft ring or chop shop operators. H.E.A.T. rewards up to \$2,000 for information leading to the issuance of a warrant for a carjacking suspect. The H.E.A.T. tip line is monitored by the Michigan State Police and funded by Michigan's auto insurance companies.

# # #

***Editor's Note:***

***To schedule an interview with Terri Miller,  
contact Elizabeth Weigandt Twork at 248.362.4200, ext 244.***