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## **H.E.A.T. REPORTS SHIFT IN AUTO-RELATED CRIME ACTIVITY** *Auto Thefts Down, Carjackings and Fraud on the Rise*

**Livonia, Mich.** (Feb. 17, 2009) – H.E.A.T. (Help Eliminate Auto Thefts) responded today to 2007 statistics released by the Automobile Theft Prevention Authority (ATPA) that indicate a decrease in the number of vehicles stolen in Michigan.

“H.E.A.T. is pleased to see an overall decrease in vehicle thefts across the state; however, our work is far from over,” said Terri Miller, director of H.E.A.T. “While reported auto thefts may be down, auto theft investigators are busier than ever. Most vehicle manufacturers have made improvements in anti-theft technologies, making vehicles on the street harder to steal. Early in 2007, Detroit Police started to require that citizens report auto thefts in person rather than over the phone, which has helped weed out many false reports and assisted in decreasing auto thefts. However, insurance fraud, carjacking, component thefts and larceny from a vehicle are on the rise.”

### **2008 ATPA Report Highlights:**

(Note: This data is from 2007. Data for the 2008 calendar year will be available in February 2010).

- Auto thefts in Michigan decreased by 16.5 percent from 2006. In 2007, 41,510 vehicles were reported stolen in Michigan, compared to 49,709 in 2006.
- From 1986 to 2007, Michigan auto thefts declined 42 percent, compared to a decrease in auto thefts nationally of 11 percent. Michigan ranked as the sixth highest state in the nation for total motor vehicle thefts in 2007.
- In 2007, the 2000 Dodge Intrepid was Michigan’s most stolen vehicle. Thieves’ top color preferences for vehicles stolen were once again black, white and blue.
- The months with the highest auto theft figures were August, July and June, and the top three days of the week were Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.
- Though the city of Detroit saw auto thefts decrease by 14.2 percent, from 22,918 in 2006 to 19,655 in 2007, it is still the highest ranking city in Michigan for auto thefts.

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- Among Michigan's other larger cities, **declines** in auto theft were seen in:
  - Dearborn – from 1,035 in 2006 to 801 in 2007, a decrease of 22.6 percent.
  - Flint – from 1,521 in 2006 to 1,034 in 2007, a decrease of 32 percent.
  - Muskegon – from 170 in 2006 to 158 in 2007, a decrease of 7.1 percent.
  - Lansing – from 472 in 2006 to 357 in 2007, a decrease of 24.4 percent.
  
- Among Michigan's cities, **increases** in auto theft occurred in:
  - Pontiac – from 565 in 2006 to 615 in 2007, an increase of 8.8 percent.
  - Taylor – from 371 in 2006 to 422 in 2007, an increase of 13.7 percent.
  - Flint Twp. – from 193 in 2006 to 216 in 2007, an increase of 12 percent.
  - Troy – from 147 in 2006 to 170 in 2007, an increase of 15.6 percent.

“H.E.A.T. continues to encourage citizens across the state to help keep their neighborhoods safe and insurance rates down by utilizing our 24/7 toll-free tip line. Citizens can anonymously report an auto theft-related crime and may be rewarded up to \$10,000 for their tip,” said Miller.

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

Since its inception in 1985, H.E.A.T. tips have led to the recovery of more than \$50 million in stolen property and the arrests of more than 3,000 suspects involved in auto theft rings, chop shops, carjackings and fraudulent car thefts, among other auto-related crimes.

H.E.A.T. has paid more than \$3.2 million in tipster rewards over the last 23 years. Anyone with information on auto theft, carjacking, chop shops, auto theft-related identity theft and auto insurance fraud in Michigan is encouraged to call the H.E.A.T. 24/7 tip line and speak to a live operator at 1-800-242-HEAT, or log on to [www.1800242HEAT.com](http://www.1800242HEAT.com) 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 the 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.

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*Editor's Note: To schedule an interview with Terri Miller, contact Kim Tassie at 248.362.4200 x243 or [ktassie@baileypr.com](mailto:ktassie@baileypr.com).*