



Town of Glastonbury

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Richard J. Johnson
Town Manager

June 24, 2021

VIA EMAIL AND U.S. MAIL

The Honorable Ned Lamont
Office of the Governor
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Car Thefts

Dear Governor Lamont:

This letter is written on behalf of the Glastonbury Town Council concerning an ongoing issue faced by communities across the state. By action at its Tuesday, June 22, 2021 meeting, the Council voted unanimously to support these comments.

Like many communities in Connecticut, Glastonbury continues to experience thefts of and from motor vehicles at an alarming rate. Since January 1, 2021, Glastonbury residents have reported 17 stolen motor vehicles and 103 thefts from vehicles. Perhaps more concerning is the increase in related residential burglaries and instances where homeowners are confronting these criminals. It is a matter of time before one of these confrontations turns violent or fatal (in January, Glastonbury's state legislators, Senator Cassano and Representatives Barry and Doucette, were advised of a mother and infant shot by a juvenile in a stolen car and a situation where a homeowner was threatened at gun point during an attempted car theft). Property owners are afraid to park in residential driveways or leave their garage doors open, and are now looking to determine how they can best defend their property – e.g. by establishing neighborhood block watch programs or other safety measures.

Those committing these offenses are aware of limitations imposed by policy and law. On Sunday, June 13th, five suspects, age 18 and younger, came to Glastonbury in a stolen car, committed several burglaries, were involved in several accidents while trying to escape, fled on foot, stole another car from a Lyft driver they had called for a ride, then crashed that car on Glastonbury High School property before officers were able to take them into custody. Because officers have no viable options for detaining them, the juveniles were promptly released from custody to their parents/guardians (some of whom requested that the police keep the juveniles in custody). This is only one example of what has become nearly a daily occurrence in Town and throughout the state.

Police officers statewide confirm the majority of these crimes are being committed by young people, resulting from continued erosion of laws and policies that remove accountability and give victims, police, and courts little recourse. Members of the Glastonbury community repeatedly express their fear, and police report a several hundred percent increase in gun permit applications over recent years, a potentially dangerous correlation. It seems that every attempt to remedy this problem at the legislative level is met with resistance. Glastonbury Police continue to proactively address this problem through patrols, investigations, collaboration with other police agencies, public information campaigns, and community meetings, but the fact remains that change needs to occur through state legislation.

Change is needed to protect all those involved including young people, property owners, and police. Glastonbury is prepared to participate in any process to reach an appropriate remedy.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Johnson
Town Manager

RJJ/sal

cc: **All copies sent via email**
Senator Steve Cassano
Representative Jill Barry
Representative Jason Doucette
All Connecticut State Legislators
Glastonbury Town Council
Marshall Porter, Glastonbury Chief of Police