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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

April 8, 2022

The Honorable Merrick Garland
Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland:

I write to express concern over the rise in carjackings across the country and to urge you to ensure that federal resources are being used to support efforts to reduce these crimes. The root causes behind the increases in crime are complex, and we need to take meaningful, comprehensive action to address the problem head on.

Last month, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on this issue and the testimony made it clear that there is an ongoing nationwide epidemic of carjackings that must be urgently addressed. In my state, for example, the city of Minneapolis experienced a 537 percent increase in carjackings between 2019 and 2020, and in 2021 there were more than 640 successful or attempted carjackings reported.¹ Nearly 90 percent of these carjackings remain unsolved.² Not only are these crimes violent, but they can leave victims and entire communities feeling at risk.

While the increase in carjacking incidents is troubling, I am encouraged to see that federal investigators and prosecutors are working with state and local law enforcement and recently brought charges against a group of seven men for violent crimes including carjacking.³ The cases are being prosecuted as part of the joint federal, state, and local “Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Program.” I also appreciate the Department’s continued efforts to support the hiring, retention, and training of local law enforcement officers through the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grant program, which I have championed for many years.

Nonetheless, there is more the Department of Justice can do to develop an effective response to carjackings nationwide. Accordingly, I respectfully request responses to the questions below:

¹ Cathay Wruzer & Alex Cheng, *Why has a Wave of Carjacking Hit the Twin Cities?*, MINN. PUB. RADIO (Dec. 14, 2021), <https://www.mprnews.org/episode/2021/12/14/why-has-a-wave-of-carjackings-hit-the-twin-cities>; Jeff Hargarten, *A breakdown of 2021 carjackings in Minneapolis by neighborhood*, STAR TRIB. (Jan. 12, 2022), <https://www.startribune.com/a-breakdown-of-2021-carjackings-in-minneapolis-by-neighborhood-map/600134704/>.

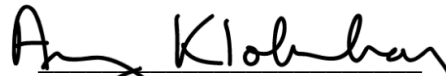
² Nathan O’Neal, *Analysis: 90% of reported Minneapolis carjackings unsolved*, FOX 9 NEWS (Feb. 20, 2022), <https://www.fox9.com/news/analysis-90-of-reported-minneapolis-carjackings-unsolved>

³ *Seven Minneapolis Men Face Federal Charges for Violent Crimes*, DEP’T. OF JUSTICE (Feb. 3, 2022), <https://www.justice.gov/usao-mn/pr/seven-minneapolis-men-face-federal-charges-violent-crimes>.

1. How have the Department's violent crime task forces prioritized carjacking in their plans to reduce violent crime?
2. What resources has the Department made available to assist local law enforcement as they address the rise in carjackings?
3. Has the Department developed best practices that can be used by federal, state, and local law enforcement to respond to carjackings?
4. What steps can the Department take to help identify and address the root causes of these crimes?
5. Are there changes in the federal criminal law that are needed to ensure that prosecutors have the tools needed to successfully prosecute these crimes?

It is critical that the Department of Justice prioritize its coordination with state and local law enforcement officials who are working tirelessly to combat the rise in these violence crimes. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Klobuchar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "A".

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator