

SENATE, No. 4612

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 1, 2026

Sponsored by:

Senator JON M. BRAMNICK

District 21 (Middlesex, Morris, Somerset and Union)

Senator TROY SINGLETON

District 7 (Burlington)

SYNOPSIS

“Stolen Car Accountability Act;” Creates duty in transportation industry to prevent theft of stolen motor vehicles and permits civil penalties.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/1/2026)

1 AN ACT concerning transnational motor vehicle theft and
2 supplementing chapter 20 of Title 2C of the New Jersey Statutes.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

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7 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the “Stolen Car
8 Accountability Act.”

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10 2. a. A person who offers storage, transportation, or
11 transportation brokerage services for a motor vehicle has a duty to
12 take reasonable measures to prevent the transportation of a stolen
13 motor vehicle into or out of this State.

14 b. (1) In addition to or in lieu of any other civil or criminal
15 remedy provided by law, upon a determination that any person has
16 violated subsection a. of this section, that person shall be liable to a
17 civil penalty not exceeding \$1,000,000 for each stolen motor
18 vehicle he stores, transports, or brokers, and for a subsequent
19 offense shall be liable to a civil penalty not to exceed \$5,000,000.

20 (2) It is an affirmative defense that the property was received
21 with purpose to restore it to the owner.

22 (3) "Receive" means acquiring possession, control, or title, or
23 lending on the security of the property.

24 c. An action to recover a civil penalty under this section shall be
25 brought by the Attorney General in the Superior Court pursuant to
26 section 2 of P.L. 1999, c.274 (C.2A:58-11).

27 d. A criminal conviction is not necessary for a civil penalty
28 enforcement action pursuant to this act.

29
30 3. Permissive inference. A violation of paragraph (a) of
31 section 3 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as
32 this bill) may be inferred in the case of a person who:

33 (1) is in the business of storing, transporting, or brokering
34 transportation of motor vehicles, and acquires the motor vehicles
35 without having ascertained by reasonable inquiry that the person
36 from whom he obtained it had a legal right to possess and dispose
37 of it; or

38 (2) is found in possession or control of two or more motor
39 vehicles stolen on two or more separate occasions; or

40 (3) has received a stolen motor vehicle in another transaction
41 within the year preceding the transaction charged; or

42 (4) is found in possession of a motor vehicle without proper
43 documentation or other evidence of right to possession; or

44 (5) has received stolen property in another transaction within the
45 year preceding the transaction charged; or

46 (6) is found in possession of property of a cargo carrier without
47 proper documentation or other evidence of right to possession.

1 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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6 This bill would impose civil penalties for facilitators of
7 transnational auto theft, including, but not limited to, transportation
8 brokers, to reduce the incentive for facilitators in auto theft
9 operations, such as transportation brokerage services, to (1) ignore
10 obvious indicia of theft, or (2) maintain ineffective business
11 practices.

12 Under current law, the penalties for theft of a motor vehicle are
13 set forth in the State's general statute consolidating theft and
14 computer criminal activity offenses, N.J.S.A.2C:20-2. Receiving a
15 stolen motor vehicle is punishable as a crime of the third degree
16 unless the vehicle is valued at \$75,000, or greater, in which case it
17 is a crime of the second degree. Separately, under N.J.S.A.2C:20-
18 10.1 et seq. "receiving" a stolen vehicle means acquiring
19 possession, control or title, or lending on the security of the
20 property.

21 Under the bill, a person who offers storage, transportation or
22 transportation brokerage services for a motor vehicle has a duty to
23 take reasonable measures to prevent the transportation of a stolen
24 motor vehicle. A person who violates that duty shall be liable to a
25 civil penalty not exceeding \$1,000,000. For a second or subsequent
26 offense, the civil penalty shall be \$5,000,000.

27 The commercial port areas around New York and New Jersey are
28 major exit points for international car theft rings. The federal
29 United States Customs and Border Patrol, CBP, and the Department
30 of Homeland Security, DHS, in coordination with local and State
31 law enforcement entities, prosecute transporting, buying, selling or
32 storing stolen vehicles, as federal crimes under federal importing
33 and exporting laws. New Jersey criminal offenses related to stolen
34 motor vehicles include theft and receiving crime.