

Resolution No.: 20-406
Introduced: February 6, 2024
Adopted: February 13, 2024

**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Lead Sponsor: Councilmembers Jawando, Albornoz, Balcombe, Fani-González,
Luedtke, Sayles, and Stewart

SUBJECT: Resolution requesting the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issue a recall of Kia and Hyundai models that lack immobilizer technology.

Background

1. Jurisdictions across the country, including the state of Maryland and Baltimore City, have called on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to issue a recall of Kia and Hyundai models that lack immobilizer technology - a critical vulnerability that compromises the security of these vehicles.
2. This known vulnerability has led to a disproportionate theft of these vehicle models. The vulnerability affects individuals and families who depend on their cars to work and care for loved ones, strains law enforcement resources, and causes distress and unease in communities.
3. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has a responsibility to hold the manufacturer accountable for the safety and security of their products. Their inaction to fully address the problem with their vehicles impacts personal and community safety.
4. In 2023, Attorney General Brown joined attorneys general across the United States in calling on the NHTSA to recall Hyundai and Kia vehicles manufactured between 2011 and 2022. The vehicles lack engine immobilizers and have “easily-bypassed ignition switches” that have made them vulnerable to theft in Maryland and other jurisdictions.¹
5. Per the Attorneys General, “[d]ue to this vulnerability in their starting systems, the vehicles can be hotwired and stolen in a matter of minutes, presenting a serious safety issue nationwide” leading to property damage and death.

¹ <https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/Press/2023/042023.pdf>.

6. Baltimore City was the first city in the country to call for this same recall of Kia and Hyundai models lacking immobilizer technology.²
7. The Montgomery County Council is dedicated to ensuring a safe community for all residents. Public safety requires a robust and holistic approach to addressing the root causes of crime and other contributing factors.
8. Given the nationwide automobile theft related to the Kia and Hyundai vehicles lacking immobilizer technology, it is only sensible to demand the manufacturer promptly address this problem to reduce automobile theft and crimes of opportunity, as part of a broader response to this public safety concern.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

The Montgomery County Council joins jurisdictions across the country, including the state of Maryland and the city of Baltimore, in calling on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to issue a recall of Kia and Hyundai models manufactured between 2011 and 2022 that lack immobilizer technology - a critical vulnerability that compromises the security of these vehicles.

This is a correct copy of Council action.



Sara R. Tenenbaum
Clerk of the Council

² City of Baltimore Council Bill 23-0199R.