



**David A. Clarke Jr.**  
Sheriff

## Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Sheriff Attributes Proliferation of Auto Thefts to Lenient Prosecution**

Milwaukee, WI – Sheriff David A. Clarke Jr., in learning about the sharp spike in auto thefts in the city of Milwaukee, said that, in part, the reason why we've seen an increase is because of lax prosecution and sentencing policies for those convicted of this type of crime.

“We have to stop treating auto theft as if it's a case of a son or daughter taking a parent's car out for a joyride while the parents are sleeping. We've gone so soft on auto theft that we don't call it auto theft anymore – it's called 'Take and Drive.' Stealing somebody's vehicle, sometimes at gunpoint, has got to start being treated like the serious offense that it is. These cars are used in armed robberies, burglaries, drive-by shootings and hit and run crashes. Some of the stolen cars are torched when the thieves are through with them in order to destroy evidence, like fingerprints.

If I embezzled \$10K from your bank account, it would be treated as a felony. If I steal your \$10K car, it's treated as joyriding. The thieves know it's okay to steal vehicles because nothing will happen to them.”

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