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MEMORANDUM

Date: January 22, 2008

To: The Honorable Mark Leno, Chair
Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee

From: Rex D. Frazier, President
Michael A. Gunning, Vice President
Kimberley Dellinger, General Counsel
Ermelinda Ruiz, Legislative Advocate

Re: AB 998 (Garrick) Motor Vehicle Thefts
Assembly Appropriations Committee – January 24, 2008
As Amended January 7, 2008
PIFC Position: Support

The Personal Insurance Federation of California, representing insurers who write over 50% of the auto insurance sold in the state, including Farmers, 21st Century, Safeco, Progressive, State Farm and NAMIC, **supports AB 998 by Assembly Member Garrick.**

PIFC and its member companies have a long history of support for sound public safety measures that serve to reduce injuries and enhance public safety. Because of our interest in vehicle theft issues, we want to express our strong support for AB 998.

Through our members' association with the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) we are vigilant of the efforts of organized criminal conspiracies dealing with vehicle theft and insurance fraud. NICB on an annual basis publishes its "Hot Spots" media campaign which ranks cities in terms of vehicle theft. On a consistent basis, California has numerous cities ranking in the top ten. As a result, the economic losses to California consumers are staggering.

AB 998 would combat the growing crime of motor vehicle theft by increasing penalties for repeat offenders. This bill would make a felony conviction of a motor vehicle when the person has a prior misdemeanor conviction for motor vehicle theft. The bill would also provide enhanced prison sentences for persons who steal motor vehicles like ambulances, police cars or a handicapped individual vehicle. By toughening penalties for would-be vehicle thieves, AB 998 sends a strong message that California does not tolerate the unlawful taking of citizens' property.

For the foregoing reasons, **PIFC supports AB 998** and urges your **"yes"** vote. If you have any questions regarding PIFC's support, please contact Michael Gunning at (916) 442-6646.

cc: Honorable Martin Garrick, Author
Jeff Long, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Gary Olson, Assembly Republican Caucus
Mike Proso, Chief Deputy, Legislative Secretary for the Governor
Kathleen Webb, Office of the Insurance Advisor

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