



Flawed Logic: The Hyundai Anti-Theft Campaign

An analysis of the campaigns to address rampant theft
of Hyundai and Kia vehicles across America

ANTI-THEFT CLAIMS PORTION

Rev. 3/1/2026

SEE FULL REPORT FOR DEFECTS PORTION

Note: Due to the lack of response from the NHTSA suggesting that the investigation has been abandoned, we are making a copy of the full report available for victims seeking legal recourse.

[FULL REPORT LINK](#)





Flawed Logic: The Hyundai Anti-Theft Campaign

An analysis of the campaigns to address rampant theft of Hyundai and Kia vehicles across America

The staggering amount of theft involving Hyundai & Kia vehicles in the past 5 years has earned the automakers the top spots for “[America’s Most Stolen Vehicles](#)”. This report intends to investigate the results of the Hyundai/Kia anti-theft campaign and was initiated due to the continuing thefts of Hyundai and Kia vehicles after the “anti-theft logic” update was supposed to stem the nationwide surge.

Car theft has been a major issue worldwide that affects all makes of cars and has resulted in various countries mandating electronic anti-theft immobilizers as early as 1998. The immobilizer technology adds a layer of security by first validating the authenticity of a microchip embedded in the key to the car’s computer (ECU) before it will start.

Although immobilizer technology was mandated across various European countries, Australia and Canada, it was not required by law in the US; however, as automakers complied with these global mandates, the technology also became largely industry-standardized in the US. As an example, Ford started to standardize the technology in the US by 1996 and had nearly their entire consumer-vehicle segment outfitted by 1999.

Before immobilizers were standard, the primary focus of a vehicle’s security was on its mechanical ignition assembly. The assembly consists of an ignition lock cylinder, an ignition switch to start the car, and a steering-lock that prevents the steering-wheel from turning while engaged; these components are linked together by an internal tumbler-rod that is rotated by turning the ignition cylinder with its key.

The ignition assembly is subject to federal law in America through the rules and standards set forth under the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, specifically, “§ 571.114 Standard No. 114 (FMVSS 114); Theft protection and rollaway prevention.”

The NHTSA is the federal agency entrusted to enforce these laws and can issue a national recall if an automaker fails to meet the federal standards.

A recall can also be issued if a vehicle component is found to be either defective or substandard and, therefore, fails to uphold a federal standard or creates the potential to cause serious crashes.

§ 571.114 Standard No. 114; Theft protection and rollaway prevention.

S1. Scope. This standard specifies vehicle performance requirements intended to reduce the incidence of crashes resulting from theft and accidental rollaway of motor vehicles.

S2. Purpose. The purpose of this standard is to decrease the likelihood that a vehicle is stolen, or accidentally set in motion.

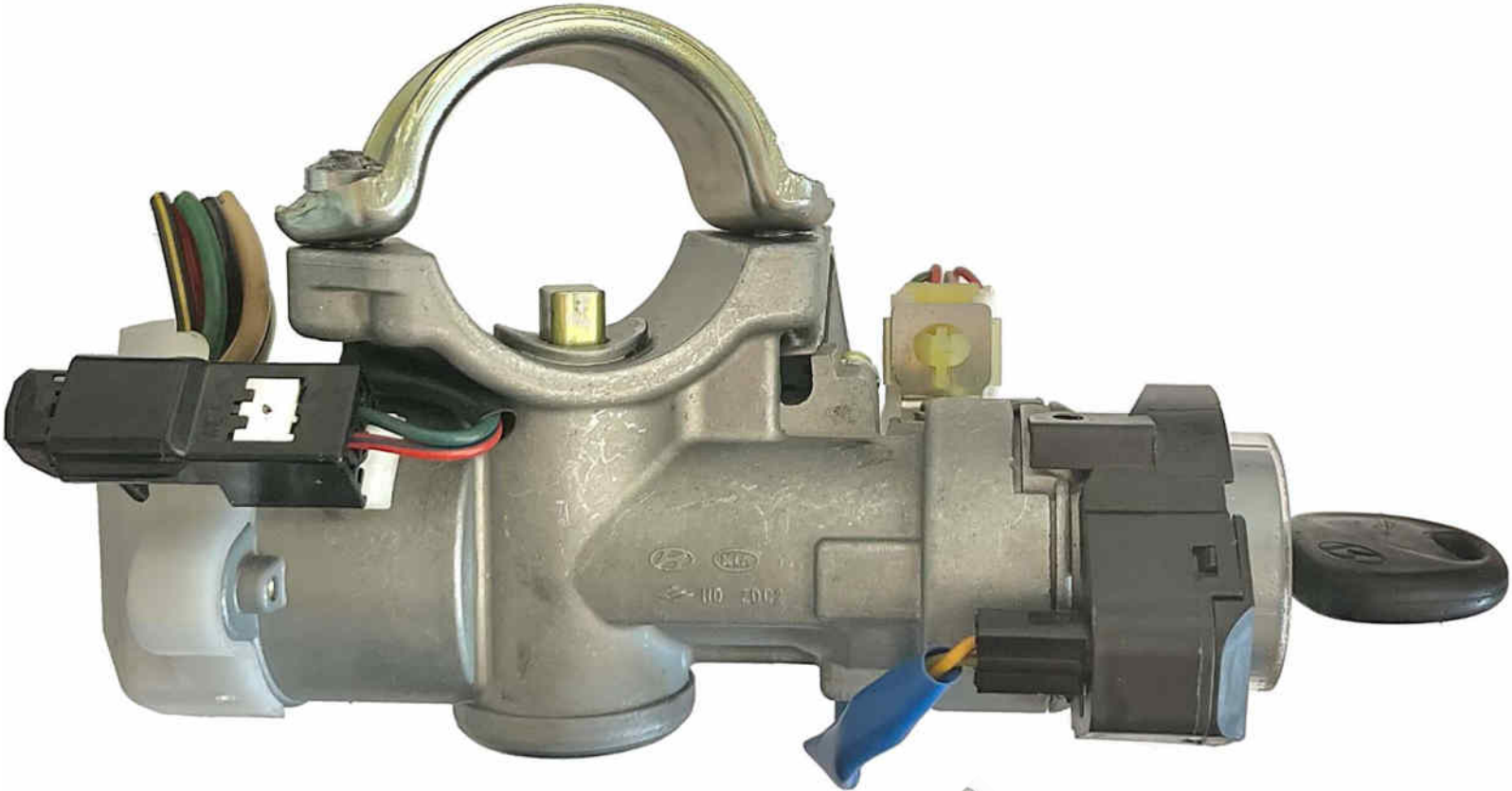
S5.1 Theft protection.

S5.1.1 Each vehicle must have a starting system which, whenever the key is removed from the starting system prevents:

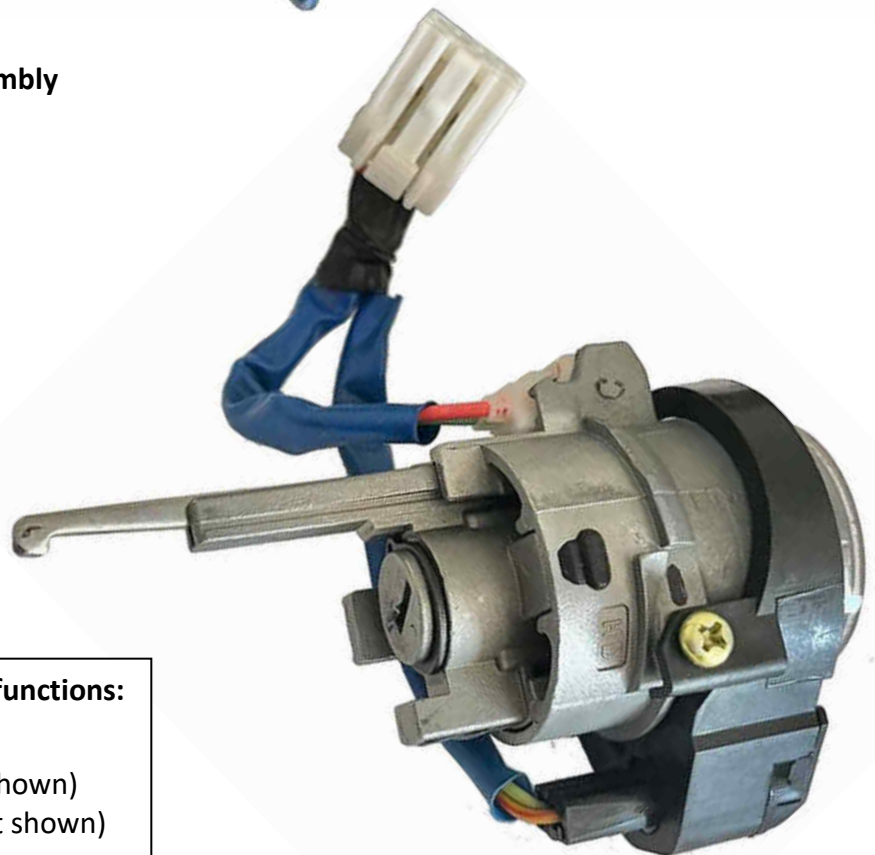
- (a) The normal activation of the vehicle's engine or motor; **and**
- (b) Either steering, or forward self-mobility, of the vehicle, or both.

Metal Ignition Assembly

Until 2010, Hyundai's ignition assembly construction was of a solid metal shell (i.e., "housing") that was designed to resist tampering and brute force attacks.



2007-10 Hyundai Elantra ignition assembly



Cylinder connector (shown) has up to 3 functions:

- 1) Key detection switch (standard)
- 2) LED illumination ring (optional / shown)
- 3) Immobilizer RF coil (optional / not shown)

Plastic Ignition Assembly

Starting in models first introduced in 2011, Hyundai began replacing the metal ignition assemblies with hollow plastic that was designed to reduce their manufacturing costs.



2011-16 Hyundai Elantra Ignition Assembly



Cylinder connector (not shown) has up to 3 functions:

- 1) Key detection switch (standard)
- 2) LED illumination ring (optional)
- 3) Immobilizer RF coil (optional)

Plastic Ignition Assembly (Overview)

Design

Beginning with vehicle models introduced globally in 2011, Hyundai replaced the previously robust metal ignition assemblies with cheaper, fragile plastic assemblies. These plastic assemblies utilized [thin-wall construction](#) intended for portable electronics, and they failed to provide the security standards of the metal assemblies they replaced. From a logical and engineering standpoint, the new plastic assemblies had been designed for use in combination with immobilizer technology.

We contend that the metal housing and associated tamper-resistant security had become an expected quality standard. Any engineering shift to lower-security plastic construction would have required immobilizers to be included as standard equipment to maintain the expected level of vehicle security.

Hyundai failed to implement immobilizers as standard. As a result, it remained the only automaker in the United States selling vehicles with plastic ignition assemblies without immobilizers through the 2022 model year. This decision contributed to a national car theft epidemic and raises serious questions regarding whether Hyundai reasonably complied with the anti-theft requirements of the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS 114).

Risks

The plastic ignition assembly has different physical properties than its metal predecessor, allowing the housing to flex, deform, and fracture more easily. Hyundai failed to make appropriate design changes to the plastic housing or its mechanisms to bolster their effectiveness and counteract the plastic's tendency to deform, which increases the likelihood of malfunctions.

By examining both new and used ignition assemblies, we were able to assess how the assemblies and their mechanisms function in the real world. We evaluated their mechanical design, construction, and operational effectiveness, and examined the adverse risks of converting the assemblies to plastic, including the resulting potential for malfunctions.

“Anti-Theft Logic” (Defective Alarm)

In addition to the decision to implement plastic ignition assemblies without the designed immobilizer system, Hyundai sold these vehicles with defective alarm systems through the 2022 model year.

Prior to the national attention on the Hyundai/Kia theft epidemic, many owners were unaware of the alarm defect. When owners tested the alarm while armed—by opening the door and attempting to start the vehicle—the alarm functioned as expected, preventing ignition. However, a programming defect caused the alarm to fail if the door had not been opened, allowing the ignition to start the vehicle.

This defect enabled thieves to gain entry by simply breaking a window and then prying the ignition cylinder from its plastic housing to start the car, often using only a USB cable. Local law enforcement agencies began to notice this method in **2020** as [thefts of Hyundai and Kia vehicles increased](#), preceding a national surge in **2021**. The escalating theft crisis prompted numerous state attorneys general and municipalities to formally request assistance from [Hyundai](#) and [Kia](#) in **2021**.

Hyundai did not formally acknowledge the alarm defect until 2023, when it began rolling out the ECU software update known as the “Anti-Theft Logic” update, which applied to vehicles dating back to 2011.

In this report, we will examine the effectiveness of the updated alarm system, evaluate its ability to prevent theft, and explore flaws in the system's design and potential avenues for exploitation.

“Anti-Theft Protection” (Cylinder Sleeve)

As the software update campaign to address the defective alarm system was rolled out, certain vehicle models were found to be incompatible with the update. For these vehicles, Hyundai offered an alternative: a metal sleeve installation designed to reinforce the ignition cylinder and reduce the likelihood of it being pried from the plastic assembly housing.

In this report, we will examine the effectiveness of the ignition cylinder sleeve and assess whether it meaningfully improves the overall performance and robustness of the plastic ignition assembly.

Steering-Wheel Lock Campaign (“The Club”)

Because Hyundai and Kia delayed implementing a software update to correct the defective alarm, they offered a temporary, stopgap solution to vehicle owners by distributing imitation steering-wheel locks—off-branded clones of “The Club.” As of 2025, Hyundai continues to provide these steering-wheel locks for vehicles not eligible for the “Anti-Theft Logic” update ([Campaign P32](#)).

In this report, we will examine the effectiveness of the steering-wheel lock and evaluate the potential risks it poses, including damage to the plastic ignition assembly and its components from both attempted theft and routine use.

Objectives

- A) Evaluate the plastic ignition assemblies and analyze their compliance with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 114, Theft Protection and Rollaway Prevention ([49 CFR Part 571](#)).
- B) Assess the potential for malfunctions in the components of the plastic ignition assemblies.
- C) Examine the effectiveness of the “Anti-Theft Logic” software update in mitigating vehicle theft.
- D) Evaluate the effectiveness of the “Anti-Theft Protection” metal cylinder sleeve in reinforcing the ignition assembly.
- E) Assess the results and potential consequences of distributing steering-wheel locks to customers with plastic ignition assemblies.



Hyundai Motor Group (“HMG”) of Korea owns Hyundai Motor Co. (“HMC”) of Korea and Kia Corporation of Korea. Hyundai Motor Co. (“HMC”) owns/operates Hyundai Motors America (“HMA”) DBA Hyundai Motor North America (“HMNA”). Kia Corporation owns Kia America (“KA”), formerly known as Kia Motors America (“KMA”) – HMC is also a parent company of KA. HMA is headquartered in Fountain Valley, CA & KA is headquartered in Irvine, California.

Ignition Assembly (Explainer)

The ignition assembly consists of an ignition cylinder (with key), an ignition switch to start the car, and a steering-lock assembly that prevents the steering-wheel from turning while engaged.

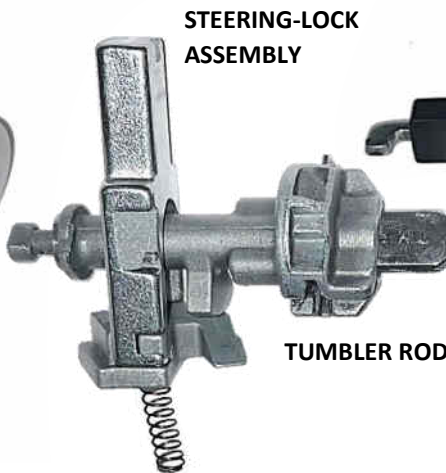
These components are joined in a housing and linked by a tumbler-rod, which is rotated by the ignition cylinder.



IGNITION HOUSING



IGNITION SWITCH



STEERING-LOCK ASSEMBLY

TUMBLER ROD



IGNITION CYLINDER

Ignition cylinder / switch positions:

LOCK (OFF):

Ignition switch is OFF and no power is transferred to the car.

Tumbler-rod disengages steering-lock and allows the spring-loaded bolt to deploy (upon removal of key).

ACC (Accessory Mode):

Ignition switch enables power output to the vehicle's accessories and shuts-off the engine (if running).

Tumbler-rod engages steering-lock and retracts the spring-loaded bolt.

ON (Ignition ON):

Ignition switch enables power output to systems used while driving (power steering, ABS, airbags, etc.).

Tumbler-rod continues to engage steering-lock.

START (Start Engine):

Ignition switch enables power output to the engine starter motor. The ignition switch uses spring-tension to turn itself back to the ON position when the key is released.

Tumbler-rod continues to engage steering-lock.



Note: Some vehicles require the driver to "PUSH" the key in ACC position before turning to LOCK.

Steering Lock (Explainer)

When the key is turned to LOCK and removed from the ignition cylinder, a spring-loaded steering-lock bolt rises from the ignition assembly and engages a receiver port in the steering column, preventing the wheel from turning.

When the key is reinserted and turned, the tumbler-rod cam depresses the steering-lock assembly, retracting the bolt and restoring free movement of the steering column.

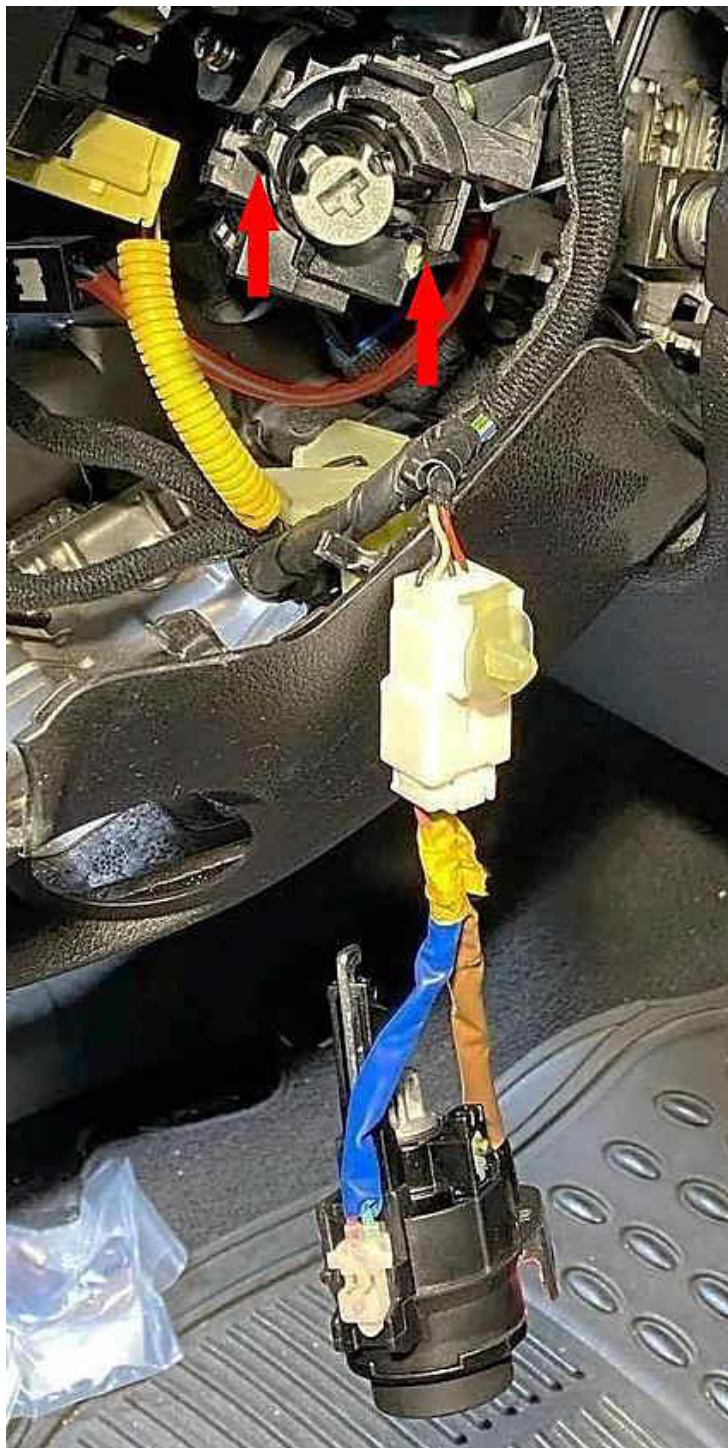


Theft Damage (RP)

Due to the widespread theft epidemic, millions of Hyundai and Kia vehicles may have compromised ignition assemblies that are at increased risk of malfunction. During an attempted theft, the ignition cylinder is often pried using a screwdriver, which introduces flexing and torsional stress throughout the ignition housing and its components. This stress causes the [thin-walled \(< 2mm\) plastic](#) housing to deform or fracture. Over time, even minor fractures can propagate and worsen due to the routine stresses of everyday use.

These deformations compromise the ignition assembly's safety mechanisms, which rely on substandard construction and tolerances as tight as 1 mm to function effectively. Once the assembly is compromised, there is a significantly higher risk of malfunctions that could result in a total loss of steering control. Because the tumbler-rod's cam is responsible for engaging and disengaging the steering-lock mechanism, preserving the integrity of the assembly requires the ignition housing to remain free from deformation or stress fractures.

Photo of ignition assembly housings documenting theft damage. Tumbler-rod in OFF/LOCK position.
Red arrows are noting areas of either cracked or missing plastic.



In 2023 alone, the NICB [reported](#) 174,421 Hyundai and Kia vehicles among the ten most stolen models. The actual number of stolen vehicles from these manufacturers is significantly higher when accounting for all models, and this figure does not include attempted thefts—which would further increase the number of vehicles with compromised ignition assemblies.

Assuming a conservative average of 350,000 affected vehicles per year (including attempted theft) over the past four years, there could be roughly 1.4 million Hyundai and Kia vehicles with compromised ignition assemblies on U.S. roads. These vehicles are more prone to catastrophic failure modes that could cause the steering wheel to lock suddenly while the vehicle is in motion.

Hyundai's business practices have maintained a high number of affected vehicles in operation, showing minimal concern for the risk to its customers and refusing to offer reasonable price concessions. The cost of an ignition assembly and cylinder set from a Hyundai dealership currently ranges from \$700–\$800, with total repair costs, including labor and taxes, likely exceeding \$1,000. Many owners, guided by mechanics or online tutorials, have opted to simply reinsert the cylinder into the compromised housing or replace it with a low-cost aftermarket cylinder, leaving the compromised assembly in place. These drivers are likely unaware of the increased risk of a critical steering lock-up failure while driving.

We estimate that approximately 1,000,000 Hyundai and Kia vehicles with compromised ignition assemblies are currently on U.S. roads. Daily use continues to stress the existing fractures in the housing, which propagate over time, increasing the likelihood of a sudden catastrophic steering lock-up.

The potential consequences of such failures are severe and life-threatening. **We strongly encourage Hyundai to issue a recall for all vehicles that have experienced an attempted theft, replacing the ignition assembly entirely and publicly warning drivers about the increased risk.** We also advise that the public be informed about the dangers of stolen vehicles being driven with physically damaged ignition assemblies and removed cylinders, which significantly elevates the risk of a catastrophic failure. Such failures may partially explain the unusually high number of crashes associated with the Hyundai and Kia theft trend.

AutoSafe's proposes issuing a recall of all **plastic** ignition assemblies without immobilizer systems due to:

1) **Inadequate Material Strength of Plastic Housing**

The ignition assembly's thin-walled plastic housing lacks sufficient material strength and structural integrity. Under foreseeable misuse scenarios, such as theft attempts involving prying, forced rotation, or impact, the housing can be easily compromised. Because FMVSS 114 requires ignition systems to provide a reasonable level of protection against unauthorized operation of a vehicle, a component design that is so fragile cannot reasonably be considered compliant.

2) **The ignition assembly housing's plastic is of insufficient thickness and creates the potential for malfunctions.**

The thinnest section of the housing is structurally vulnerable, making it possible for an initial fracture to form at this weak point. Once initiated, such a fracture can propagate through the plastic housing under normal operating stresses, thereby creating the potential for a catastrophic malfunction, including a sudden steering lock-up while the vehicle is in motion.

3) **Reliance on Electronic Immobilizer Instead of Physical Security**

The ignition assembly's 1.x mm thin-walled plastic housing appears to have been engineered with the assumption that an electronic immobilizer would provide the primary theft deterrent. In such a configuration, the housing itself is not designed to resist tampering or forced entry, but rather to function as a placeholder for the immobilizer system.

By delegating the anti-theft function almost entirely to the immobilizer, the assembly's physical design fails to satisfy the standard's intent, as it cannot meaningfully deter or resist a theft attempt on its own.

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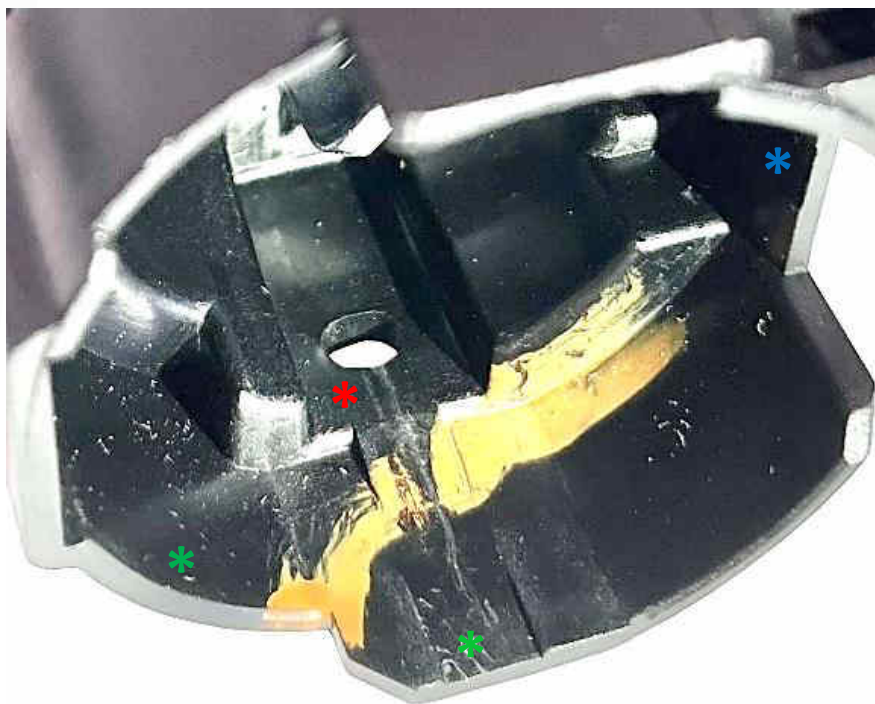
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- * 1.3 mm
- * 1.5 mm
- * 3.0 mm

Comparison

Ford utilized plastic ignition assemblies that were reinforced with metal in a few select models starting in 2008. **These metal reinforced assemblies also included immobilizer technology as standard** (Ford standardized immobilizers by 1999) and should have served as an example to Hyundai as to the expected quality standards in the United States.



Hyundai Elantra (2015/2016) - **\$740.58**



Ford Focus (2008) - **\$215.00**

Instead of meeting U.S. quality expectations, the focus shifted to cutting costs and boosting profits with substandard parts. Competition should drive better products, but American companies shouldn't lose ground at home because newer players gain an advantage by cutting corners.

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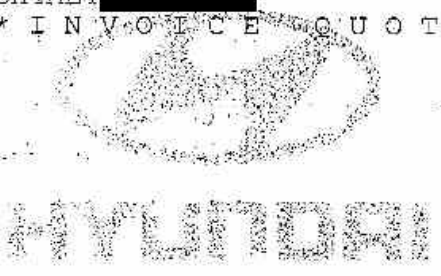
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Price Quote for 2015 Hyundai Elantra Ignition Assembly

Price quote from Hyundai dealership in Los Angeles, CA

SHIP VIA		SLSM.	B/L NO.	TERMS	F.O.B. POINT		
				CASH			
QTY	UNIT	NO.	PART NO.	DESCRIPTION	LIST	NET	AMOUNT
1	1	0	81900-3XF00	KEY SUB SE	316.91	316.91	316.91
1	1	0	81910-3X130	BODY & SWI	379.68	379.68	379.68
1	1	0	81918-2H000	CLAMP-STEE	26.43	26.43	26.43
2	2	0	81919-31000	BOLT-SAFET	8.78	8.78	17.56
KMHDH4AE4 [REDACTED] **** INVOICE QUOTE - DO NOT PAY **** 							
						PARTS	740.58
						SUBLET	
						FREIGHT	0.00
						SALES TAX	70.36
CUSTOMER'S SIGNATURE						TOTAL	\$810.94
X							

NOTICE TO CONSUMER: PLEASE READ IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON REVERSE SIDE.

FILE COPY

Note: Quote does not include the price of labor to install parts.

We believe there may be 1,000,000 vehicles with compromised ignition assemblies driving on America's roads today.

If every vehicle owner were to pay Hyundai's quoted price, Hyundai would stand to benefit by taking in **over 1 Billion dollars** in additional revenue.

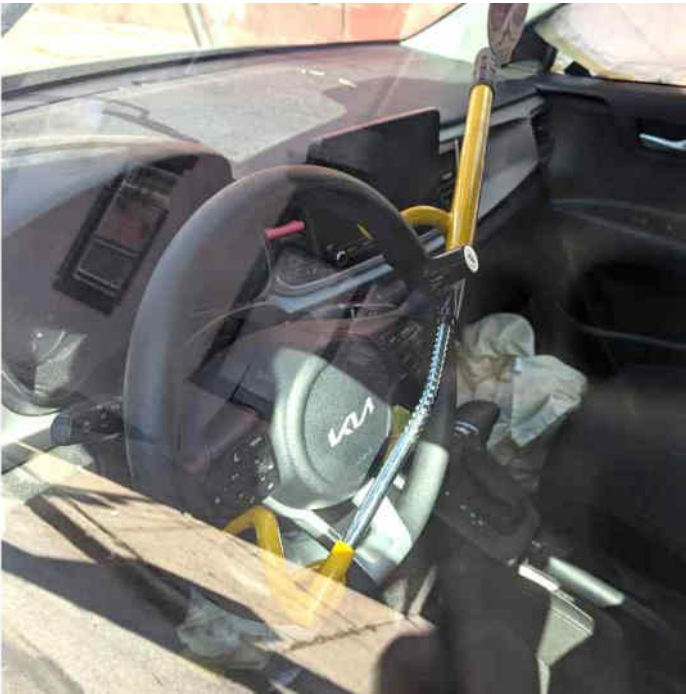
Steering-Wheel Lock Campaign (RP)

As Hyundai and Kia thefts surged across the United States, the automaker resorted to an unorthodox “band-aid” solution: distributing imitation steering-wheel locks (distinct from the ignition assembly’s steering-lock). As of 2025, Hyundai continues to provide these locks for affected vehicles not eligible for the “Anti-Theft Logic” update ([Campaign P32](#)).

The steering-wheel lock was designed to attach to the wheel and prevent maneuvering while in place. Unfortunately, the selected lock was already known to be easily defeated. Its design dates back to the 1980s and remained popular throughout the 1990s, but by the 2000s, its vulnerabilities were widely recognized, and it was no longer considered a viable security measure. Today, these locks are often seen as nostalgic relics of the 1990s, akin to cassettes or VHS tapes.

These locks could be bypassed by bending the bar with a stronger one or by quickly cutting through the steering wheel with a hacksaw. Once Hyundai and Kia began distributing these locks, a new generation of thieves rapidly rediscovered and exploited these well-known weaknesses.

[VIDEO DEMONSTRATION](#)



★★★★★ Verified Purchase

They were able to just pry it off relatively easily, can not recommend



★★★★★ Verified Purchase

Car stolen easily

My car was stolen easily with this device installed... when it was recovered the device shown was in the back seat.



Anti-Theft Logic (RP)



Window Decals

Hyundai's defective "burglar alarm" system allowed for their cars to start even while the alarm was armed and active, as long as the alarm was not tripped by opening a door. The defective alarm system, combined with Hyundai's switch from robust metal to [thin-walled plastic](#) ignition assemblies starting in 2011, led to a theft epidemic across the United States.

Before the theft surge became a national concern, owners were often unaware of the defect. Testing the alarm by opening the door would function as expected, but if the door remained closed, a programming flaw allowed the ignition to start. Thieves exploited this by breaking windows and prying the ignition cylinder from its plastic housing to start the car, sometimes using just a USB cable.

This particular method began catching the attention of some local law enforcement agencies in **2020** after noticing an [uptick in thefts](#) of Hyundai and Kia vehicles, which preceded a national surge in 2021. The crisis of car theft led to numerous state attorney generals and municipalities formally requesting help from [Hyundai](#) and [Kia](#) in **2021**.

Hyundai did not acknowledge the defect or release a corrective ECU software update, known as the "Anti-Theft Logic" update, until 2023, covering vehicles back to 2011.

Despite Hyundai's opaque efforts to obscure details on the system, thieves quickly figured out how the system *actually* works and how to bypass it. Each day, more thieves learn the trivial methods that disable Hyundai's updated alarm and theft rates continue to rise, heading closer to the peak of the theft epidemic.

This report examines the alarm's working principles, the update's efficacy, and how criminals are currently circumventing the system.

How the "Anti-Theft Logic" (actually) works:

The alarm and its "Anti-Theft Logic" are enabled by either pressing the lock button on the wireless key fob or by mechanically locking the driver door lock with the key.

Once the alarm is active, the car will not start until the alarm is deactivated by pressing the unlock button on the wireless key fob or mechanically unlocking the driver door lock with the key.

Anti-Theft Logic Disabling Methods:

Method 1 – Brute Force

Method 2 – Remove Lock

Method 3 – Short Circuit

Vehicle List - HYUNDAI

HYUNDAI	US Model Years	Housing	Anti-Theft Logic Eligible	Alternative Offered?
Accent	2012-2017	Plastic	No	Sleeve
Accent	2018-2022	Plastic	Yes	/
Elantra	2011-2016	Plastic	Yes	/
Elantra	2017-2020	Plastic	Yes	/
Elantra	2021-2022	Plastic	Yes	/
Elantra Coupe	2013-2014	Plastic	No	Sleeve
Elantra GT (i30)	2013-2017	Plastic	Yes	/
Elantra GT (i30)	2018-2020	Plastic	Yes	/
Elantra Touring (i30cw)	2011-2012	Metal	No	Sleeve
Entourage	2011-2014	Metal	Yes	/
Genesis Coupe	2011-2012	Metal	No	Sleeve
Genesis Coupe	2013-2014	Metal	Yes	/
Kona	2018-2022	Plastic	Yes	/
Palisade (Santa Fe XL)	2020-2022	Plastic	Yes	/
Santa Fe	2011-2012	Metal	No	Sleeve
Santa Fe - SE/GLS/LTD (LWB)	2013-2016	Plastic	Yes	/
Santa Fe - Sport (SWB)	2013-2018	Plastic	Yes	/
Santa Fe - XL (LWB)	2018-2019	Plastic	Yes	/
Santa Fe (SWB)	2019-2022	Plastic	Yes	/
Sonata	2011-2014	Plastic	Yes	/
Sonata	2015-2019	Plastic	Yes	/
Sonata	2020-2022	Plastic	Yes	/
Tucson	2011-2015	Metal	Yes	/
Tucson	2016-2021	Plastic	Yes	/
Tucson	2022	Plastic	Yes	/
Veloster	2012-2017	Plastic	Yes	/
Veloster	2019-2021	Plastic	Yes	/
Venue	2020-2021	Plastic	Yes	/
Veracruz	2011-2012	Metal	No	Sleeve

Anti-Theft Logic Window Decal



Cylinder Sleeve Window Decal



Vehicle List - KIA

KIA	US Model Years	Housing	Anti-Theft Logic Eligible	Alternative Offered?
Forte	2010-2013	Metal	No	Sleeve
Forte	2014-2016	Plastic	No	Sleeve
Forte	2017-2018	Plastic	Yes	/
Forte	2019-2022	Plastic	Yes	/
K5 (LX)	2021-2022	Plastic	Yes	/
Optima	2011-2015	Plastic	Yes	/
Optima	2016-2020	Plastic	Yes	/
Rio	2010-2011	Metal	No	Sleeve
Rio	2012-2017	Plastic	Yes *	Sleeve
Rio	2018-2022	Plastic	Yes *	Sleeve
Sedona	2011-2014	Metal	Yes *	Sleeve
Sedona	2015-2021	Plastic	Yes	/
Seltos	2021-2022	Plastic	Yes	/
Sorento	2010-2015	Metal	Yes	/
Sorento	2016-2020	Plastic	Yes	/
Sorento	2021-2022	Plastic	Yes	/
Soul	2010-2013	Metal	No	Sleeve
Soul	2014-2019	Plastic	No	Sleeve
Soul	2020-2022	Plastic	Yes *	Sleeve
Sportage	2011-2016	Metal	Yes *	Sleeve
Sportage	2017-2022	Plastic	Yes	/

* Base model trims (e.g., "Rio LX") may not be eligible for Anti-Theft Logic update and will be offered the cylinder sleeve alternative.

Anti-Theft Logic Window Decal



Cylinder Sleeve Window Decal



Anti-Theft Logic - Brute Force

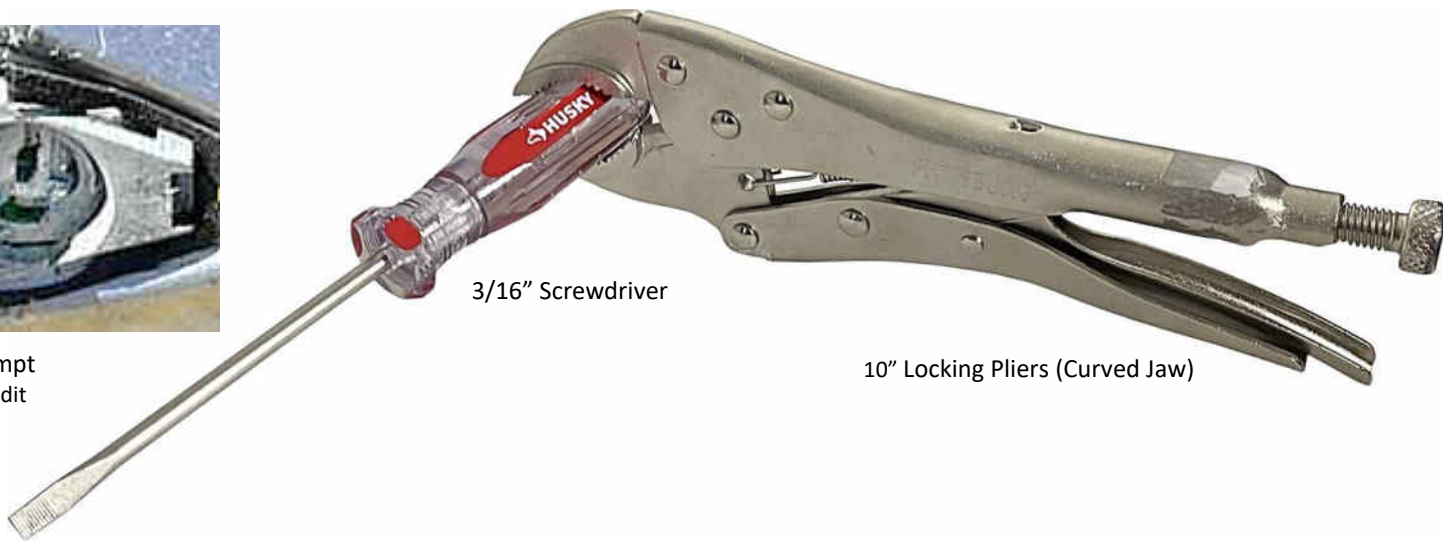
The most common method for bypassing the “Anti-Theft Logic” alarm today involves using brute force on the door lock cylinder. This technique predates the anti-theft update and is preferred because it avoids breaking windows. Tutorial videos demonstrating this method can be found on social media under usernames or tags such as “KiaBoyz.”

Typically, thieves use a screwdriver and locking pliers (“vice grips”) to forcibly turn the lock cylinder. The cylinder’s pins either shear or carve into the soft pot-metal, allowing the lock to turn. In many cases, the weak material causes the cylinder to crumble or be pried out entirely.

Once the cylinder turns, the door unlocks without triggering the alarm, allowing the thief to remove the ignition cylinder and start the car.



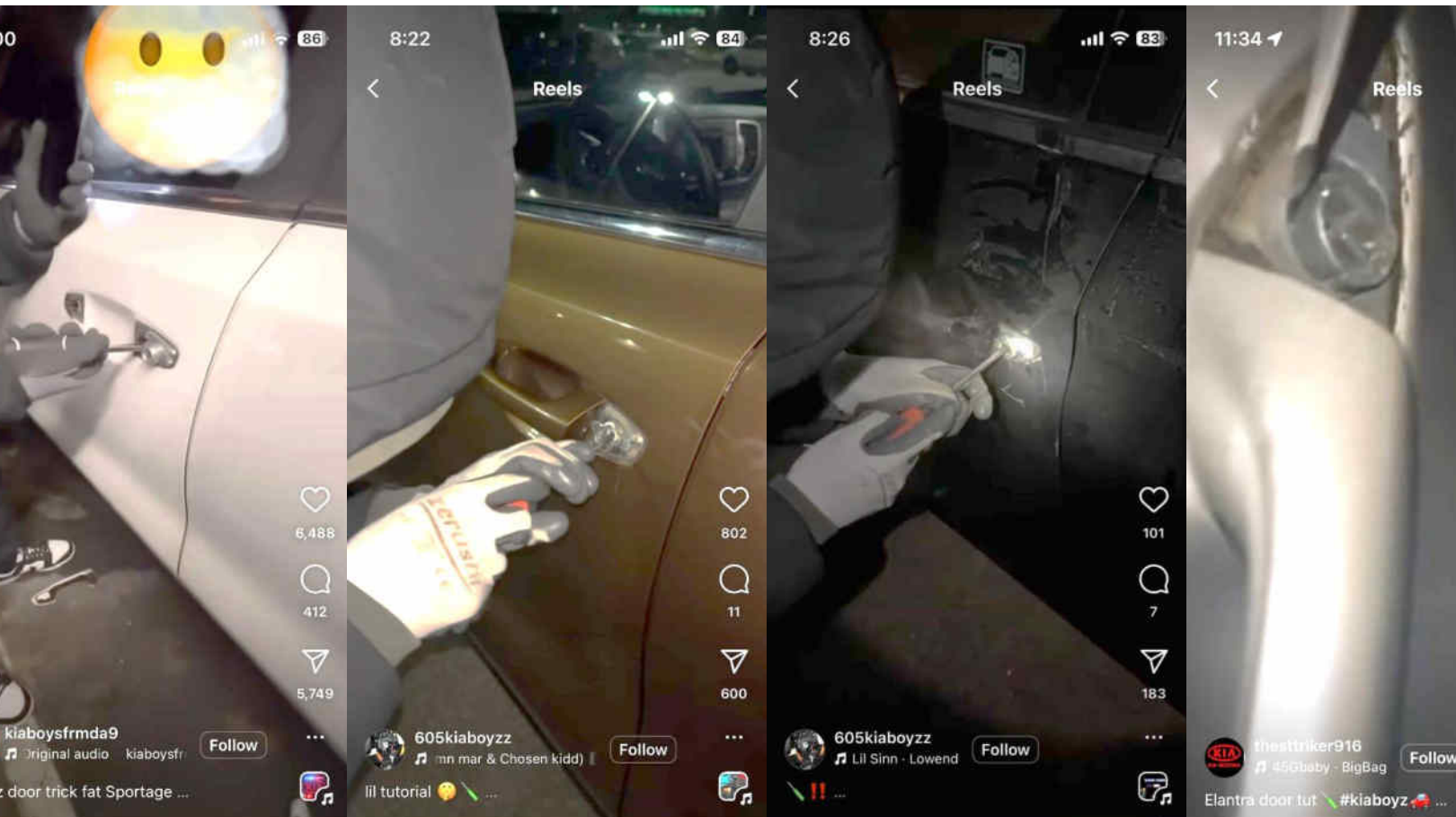
Theft attempt
Source: Reddit



3/16" Screwdriver

10" Locking Pliers (Curved Jaw)

Social media (Instagram) videos demonstrating brute force break-ins:



Anti-Theft Logic – Remove Lock (RP)

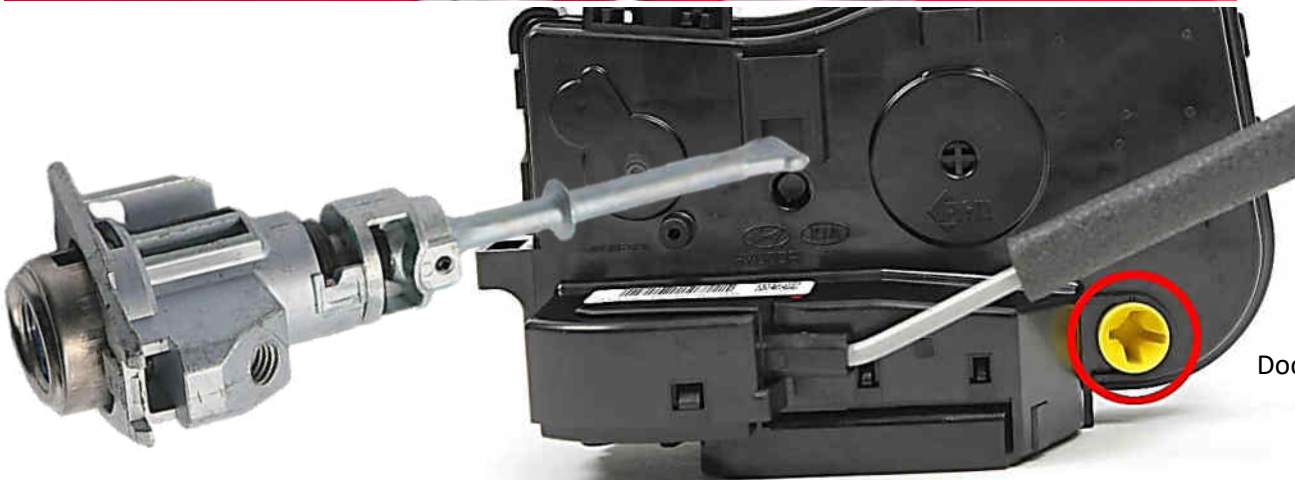
Although brute-force attacks on the door lock have proven effective—and improvements in material and construction are clearly needed—the mechanical security has occasionally thwarted theft attempts. Unfortunately, oversight in the lock’s design allows even arthritic seniors to disable the alarm in under a minute.

If a thief cannot turn the lock cylinder directly, they can break the window, unbolt the door lock, and then use a screwdriver to turn the door actuator. Hyundai and Kia door locks are secured with a standard 8 mm or 10 mm bolt across nearly the entire lineup. Turning the door actuator operates the lock in the same manner as the cylinder, unlocking the car and disengaging the “Anti-Theft Logic” protection.

AutoSafe’s security evaluation proposes issuing a recall to change these standard bolts with security / shear bolts.



8mm/10mm Ratchet



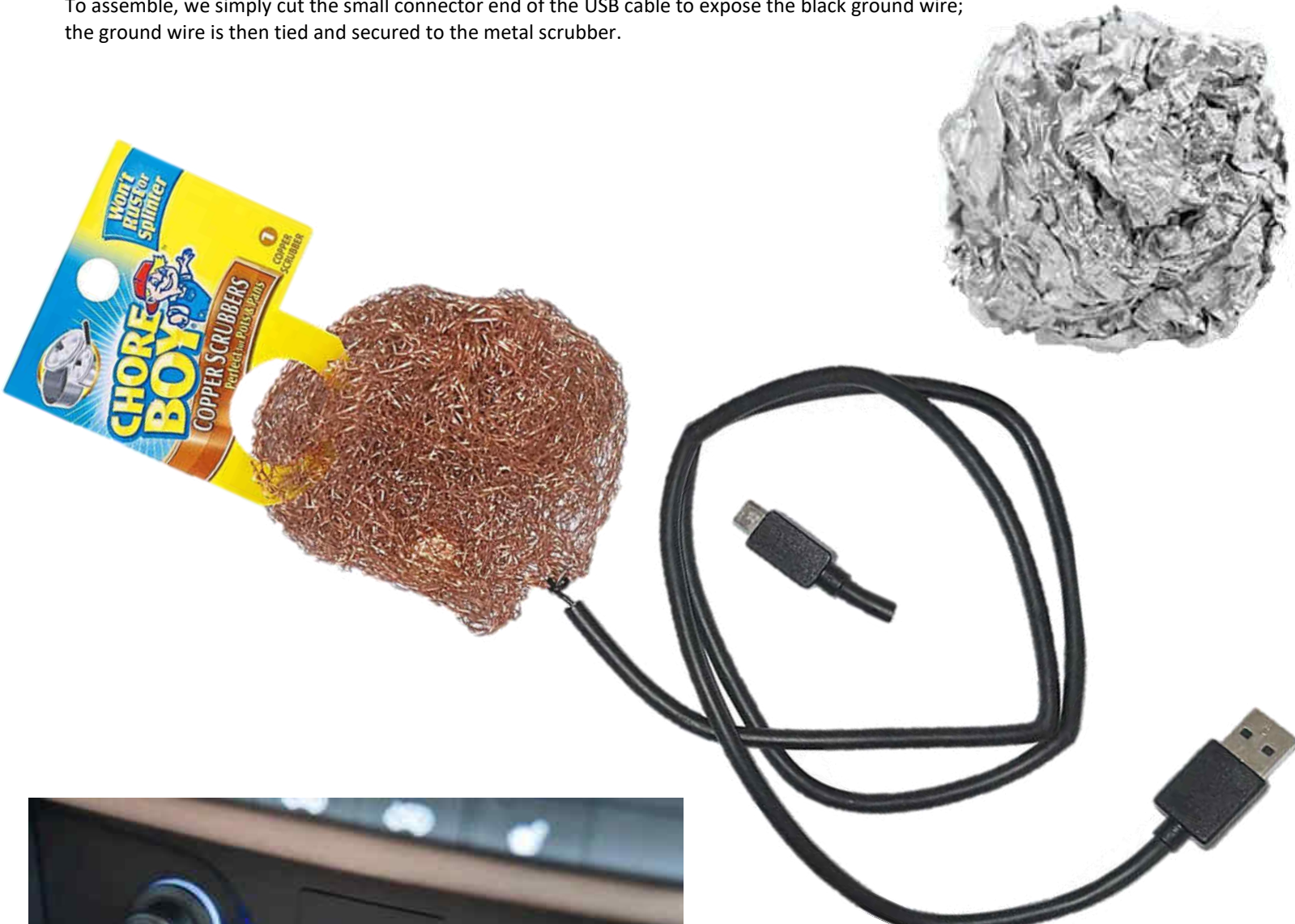
Door actuator

Anti-Theft Logic – Short Circuit (VIDEO DEMONSTRATION)

A third method for bypassing the Anti-Theft Logic highlights Hyundai's flawed wiring scheme. The door lock signal pins are held high by default and pulled low when the door is unlocked. This design allows someone to mass-short the connector pins and disable the alarm.

This can be demonstrated by pressing a ball of tinfoil into the door's wiring harness connector port, which shorts the pins and pulls them low, disabling the Anti-Theft Logic. Because this method can damage electrical components, we instead used a metal dishwashing scrubber (e.g., Scotch-Brite, Chore Boy) to short the pins to the car's USB port. Using this "USB-scrubber" method, we achieved near-instantaneous alarm deactivation on multiple Hyundai and Kia vehicles and presume it is universally effective on all models using the Anti-Theft Logic system.

To assemble, we simply cut the small connector end of the USB cable to expose the black ground wire; the ground wire is then tied and secured to the metal scrubber.



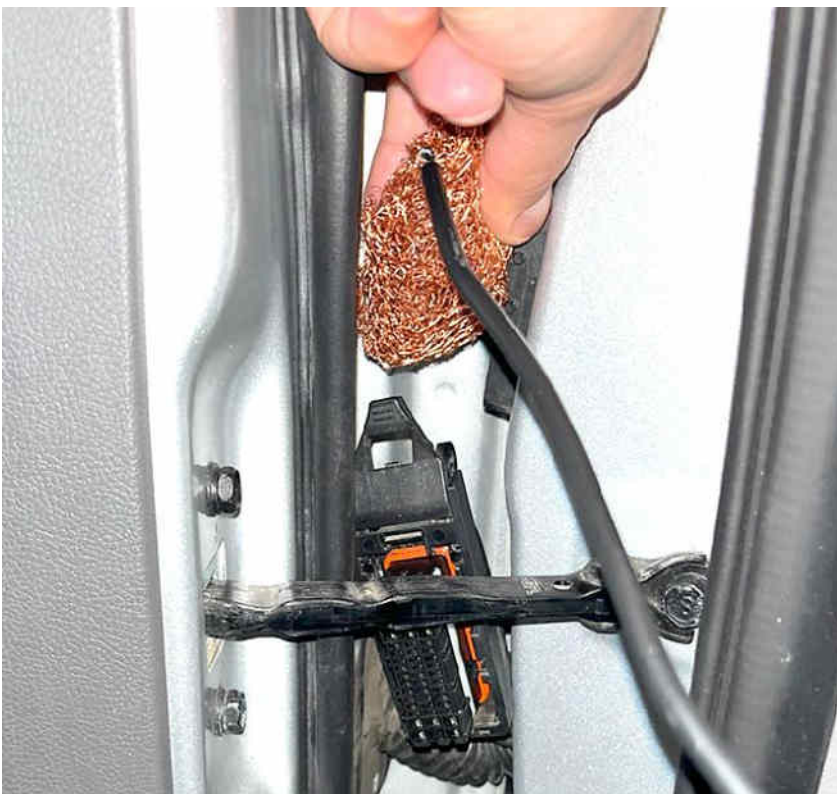
Note: USB adapter also works to ground scrubber.



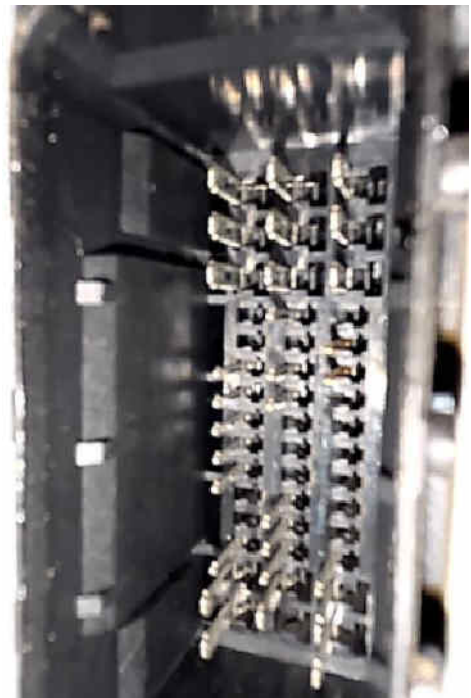
Anti-Theft Logic – Short Circuit (VIDEO DEMONSTRATION)

The ball of tinfoil or metal scrubber is inserted into the driver door connector port to make contact with the pins within. The active alarm should silence and the “Anti-Theft Logic” should now be disabled.

AutoSafe’s security evaluation proposes changes to the wiring scheme to prevent the mass shorting of pins disabling the alarm.



Inside door connector port



Anti-Theft Logic – Short Circuit

The door connector is disconnected from the port using a release tab.
The connectors we encountered came in 2 types of release tabs that are shown below.

Type 1 Connector (Soda Tab):

Using finger, lift tab up like a soda can tab. Continue to push tab towards door frame until connector partially pops out.



Type 2 Connector (Lift Tab):

Place a key under the tab and lift straight up. Continue lifting the tab until connector partially pops out.



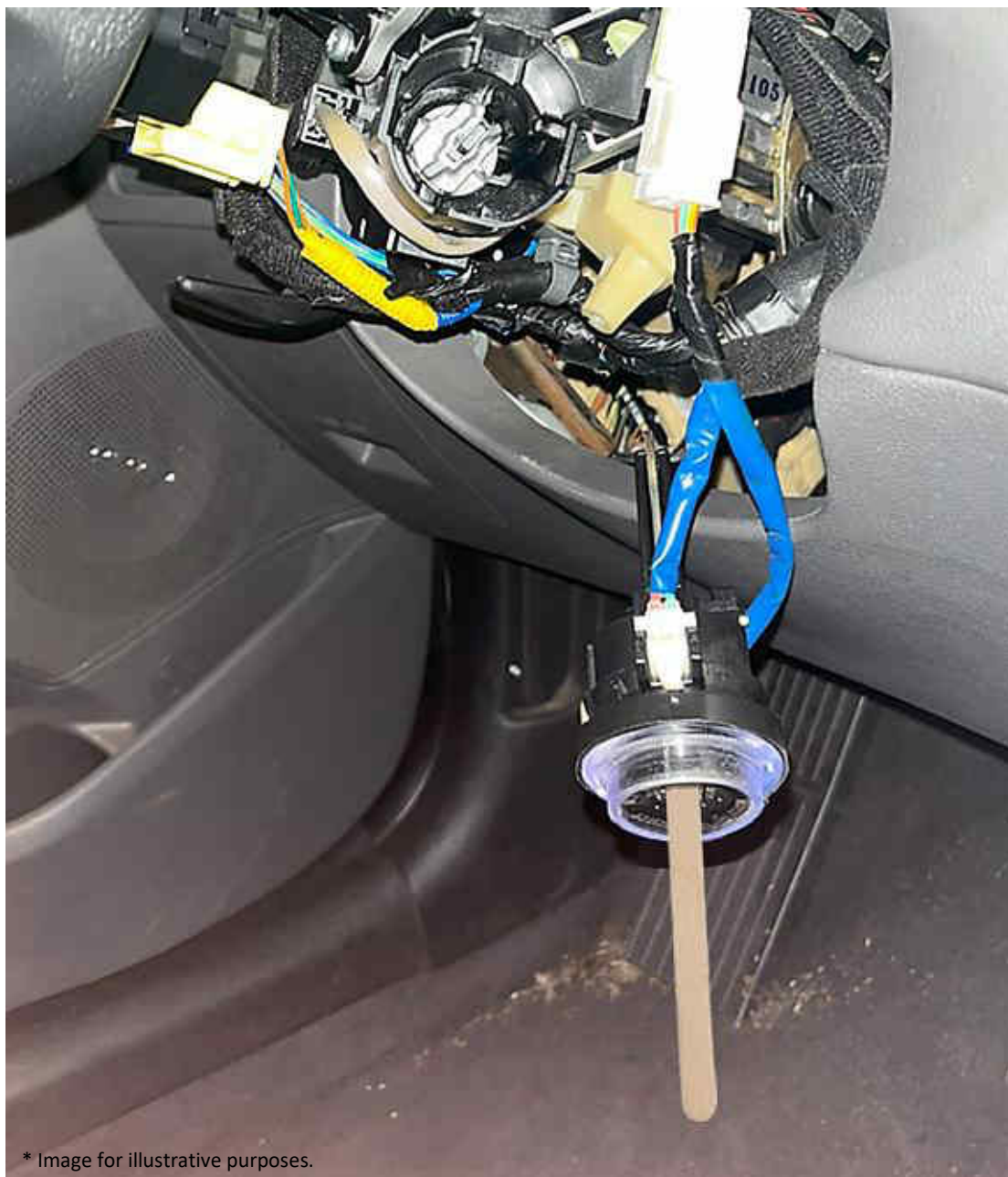
Anti-Theft Logic – Key-in-ignition requirement

We were informed by various Hyundai/Kia outlets and via a [NHTSA PR statement](#) that the Anti-Theft Logic system would require a key to be inserted into the ignition cylinder to allow the car to start.

Hyundai & Kia went so far as to advertise this function as an “immobilizer” through their public relations media campaigns and through misinformation provided to and by their dealership networks.

Our testing shows this supposed immobilizer upgrade is largely ineffective. The ignition cylinder only uses a simple switch to signal the insertion of an object—presumably a key. It cannot verify whether the object is a genuine Hyundai/Kia key or even a key at all.

Defeating this “requirement” was trivial and a popsicle stick proved ideal at simulating a Hyundai-Kia key, fitting all Hyundai-Kia cylinders tested. It was found that the popsicle stick only needed to be firmly inserted about 1/2” to actuate the switch before turning the tumbler rod to start the ignition.



* Image for illustrative purposes.

Anti-Theft Protection (Metal Sleeve “Protector”)



Some vehicles were incompatible with the “Anti-Theft Logic” software update, so Hyundai introduced a metal sleeve (“protector”) for the ignition cylinder.

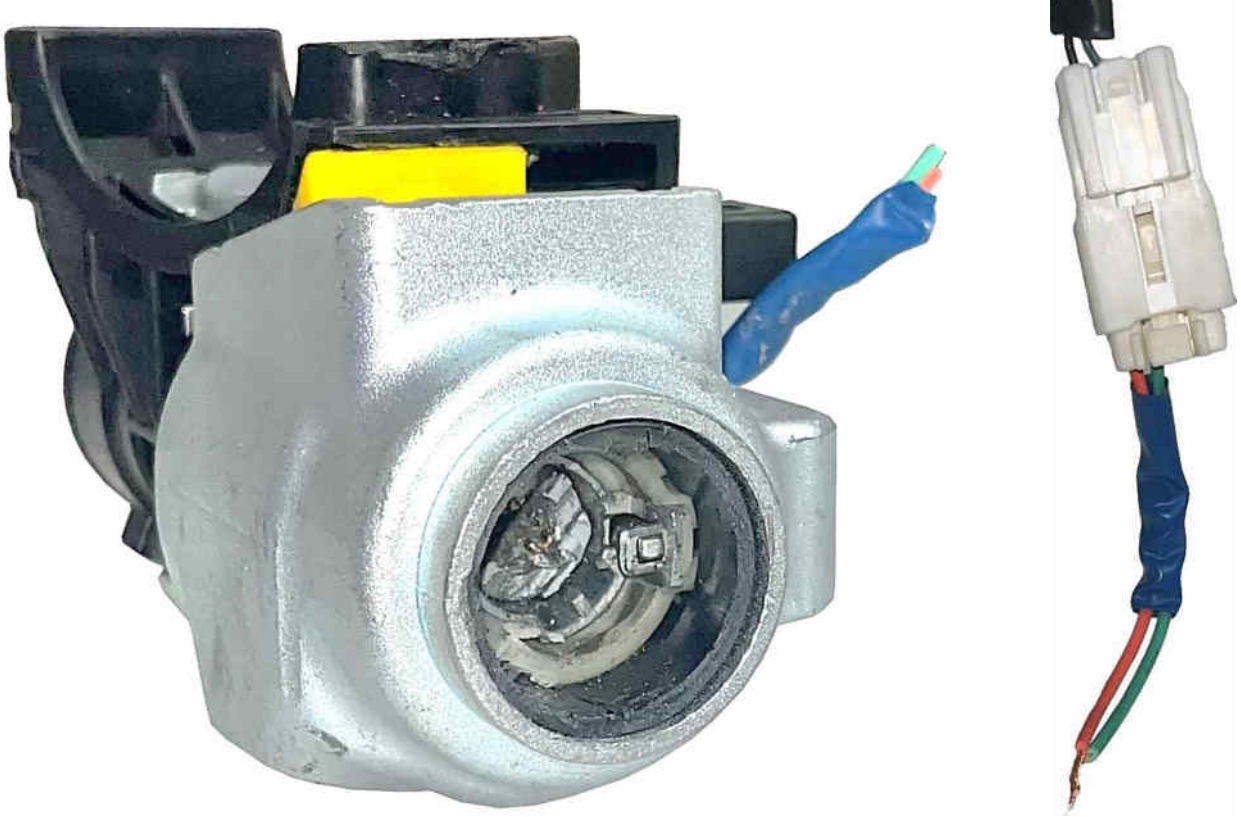
Note: A December 2025 settlement will make all affected 2011-2022 Hyundai-Kia cars eligible to have this metal protector installed (even if they already had the software update installed).

Upon examination of the upgraded assembly, we noted the following:

The plastic face of the cylinder has been left exposed, without any metal shielding. This leaves the cylinder’s internal components completely exposed, and able to be pried out.



The plastic cover of the cylinder has been left uncovered and unprotected.



The uncovered plastic face of the cylinder can still be easily broken off and allow the internal components of the cylinder to be pried out and turned with a flathead screwdriver, which is made even easier with the use of vice grips or locking pliers.

The key detection switch can also be bypassed by cutting the red/green wires and twisting them together (only necessary for vehicles with the software update).

Hyundai-Kia promised that the ignition sleeve would prevent the type of theft that was demonstrated and spread through social media posts, however, we contend that the prying attack method is still possible.

Although it has become more challenging to pry the entire cylinder off, several social media posts (pictured to right) demonstrate prying attacks in which the cylinder's internal components are pried out, leaving the cylinder body attached to the assembly.

Unfortunately, the metal sleeve does not even attempt to prevent prying of the cylinder's internal plastic components.

Example 2011+ ignition cylinder (plastic construction)



Another issue that the cylinder sleeve fails to address is that the assembly is secured to the steering column by metal bolts, which are held in by the assembly's plastic body and threads.

If the bolts are heated and then removed, the ignition assembly can be pushed down about 1-inch to free the steering lock and allow free movement of the steering wheel (after the car turns on).

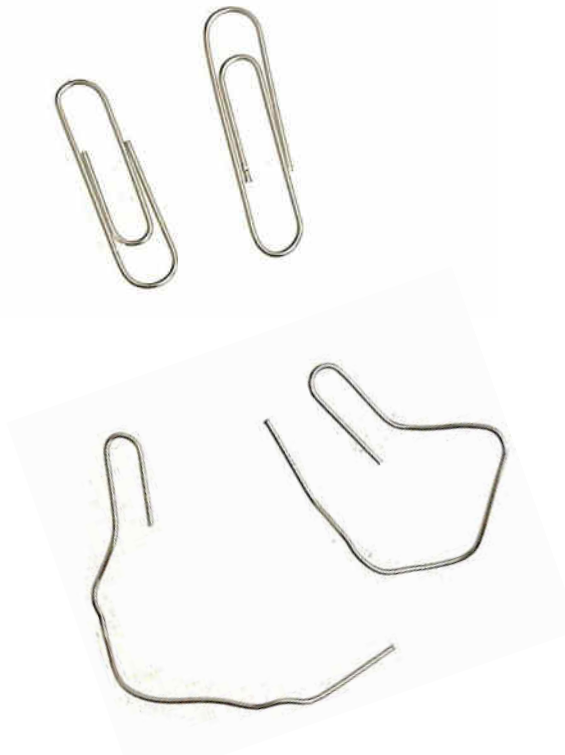


Plastic body and threads



Demo Materials:

- Lighter
- Popsicle
- Paperclips (small)



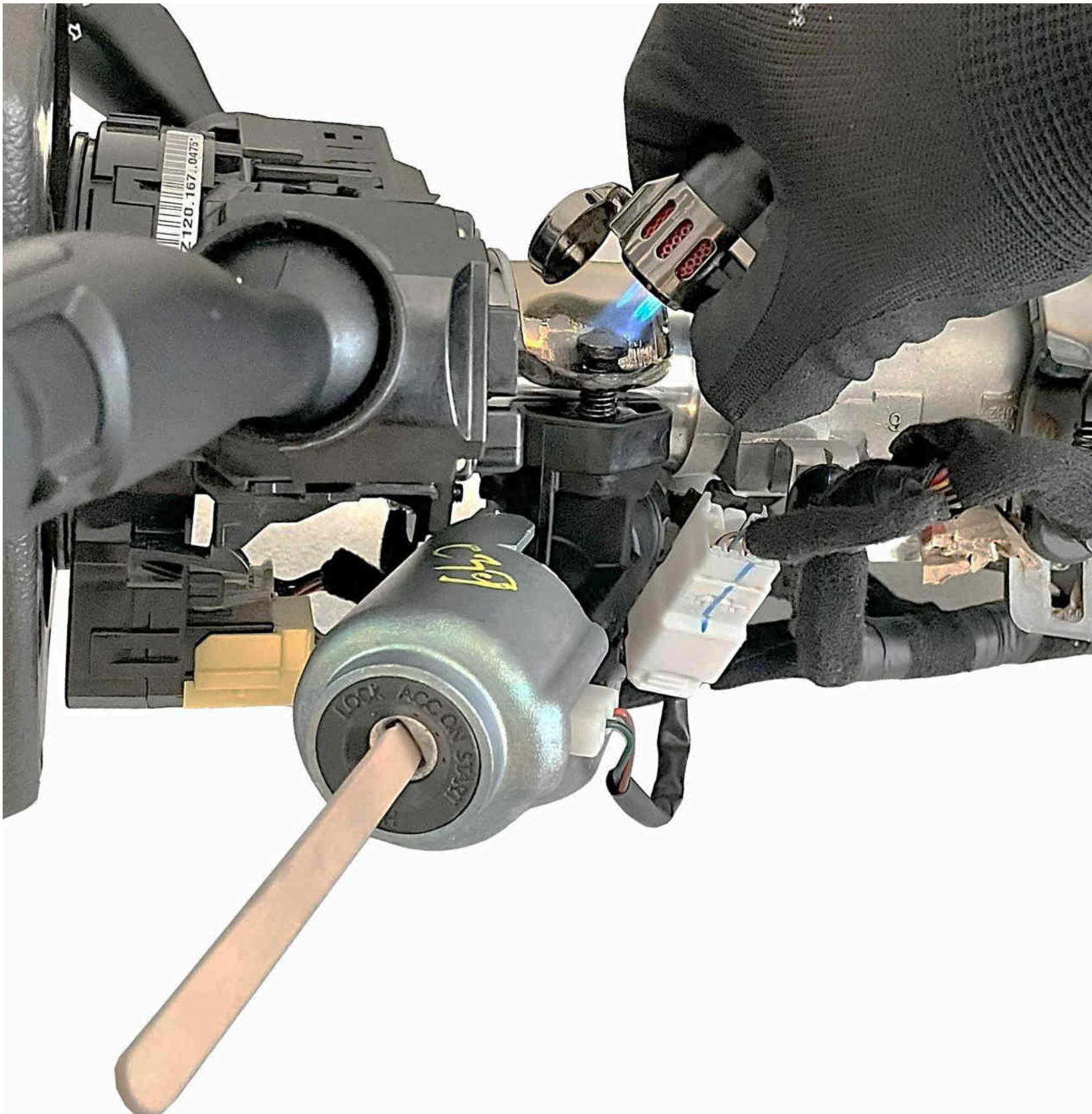
DEMONSTRATION VIDEO

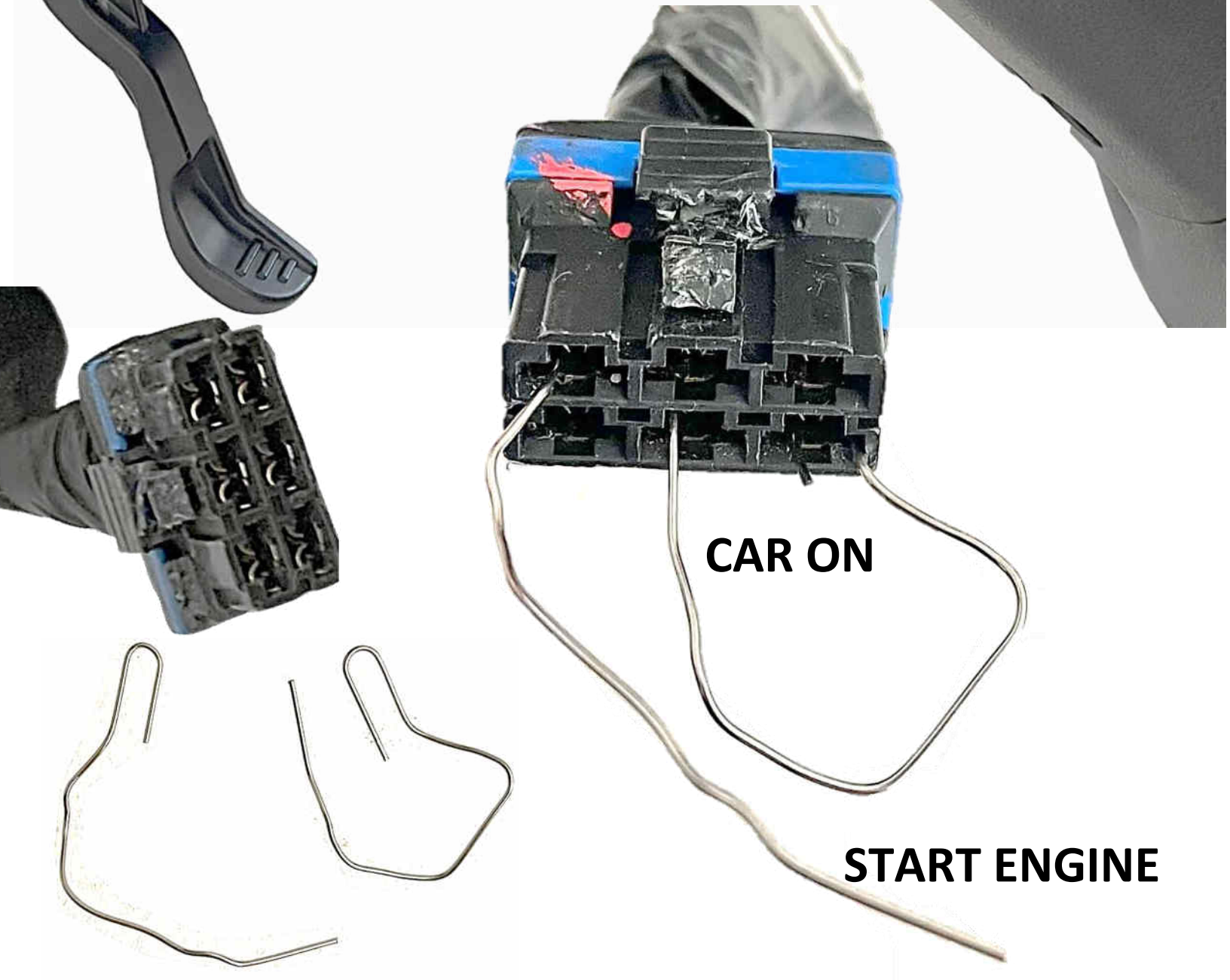
Step 1: Remove plastic shroud covers around steering column.

Step 2: Use a lighter to heat up each bolt for 45 seconds and then pry with a screwdriver, bolts will smoothly slide out and free the ignition assembly and steering wheel (but car must be turned on for power steering).

Step 3: Insert a popsicle stick into the ignition (only required for vehicles also upgraded with software update).

Step 4: Insert paperclips into the ignition switch's connector to start the car.



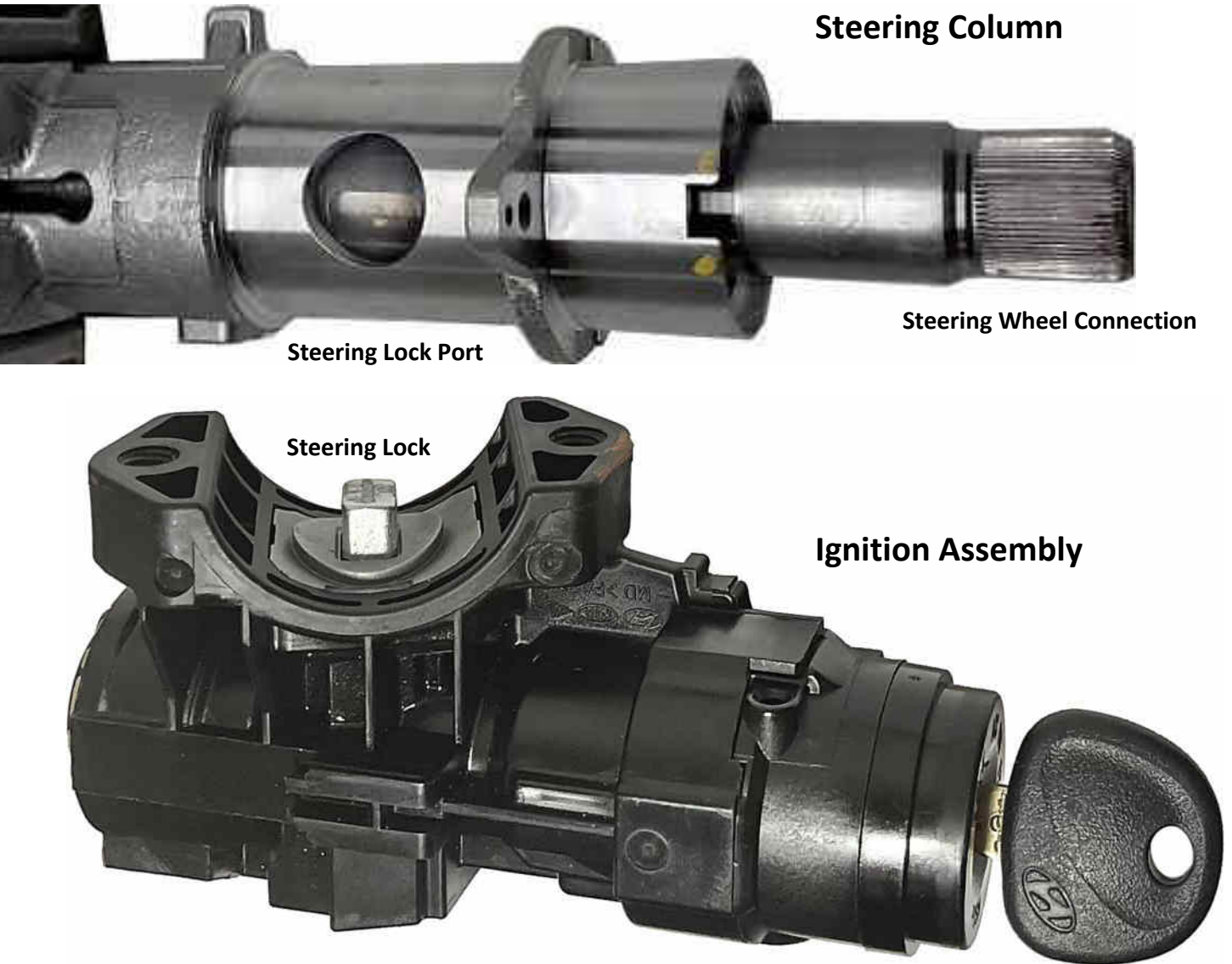


CAR ON

START ENGINE

Explanation: ([SEE DEMONSTRATION VIDEO](#))

By heating the bolts and extracting them from the plastic housing, the ignition assembly's steering lock can be disabled by simply pushing down on the assembly. The steering wheel will then be able to turn freely once the car is turned on.



Conclusion:

The purpose of the metal protector is to reinforce the cylinder because it is made of plastic. Hyundai even spent a considerable sum to [claim](#) their ignition cylinder sleeve has been independently tested and verified by a leading engineering and scientific consulting firm; however, it was disappointing to see that the cylinder “protector” had such a glaring design flaw that left the front plastic cover completely unprotected. Hyundai should expect that thieves will utilize the same prying and brute force methods currently used to bypass the door lock on the ignition cylinder.

Although the metal protector partially patches the ignition assembly's cylinder, it still leaves the rest of the plastic assembly completely vulnerable; therefore, the lighter bypass demonstrated exploits the assembly's fundamental weakness (and the same defect)—the ignition housing's plastic construction.

NHTSA Complaint

The Hyundai “Anti-Theft Logic” software update was intended to address the wave of thefts that spread across the United States. These thefts stemmed from three primary causes:

First, Hyundai’s lack of industry-standard immobilizers. By the time these thefts occurred, immobilizers were a basic and expected component in modern vehicles. They provide a critical layer of security that prevents vehicles from being stolen and misused in ways that endanger public safety.

Second, Hyundai’s transition from durable metal ignition assemblies to thin-walled plastic housings. While [thin-walled plastic is suitable for lightweight consumer electronics](#), it is inappropriate for critical vehicle security components. These flimsy plastic ignition assemblies failed to meet a reasonable expectation of quality (as demonstrated by the prior metal assemblies) and should be deemed “substandard.”

These substandard ignition assemblies fall under the scope of NHTSA’s oversight through the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, specifically FMVSS 114: Theft Protection and Rollaway Prevention (§ 571.114). Under this standard, NHTSA can issue a national recall if an automaker fails to comply with federal requirements, or if a component is found to be defective or substandard in a way that undermines theft prevention or creates the potential for serious crashes.

Third, Hyundai’s defective alarm system. The alarm allowed vehicles to be started even while armed and active. This defect was widely exposed on social media, where videos showed thieves smashing windows, entering cars without opening the doors, and successfully starting the engines—while the alarms remained armed. In contrast, if an owner tested the alarm by unlocking the door and attempting to start the car, the system functioned as expected and prevented ignition. The Hyundai “Anti-Theft Logic” update was presented as a fix for this defect by reprogramming the alarm system through the ECU/BCM.

By the time Hyundai released this update, however, the damage had already escalated. Rising theft rates and the harm caused to life and property had drawn the attention of the public, law enforcement, state and local governments, and federal regulators. Calls mounted for a national recall of affected vehicles due to the absence of immobilizers and substandard ignition assemblies, and formal procedures were initiated in Congress to compel the NHTSA to act.

In response, Hyundai launched a national PR campaign to counter the growing pressure. We allege that Hyundai’s campaign relied on misinformation, omissions, and obfuscation. The company framed the update as an “immobilizer,” exaggerating its capabilities and effectiveness in order to silence recall efforts already in motion.

By withholding key details about how the update actually works and by providing misleading information about its efficacy, Hyundai curtailed efforts by government entities across the U.S. to compel a recall. A coalition of 23 state attorneys general, along with congressional members and committees, were prevented from advancing their efforts due to Hyundai’s deceptive corporate messaging, which misled the media, the public, and policymakers alike.

Meanwhile, public safety remains at risk. These defective systems continue to be exploited. The NHTSA reported in February 2023 that the defect “has resulted in at least 14 reported crashes and eight fatalities.” Many law enforcement leaders and state attorneys general would contest those figures. For example, in Minneapolis alone in 2022, thefts of Kia and Hyundai vehicles were tied to: 5 homicides, 13 shootings, 36 robberies, and 265 motor vehicle accidents.

This report has been prepared for the NHTSA to demonstrate that Hyundai misrepresented the methods, efficacy, and robustness of the “Anti-Theft Logic” update. Hyundai’s deceptive actions thwarted government efforts to pursue a national recall, prevented public officials from addressing an ongoing public safety threat, and allowed the company to evade responsibility while the damage to communities continues.

Claims ([Playlist - Unlisted](#))

Claim 1

Hyundai made false or misleading claims about how the software update works regarding the requirement to arm/disarm the anti-theft logic using only the electronic key fob (remote).

In reality, the system also arms and disarms mechanically when a key is used in the door lock cylinder, a flaw that quickly allowed thieves to bypass the update using brute force methods.



Example Hyundai / Kia "Key Fob"

Merriam-Webster Dictionary

key fob

fob 1 of 3 noun

ˈfɒb

noun

- : a short strap, ribbon, or chain attached especially to a pocket watch
- : an ornament attached to a fob chain
- or key fob** : an object attached to a key chain or key ring
especially : a small electronic device used typically in place of a key (as to unlock a door or start a vehicle) or to remotely initiate the action of another device (such as a garage door)

HYUNDAI Technical Service Bulletin	GROUP BODY ELECTRICAL	NUMBER 19-BE-006H
	DATE MARCH, 2019	MODEL(S) ALL VEHICLES
SUBJECT: KEY FOB CODE SAVING/PROGRAMMING INFORMATION		

Description: This bulletin provides information for the following:

- General key FOB information including smart key and RKE (Remote Keyless Entry).

SUBJECT: KEY FOB CODE SAVING/PROGRAMMING INFORMATION

Parts Information:

Various Types of Key FOBs

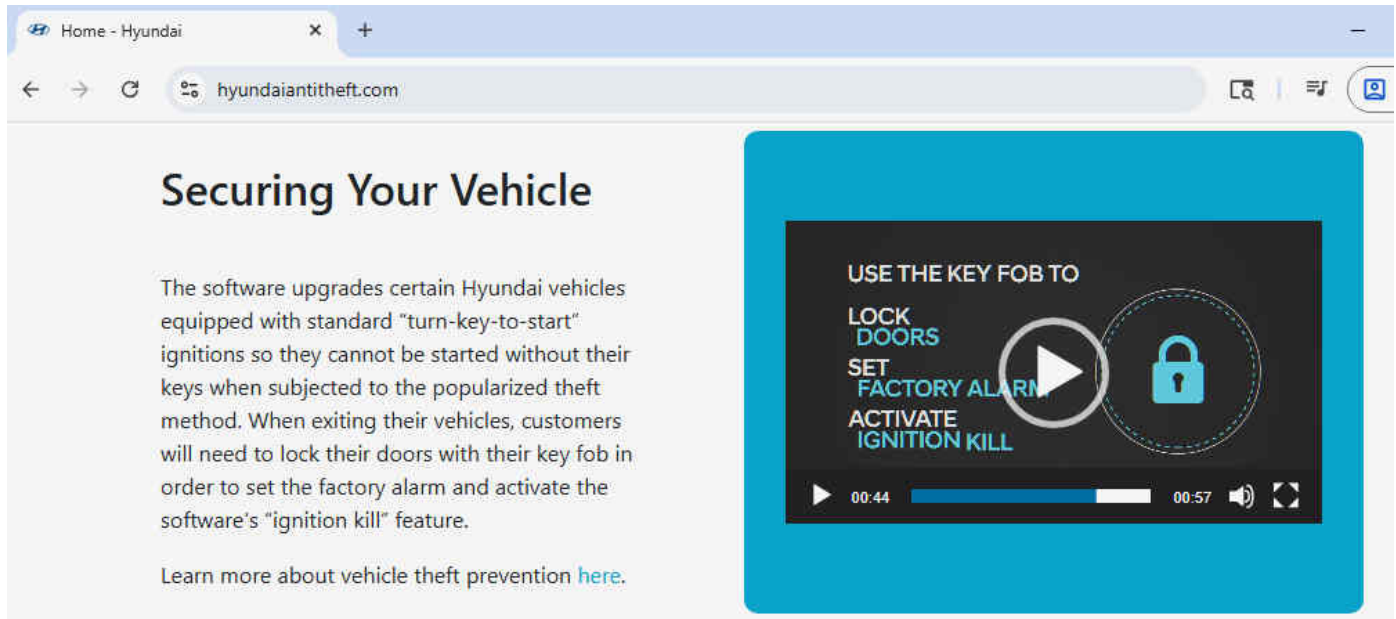
Part Name	Part Prefix	Image	Comment
TX ASSY-KEYLESS ENTRY (NOT SMART KEY - RKE)	95430		Apply to various models

Example 1

Hyundai USA:

"When exiting their vehicles, customers will need to lock their doors with their key fob in order to set the factory alarm and activate the software's 'ignition kill' feature."

Video [0:36]: "Remember to always lock your doors with your **key fob button** when exiting your vehicle."



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL hyundaiantitheft.com. The page title is "Securing Your Vehicle". The main text reads: "The software upgrades certain Hyundai vehicles equipped with standard 'turn-key-to-start' ignitions so they cannot be started without their keys when subjected to the popularized theft method. When exiting their vehicles, customers will need to lock their doors with their key fob in order to set the factory alarm and activate the software's 'ignition kill' feature." Below this text is a link: "Learn more about vehicle theft prevention [here](#)." To the right of the text is a video player with a blue background. The video content includes the text: "USE THE KEY FOB TO LOCK DOORS SET FACTORY ALARM ACTIVATE IGNITION KILL" and a play button icon. The video player shows a progress bar from 00:44 to 00:57.

Example 2A

Hyundai Service Campaign 993 ([via NHTSA](#)):

"Once the upgrade procedure has been completed, the **key fob buttons** to lock and unlock the vehicle are required to activate/deactivate the anti-theft system. After using the key fob to activate the anti-theft system, the key fob must be used to first disarm the system prior to attempting to start the vehicle."

Service Campaign 993:

Hyundai is conducting a service campaign to upgrade the Integrated Body Control Unit/Body Control Module (IBU/BCM) software to enhance the OEM Hyundai burglar alarm system operation and ignition start logic. It also requires installation of an anti-theft decal on the front driver's-side window and on the front passenger-side window. See **TSB 23-01-014H** (or latest) for repair details. Owners will be notified via first class mail beginning mid-February 2023.

IMPORTANT

- Once the upgrade procedure has been completed, the key fob buttons to lock and unlock the vehicle are required to activate/deactivate the anti-theft system. After using the key fob to activate the anti-theft software, the key fob must be used to first disarm the system prior to attempting to start the vehicle.
- Vehicles equipped with aftermarket or add-on alarm, or remote start may not operate normally if the BCM is upgraded with this software.

Example 2B

Kia Technical Service Bulletin

Via NHTSA: [1 \(Forte\)](#), [2 \(K5\)](#), [3 \(Optima\)](#), [4 \(Rio\)](#), [5 \(Sedona\)](#), [6 \(Seltos\)](#), [7 \(Sorento\)](#), [8 \(Soul\)](#), [9 \(Sportage\)](#)

“This logic upgrade will add anti-theft ignition start logic to the vehicle’s system operation **which activates when the vehicle is locked with the use of the key fob.**”

“After the ‘updated’ software installation is completed, **the use of the key fob to lock and unlock the vehicle will be required** to activate/deactivate the Anti-Theft system”

	GROUP	MODEL
	Customer Satisfaction	2011-2020MY Optima (TF, QF, JF, JFa)
	NUMBER	DATE
	2303 (Rev 4, 6/05/2024)	February 2023
TECHNICAL SERVICE BULLETIN		
SUBJECT: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: ANTI-THEFT S/W LOGIC UPGRADE & DECAL INSTALLATION (CS2303)		

NOTICE

This bulletin has been revised to include additional information. New/revised sections of this bulletin are indicated by a black bar in the margin area.

This bulletin provides the procedure to upgrade the software logic of the Integrated Body Control Unit (IBU) or Body Control Module (BCM) system on certain 2011-2015MY Optima (TF), 2012-2015MY Optima (QF) and 2016-2020MY Optima (JF, JFa) vehicles produced within the dates outlined on page 10, which may not be equipped with an immobilizer. This logic upgrade will add anti-theft ignition start logic to the vehicle's system operation **which activates when the vehicle is locked with the use of the key fob.** Follow the procedure outlined in this publication to apply the improved logic to the 'IBU-BCM' system using the KDS ECU Upgrade function as described in this bulletin. For confirmation that the latest reflash has been applied to a vehicle you are working on, verify the ROM ID using the table on page 3 of this bulletin.

Window decals should also be applied to both front windows in accordance with the instructions on page 8 to indicate this anti-theft S/W logic upgrade has been completed (unless a customer specifically requests, they not be installed). An initial supply of window decals will be shipping directly to dealers. Should there be a delay in receipt of this supply, please track any customers that may need window decals installation upon receipt of the stickers.



NOTICE

After the ‘updated’ software installation is completed, the use of the key fob to lock and unlock the vehicle will be required to activate/deactivate the Anti-Theft system

Example 2C

Kia USA [Customer Care Center](#):

“To prevent vehicle theft, remember to ... lock your vehicle every time you walk away using the key fob to activate the alarm and security software ...”

| Customer Care Center



ANTI-THEFT SUPPORT ACTIONS

At Kia, the security of Kia vehicles is a top priority.

We are providing assistance to Kia owners and lessees whose vehicles may be targeted by methods of theft that have been popularized on social media. We continue to offer a free, enhanced security software upgrade to restrict the unauthorized operation of vehicle ignition systems on **LOCKED** vehicles to owners nationally, and we strongly encourage all eligible vehicle owners to have this upgrade installed. For vehicles not eligible for the software upgrade, we have developed an ignition cylinder protector to reinforce the key cylinder sleeve assembly as an additional theft deterrent. We are also providing free steering wheel locks for impacted owners and lessees, both directly to consumers and through local law enforcement agencies. To prevent vehicle theft, remember to park in well-lit areas or near security cameras, close all windows and lock your vehicle every time you walk away using the key fob to activate the alarm and security software, and do not leave your keys/fob, valuables, or the area while your vehicle is running.

Example 3

Hyundai Spokesperson:

“For the anti-theft software to work, the vehicle must be locked using a **button on the key fob — not by turning the metal key in the door lock.**”

<https://www.cnn.com/2024/08/07/business/thieves-hyundai-kia-new-security-software/index.html>

Example 4

Kia reps making false statements to media and customers:

“When you go down to lock your doors, make sure you **hit the lock button** two times ...”

Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4QQvRoEm3M&t=23> (Original)

Claim 2

Hyundai made false or misleading claims to both the NHTSA and the public about the operation of its software update, specifically regarding the requirement that a key be in the ignition to start the vehicle. As detailed in the analysis report under the heading “Anti-Theft Logic – Key-in-ignition requirement,” this claim exaggerated the update’s security improvement and misrepresented the system’s operation and effectiveness.

NHTSA PR Statement ([Direct Link](#))

The screenshot shows the NHTSA website's news archive page. The header includes the NHTSA logo and navigation links for Ratings, Recalls, Risky Driving, Road Safety, and Vehicle. The main headline reads: "Hyundai and Kia Launch Service Campaign to Prevent Theft of Millions of Vehicles Targeted by Social Media Challenge". Below the headline, it states: "Approximately 3.8 million Hyundais and 4.5 million Kias involved". There are social media share icons for Facebook, X, LinkedIn, and Email. The date is "February 14, 2023 | Washington, DC". The text of the press release begins: "Hyundai and Kia have developed theft deterrent software for millions of their vehicles that lack an immobilizer and will provide it FREE of charge to vehicle owners. The software updates the theft alarm software logic to extend the length of the alarm sound from 30 seconds to one minute and requires the key to be in the ignition switch to turn the vehicle on."

Videos of the false or misleading claims regarding the key-in-ignition requirement:

- A) Kia Service Manager explaining that the key will be required to start the car.
Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CpJOSpiTM1c&t=110s> (Original)
- B) Kia representative claiming that the software update ensures that the car cannot be stolen without the key.
Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-OWghGxkTZo&t=40s> (Original)
- C) "Technicians update cars so the key must be in the ignition switch to turn the vehicle on ..."
Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-laWvnBnAw&t=25s> (Original)
- D) Kia Technician: "So whenever you go to start the car, it reads the key now and if it doesn't see a key in the vehicle, it won't start the vehicle."
Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihlMmrBi4dE&t=50s> (Original)
- E) Kia Service Manager: "The software is detecting if a key is actually installed in the lock cylinder. So, if the vehicle does not detect a key has been inserted into the lock cylinder, it will not start."
Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1niotPJJqgc&t=70s> (Original)

Claim 3

Hyundai made false and misleading claims about the nature of its software update. The company falsely characterized and promoted its “Anti-Theft Logic” update as an “immobilizer.”

In the automotive industry, an immobilizer is a defined electronic security component of the ignition starting system that requires electronic data verification before the ignition can be enabled. This is the standard Hyundai and Kia promised to deliver to the government, law enforcement, and the public.

Our findings clearly demonstrate that Hyundai’s software update does not meet this definition. The system can be disabled entirely through a simple mechanical action: turning the door lock cylinder. This disables the alarm and enables the ignition system, bypassing any electronic verification by the remote fob.

Hyundai and Kia’s misrepresentation of this software update as an “immobilizer” was intended to mislead regulators and customers, and to avoid a recall that should have been triggered under federal safety standards.

Example 1:

"Dave Vandelinde, Hyundai Motor America’s vice president for after-sales, said that the upgrades install a software-based immobilizer that is activated with the vehicles’ remote key fobs."

“If the customer locks their vehicle with the lock button on their key fob, the vehicle has the immobilizer system armed.”

<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2023/11/09/police-urge-kia-hyundai-owners-to-get-antitheft-upgrades>

Example 2:

2A:

[VIDEO 7:06] Dave Vandelinde: “To make sure we’re available . . . to make sure they [Hyundai/Kia owners] can get the immobilizer solution that fits their vehicle.”

Article: <https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/hyundai-kia-holding-software-update-clinics-in-minnesota-for-vehicles-targeted-by-thieves/>

Video Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=exOZSD-TsHg>

2B:

[1:53] Vandelinde: “First of all, the alarm will sound and the vehicle won’t start. That mimics an immobilizer factory solution in the vehicle, so that’s the key. They will not be able to drive away with the vehicle.”

Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1P1iCk-2YA> (Original)

2C:

[3:03] Dave Vandelinde: "The software package, once it's on, won't allow the vehicle to start until it sees the immobilizer signal from the customer."

Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-RWhEsdLtOc> (Original)

Example 3:

3A:

[1:40] James Bell (Head of corporate communications for Kia America) claims the software solution mimics an immobilizer.

Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHnnaWM2Ruo&t=100s> (Original)

[9:55-11:30] James Bell allows reporter to describe the software update as an immobilizer numerous times without correction.

Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHnnaWM2Ruo&t=595s> (Original)

3B:

[1:24] Same journalist subsequently reporting that "immobilizers" are now available for Hyundai and Kia vehicles.

Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dO4ltpWWPoc&t=84s> (Original)

Example 4:

Emily Falecki, Project Manager with Kia's Anti-Theft Program:

"They can still break into your back window and attempt to steal your vehicle but **what the software update does, is that it doesn't disable that ignition immobilizer feature** and it will sound the factory alarm ..."

Archive: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXwqb_7V1_0&t=90s (Original)

Example 5:

Dealerships making false statements:

<https://www.worldkiajoliet.com/kia-models-eligible-for-software-update/>

<https://www.emichkia.com/understanding-the-kia-anti-theft-immobilizer-update-and-safety-recall/>

A) Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zGlwUXUKwdo&t=90s> (Original)

B) Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-kFykY-BDqE&t=65s> (Original)

C) Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SKtPNEvBX4> (Original)

[0:20] Media incorrectly reports that the update is an immobilizer due to misinformation from dealership.

[0:26] Shows the technician's computer screen showcasing the "ECU Upgrade" as "IMMOBILIZER (BCM) LOGIC IMPROVEMENT."

D) Archive: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E8dG5PHL_Y4 (Original)

[0:48] GM, Russ Darrow Kia: This now will immobilize the vehicle, if the key and [wireless remote] FOB – at the same time – are not detected in your current vehicle.

Example 6:

Media article examples resulting from the misinformation campaign:

<https://www.kansascity.com/news/local/article273649755.html>

<https://www.fox5vegas.com/2023/04/18/how-see-if-your-kia-hyundai-vehicle-is-eligible-anti-theft-software-update/>

Claim 4

Hyundai has falsely represented the capabilities of its anti-theft software update and intentionally withheld knowledge of significant security flaws from the public—omissions that directly undermined efforts by government officials and the NHTSA to initiate a national recall.

Example 1:

James Bell (Head of corporate communications for Kia America) claiming that the anti-theft update makes it so the car can't be stolen:

Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDGojrSdo-l&t=45s> (Original)

Example 2:

[10:00] James Bell claiming the software update will make the vehicle inoperable.

[11:30] Claiming that the software update is a “solution that is very robust.”

Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=71U7UJEoW7I> (Original)

Example 3:

Keith Ellison (Minnesota Attorney General):

"Kia and Hyundai's software update is not a real solution to this problem. We are still hearing from consumers who have had their vehicles stolen after the update ..."

"After over a year of rampant thefts of Hyundai and Kia vehicles, Hyundai's decision to offer a four-day clinic does not come close to remedying the problems caused by their failure to equip their vehicles with industry standard engine immobilizers."

"Attorney General Ellison's investigation into the threat to public safety posed by Kia and Hyundai vehicles remains ongoing."

<https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/hyundai-kia-holding-software-upgrade-clinics-in-minnesota-for-vehicles-targeted-by-thieves/>

Example 4:

Media reports of ongoing thefts of cars that received the software update:

A) MN attorney general:

Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2TKBZe-lpzw> (Original)

B) Syracuse police chief:

Archive: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJF3i50iyFE> (Original)

Claim 5

In addition to Hyundai's apparent motive to circumvent pressure for a national recall, the company's suppression of critical information regarding how the software update actually works and its lack of effectiveness served to protect corporate interests in a [class action litigation](#). This deliberate withholding of information should not shield Hyundai from future liability for damages resulting from its efforts to obstruct recall actions through a calculated misinformation campaign.

Government Efforts

Bonta among 23 attorneys general blasting Kia, Hyundai over lack of anti-theft devices ([Link](#))

In a letter Monday, Bonta was among 23 attorneys general urging the two automakers to take immediate action to address the thefts. The attorneys said Hyundai and Kia did not install engine immobilizers in many of its vehicles sold in the U.S. between 2011 and 2022.

"Hyundai and Kia made a decision to forgo a standard safety feature that would help protect owners' investments, and now their customers are paying the price," Bonta [said in a statement Monday](#). "It's time for Hyundai and Kia to take responsibility for their poor decision which is hurting American families and putting public safety at risk. They must remedy this decision, now."

Attorney General Bonta Leads States Calling for Recall of Theft-Prone Hyundai and Kia Vehicles ([Link](#))

California Attorney General Rob Bonta today led a coalition of 18 states calling for a federal recall of Hyundai and Kia vehicles following the companies' continued failure to take adequate steps to address the alarming rate of theft of their vehicles. The letter, sent to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), requests the NHTSA to institute a recall of unsafe Hyundai and Kia vehicles manufactured between 2011 and 2022 whose easily bypassed ignition switches and lack of engine immobilizers make them particularly vulnerable to theft.

National Recall of Kia/Hyundai models vulnerable to theft (RCA-2024-00161) ([Link](#))

The automakers, Kia and Hyundai did not install industry-standard engine immobilizer technology on certain models between 2011 and 2022 resulting in millions of Kia and Hyundai vehicles being built without an anti-theft device to prevent the car from starting without the key or fob. Millions of Kia and Hyundai models with this defect are vulnerable to theft, and models without this defect are perceived to be vulnerable to theft.

This defect allows for theft of Kia and Hyundai vehicles and endangers public safety by enabling reckless driving and other crimes of opportunity. According to the Minneapolis Police Department, auto thefts were tied to five homicides, 13 shootings, 36 robberies, and 265 motor vehicle accidents in 2022.

CALLING FOR FEDERAL ACTION TO RECALL KIA AND HYUNDAI MODELS VULNERABLE TO THEFT ([Link](#))

That the Mayor and City Council do hereby join a growing coalition of elected leaders representing municipalities across the country and at least 18 attorneys general in calling on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to initiate a national recall of Kia and Hyundai models that lack immobilizer technology and are vulnerable to theft due to their safety related defects and offer fair compensation or a fair trade for a safe and secure vehicle in exchange for financial loss for impacted individuals.

And be it further resolved, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the United States Secretary of Transportation, the President of the United States, the United States Congressional Delegation for Minnesota, the Minnesota Attorney General, the Minnesota Secretary of Transportation, the Administrator of the Minnesota Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration, the Governor of Minnesota, Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

Hyundai, Kia holding software-update clinics in Minnesota for vehicles targeted by thieves ([Link](#))

"On March 2, Attorney General Ellison called on Kia and Hyundai to recall all vehicles lacking industry-standard anti-theft engine immobilizers to correct this clear deficiency and stem the rising tide of auto thefts. That remains his position.

"Kia and Hyundai's software update is not a real solution to this problem. We are still hearing from consumers who have had their vehicles stolen after the update ..."

"After over a year of rampant thefts of Hyundai and Kia vehicles, Hyundai's decision to offer a four-day clinic does not come close to remedying the problems caused by their failure to equip their vehicles with industry standard engine immobilizers."

AutoSafe Solution

This report demonstrates that Hyundai made false and misleading representations regarding the functionality of their “Anti-Theft Logic” software update, and that the company’s public claims were not fulfilled. AutoSafe, however, has developed a solution to ensure that Hyundai and Kia can meet the commitments they originally made.

AutoSafe has designed and developed a plug-in product compatible with Hyundai and Kia models affected by the theft crisis. Our solution ensures that the vehicle’s fob remote is required to disable the vehicle’s burglar alarm system—precisely what Hyundai and Kia originally promised the government, law enforcement agencies, and the American public.

The plug-in provides a seamless customer experience, is permanently installed in under five minutes, and represents the most cost-effective option for delivering a robust electronic security system that cannot be mechanically bypassed. AutoSafe was prepared to supply this solution for just \$10 per vehicle.

Despite this, Hyundai has declined to proceed with our proposal. Instead, the company has chosen to allow vehicle thefts to continue while preparing yet another campaign of obfuscation and misinformation—actions that undermine public safety and burden law enforcement.

We urge the NHTSA to address this critical issue and hold Hyundai and Kia accountable for the misrepresentations made to the public, law enforcement, and the NHTSA.

AutoSafe Expert Witness Service

AutoSafe also offers expert witness service to firms and individuals.

Please contact us at info@AutoSafeAmerica.com to schedule.

This report substantiates various legal grounds under California law:

Misrepresentation and Fraudulent Inducement – California Civil Code §§1709–1710

Hyundai-Kia made affirmative statements describing the “Anti-Theft Logic” update as providing immobilizer-level protection and requiring key fob authentication for arming/disarming. These statements were false, material, and made with the intent that consumers rely upon them.

Unfair Competition / Consumer Protection – California Business & Professions Code §17200 et seq.

By promoting a security upgrade that did not in fact provide the protections advertised, Hyundai-Kia engaged in unlawful, unfair, and deceptive business practices. Representing software updates as immobilizer-equivalent or as materially enhancing theft resistance — when they do not — violates California’s consumer protection standards.

Implied Warranty of Merchantability – California Civil Code §1792 & Commercial Code §2314

The security update, as represented, was marketed as restoring or improving the vehicle’s ability to provide safe and secure transportation. Because the update failed to provide the basic level of theft-prevention functionality it was claimed to offer, the vehicle was not fit for its ordinary purpose, and the implied warranty of merchantability was breached.

Implied Covenant of Good Faith and Fair Dealing

By representing the security update as providing immobilizer-type protection and failing to disclose its true limitations, Hyundai-Kia frustrated the consumer’s reasonable expectations and breached the covenant of good faith inherent in every consumer transaction.

A Call for Accountability and Integrity

Standing Against Hatred and Protecting Public Safety

AutoSafe, LLC was founded by an immigrant and asylum seeker. From the beginning, the company has been guided by a commitment to respect every individual's right to their own perspective and identity.

For that reason, we believe it is our responsibility to speak out and take a stand when we witness the rise of hatred and extremism in our society—even when that hatred originates from within our own government and its agencies.

Taking such a stand, however, has come at a significant cost. Countless hours of investigative work and substantial financial resources have been effectively wasted, as our company has been functionally blacklisted by the Trump administration. As a result, lobbyists working on behalf of Hyundai Motor America and Kia America have succeeded in stalling the investigation we initiated into serious safety defects in Hyundai and Kia ignition systems, as well as the misrepresentations we believe were made to the government and the public.

We call on Hyundai and Kia to take a clear stand against hatred and to publicly condemn white supremacist content posted by the White House and the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

We further urge Hyundai and Kia to encourage the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to move forward with its investigation and to fully address the safety concerns and alleged misrepresentations we have identified.

Ultimately, this moment calls for honor and integrity. American values are grounded in accountability, transparency, and the courage to confront uncomfortable truths. If Hyundai and Kia wish to demonstrate genuine respect for those values, they must refrain from stifling legitimate safety investigations by exploiting AutoSafe's choice to speak out against hatred.

True corporate leadership requires standing on principle—even when doing so is inconvenient—and ensuring that public safety and truth are never subordinated to politics or retaliation.



White supremacist content posted by DHS & White House

 <@gmail.com>

Thu, Jun 12, 2025 at 3:10 PM

To: news.tips@abc.com

Hello,

My name is   and I am currently a resident of Los Angeles.

I would like to bring to your attention that the DHS has posted content from a white supremacist on their X.com account on June 11, 2025.

The White House has also posted this content on their instagram account.

The poster, which depicts Uncle Sam encouraging Americans to report "foreign invaders," was created by X.com user "Mr. Robert" @mrrobertwp

This account is used to spread white supremacist ideology and spouts hatred.

An example of such racist comments:

"Nigger is an English word used by our forefathers to call out savagery we still see in our American streets today. It's not spoken in clicks. White Men created the word to call out what threatens his wife and children. Your tounge is owned. You're part of the problem. Bitch Ass"

Please feel free to contact me if I may be of further assistance.

Best regards,





Mr. Robert 
@mrrobertwp



Nigger is an English word used by our forefathers to call out savagery we still see in our American streets today. It's not spoken in clicks. White Men created the word to call out what threatens his wife and children. Your tounge is owned. You're part of the problem. Bitch Ass

10:06 PM · Jun 7, 2025 · **300** Views

<https://x.com/mrrobertwp/status/1931533238004027633>

Continued ...

Pattern of racist posts by White House (Photos incl'd)

<[redacted]@gmail.com>
To: news.tips@abc.com

Fri, Feb 6, 2026 at 11:01 PM

Hello,

I came across your news story about the White House reposting a Truth Social post by President Trump that depicted the Obamas as racist caricatures towards the end of the video.

I would like to draw attention to earlier posts made by **the White House and DHS** that also involved racist messaging; I feel you should include them within your articles to provide readers with better context about the pattern of racist messaging and evading responsibility.

On June 11, 2025, Both the White House (Instagram [link](#)) & the DHS (X.com [link](#)) posted the following image:



The image posted by the White House & DHS originated from white supremacists that originally disseminated the content through X.com ([link](#)) on June 8, 2025 (3 days prior to the White House and DHS). These individuals use the pseudonyms "Mr. Robert" and "Whitelandia."

You reposted



Mr. Robert @mrrobertwp · Jun 11



This should inspire you all. I made a digital poster. @whitelandia made some too and printed them out. There was no sign of having an impact more than 1 person tearing it down if you put one up.

TODAY OUR EFFORTS ARE COMING OUT OF THE WHITE HOUSE!



Whitelandia @Whitelandia · Jun 8

It doesn't have to be perfect, it just has to be done. MAWA.



Whitelandia @Whitelandia · Jun 8



Replying to @Whitelandia

Here is what I printed and cut out for anyone that wants to do the same in their community.



Here is some content posted by "Mr. Robert"

 **Mr. Robert** 
@mrrobertwp  

Nigger is an English word used by our forefathers to call out savagery we still see in our American streets today. It's not spoken in clicks. White Men created the word to call out what threatens his wife and children. Your tounge is owned. You're part of the problem. Bitch Ass

10:06 PM · Jun 7, 2025 · **384** Views

 2  2  2  1 

[Link](#)

And here is some content posted by "Whitelandia"

Note the post declaring "Go home shitskins."



Whitelandia

9,045 posts



More options, share, search, and follow buttons.

Whitelandia

@Whitelandia

White man. America is an ethnically European homeland, not an economic zone for 🏠 to replace us with their multiracial bio weapons. 🇺🇸.

4th times the charm.

Joined October 2024

1,118 Following 1,408 Followers

Not followed by anyone you're following

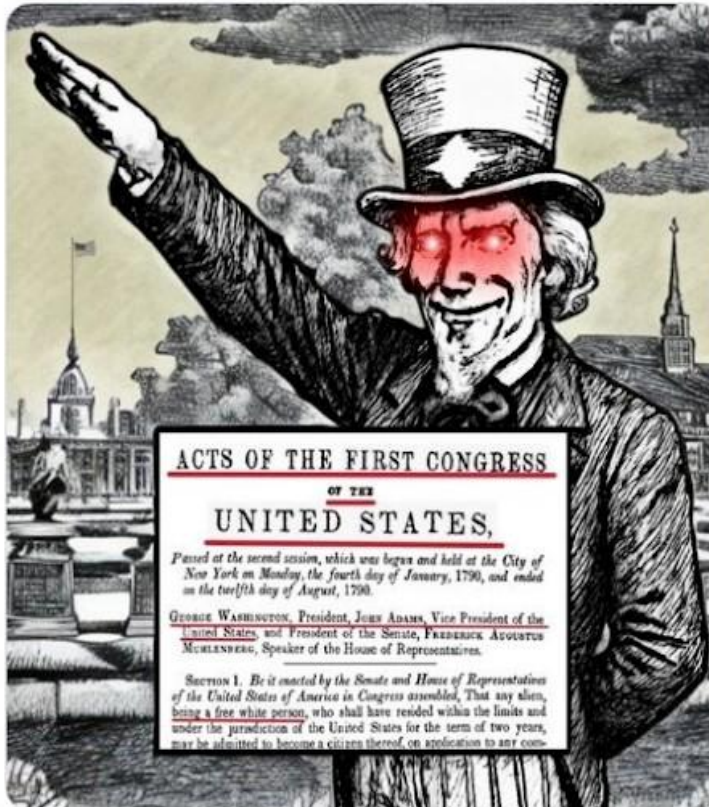
Posts

Replies

Media

Pinned

Whitelandia @Whitelandia · Jun 1
Go home shitskins.



2

18

93

1.8K





Whitelandia @Whitelandia · Jun 8



It's simple. Whites deserve our own nations, like everyone else is allowed to have. America, founded by Whites for Whites, is one of those nations. This is just the beginning.



2

12

28

863



The account for Whitelandia has been suspended, however, I have snapshotted his posts and then posted them as replies to his original posts as a way to archive them.

You can see the snapshots as comments to the original posts on my X.com account (<https://x.com/DanLA213>).

The images posted by the White House and DHS are still up, even though many complaints have been made.

Please confirm receipt of this e-mail.

Sincerely,



Article feedback - DHS poster by white supremacists

<[redacted]@gmail.com>

Tue, Feb 10, 2026 at 7:19 PM

To: ramishah.maruf@cnn.com, "sean.lyngaas@cnn.com" <sean.lyngaas@cnn.com>, "clare.duffy@cnn.com" <clare.duffy@cnn.com>

Cc: Kevin.Liptak@cnn.com, Adam.Cancryn@cnn.com, Alayna.Treene@cnn.com, Alejandra.Jaramillo@cnn.com, Betsy.Klein@cnn.com

Hello,

I would like to provide some feedback and context regarding an [article](#) you posted on June 12, 2025, that regards the DHS and White House posting content from a white supremacist group.

Your article ended: "CNN has requested comment from Engel and attempted to reach the X user who claimed to have created the image."

I can provide you with a screenshot that shows "Engel" admits that the poster was made by "Mr. Robert."

<https://x.com/mrrobertwp/status/1933138258440978677>



I also feel you should include the following details within your articles to provide readers with better context about the pattern of racist messaging and evading responsibility.

On June 11, 2025, Both the White House (Instagram link) & the DHS (X.com link) posted the following image:

Whitelandia reposted

Mr. Robert @mrrobertwp · Jun 11
What do you think guys? Is my poster controversial?


Anthony @AnthonyCabassa_ · Jun 11
DHS just posted this, and it's garnering a lot of backlash and controversy, what do you guys think?

Homeland Security @DHSgov
Help your country locate and arrest illegal aliens.
To report criminal activity, call 866-DHS-2-ICE (866-347-2423).



Mr. Robert @mrrobertwp · Jun 11
A historical moment anons.

whitehouse The White House
8.7M followers · 7 following
The Golden Age of America Begins Right Now.
Text FREEDOM to 45470 to receive alerts.



The image posted by the White House & DHS originated from white supremacists that originally disseminated the content through X.com (link) on June 8, 2025 (3 days prior to the White House and DHS). These individuals use the pseudonyms "Mr. Robert" and "Whitelandia."

You reposted

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This should inspire you all. I made a digital poster. @whitelandia made some too and printed them out. There was no sign of having an impact more than 1 person tearing it down if you put one up.

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Whitelandia @Whitelandia · Jun 8
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Mr. Robert ✓
@mrrobertwp



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10:06 PM · Jun 7, 2025 · 384 Views



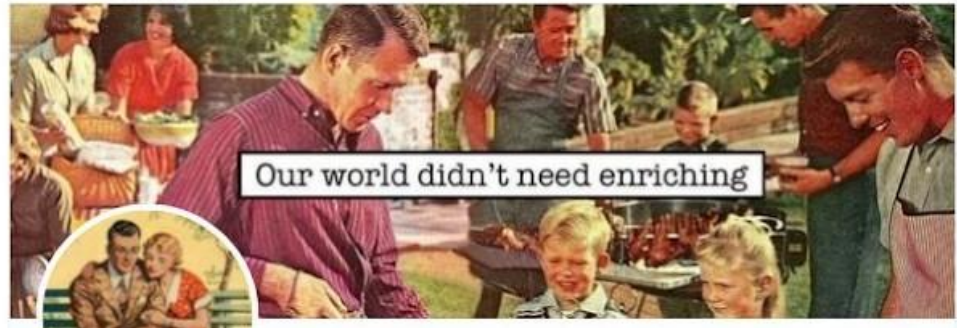
[Link](#)

And here is some content posted by "Whitelandia"

Note the post declaring "Go home shitskins."



Whitelandia
9,045 posts



... [Share] [Search] Follow

Whitelandia

@Whitelandia

White man. America is an ethnically European homeland, not an economic zone for 🏦 to replace us with their multiracial bio weapons. 🇺🇸.

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📅 Joined October 2024

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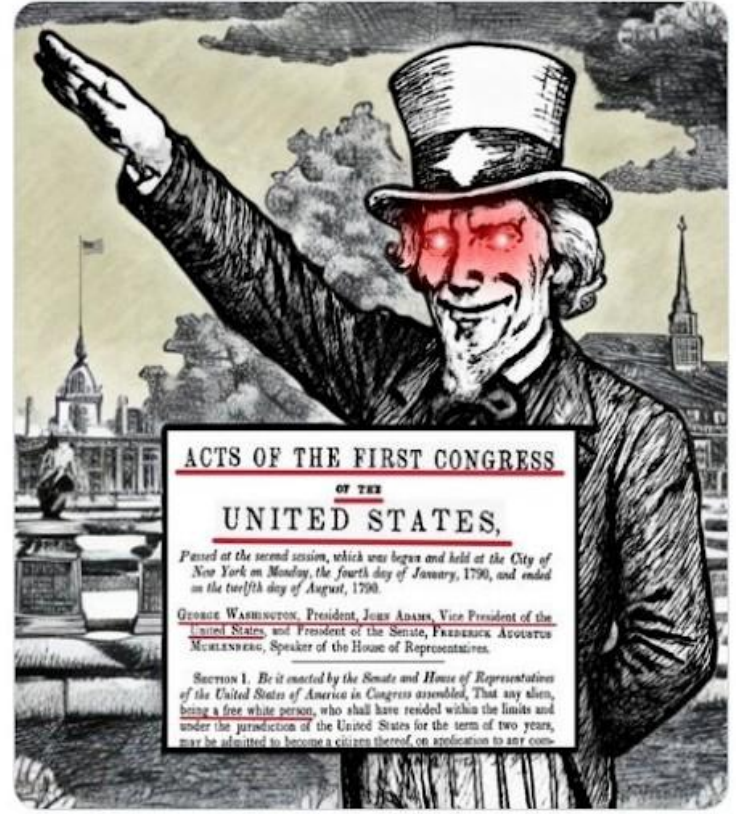
Pinned



Whitelandia @Whitelandia · Jun 1

Go home shitskins.

🔗 ...



🗨️ 2

🔄 18

❤️ 93

📊 1.8K

🔗 📌





Whitelandia @Whitelandia · Jun 8



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You can see the snapshots as comments to the original posts on my X.com account (<https://x.com/DanLA213>). The account appears suppressed but you should be able to view the posts if you're logged in, otherwise, it will say there are no posts.

Please consider replying and giving me your insight on this matter. I have contacted many politicians and news media outlets without a response and I really want to know if there's something that I don't understand here; just as a courtesy perhaps.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

