

Public Safety Update from the Town Supervisor

As the warm weather returns, we're seeing a troubling uptick in criminal activity across our region. The Town of Amherst, just across Transit Road, has been significantly impacted by vehicle break-ins and thefts—and unfortunately, Clarence has not been immune.

Last week, a vehicle was stolen from Redtail Drive, likely due to a key fob left inside. Alongside our ongoing issue with unlocked vehicles being entered at night, this theft serves as a reminder: we must all remain vigilant.

Even with Amherst deploying up to ten patrol cars at a time, crimes like these happen fast. Police can't be everywhere at once—these criminals are in and out of a vehicle in less than a minute. Your best defense is prevention:

- **Always lock your vehicle**, even when parked in your garage or during the day.
- **Remove valuables and key fobs** from your car.
- **Close your garage door**, especially at night.
- **Leave a light on** to deter potential intruders.

There are also reports (not yet confirmed) that key fobs left near vehicles—such as just inside a garage wall—can be cloned. The safest practice is to keep your fob in a more interior part of your home, like your bedroom. In the event of suspicious activity, you can activate your car alarm using the panic button.

The Erie County Sheriff's Special Task Force has been actively patrolling Clarence and has even alerted residents—sometimes in the early morning hours—when garage doors were left open. In one recent incident, three individuals were caught on camera entering an open garage and attempting to start vehicles by pressing brake pedals. Thankfully, the key fobs were out of reach. A nearby vehicle was stolen that same night and later found abandoned, damaged, and smelling of marijuana. Sadly, the owner's insurance did not cover the loss.

Many of these crimes are being committed by juveniles, and due to state bail reform laws, consequences are minimal. The individual who crashed the stolen vehicle from Clarence had multiple prior arrests, receiving only appearance tickets with no time in the Holding Center or bail.

Additionally, there has been a rise in juveniles riding illegal gas and electric minibikes in areas like Clarence Center. These riders have been reported not only for reckless behavior on our streets and trails but also for verbally harassing residents and law enforcement.

To address this, I recently convened a task force meeting at Town Hall with multiple law enforcement agencies. The Town of Clarence is now preparing to **impound minibikes** involved in illegal activity. While the legal process can be slow, removing these vehicles from our roads is one step we can take immediately to protect our community.

I want to personally thank the New York State Police and the Erie County Sheriff's Office for their continued partnership and efforts to keep Clarence safe.