

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Police Code - Rental Car Restrictions to Reduce Burglaries]

Ordinance amending the Police Code to prohibit visible barcodes and advertising on rental cars rented in the City or at San Francisco International Airport.

Existing Law

The City does not currently attempt to regulate the appearance of automobiles rented within the City or at San Francisco International Airport. The City's Police Code generally requires rental car companies to obtain permits to operate in the City, but does not condition this permit on any aspect of the physical appearance of a company's automobiles.

Amendments to Current Law

This ordinance would regulate rental cars' appearance in two ways. First, it would prohibit automobiles from carrying barcodes visible in automobiles' windows or on their exteriors. Second, it would prohibit automobiles from carrying rental-car-company advertising on their exteriors.

The ordinance would apply these requirements to automobiles rented within the City and at San Francisco International Airport. As to the former, the ordinance would make compliance a condition of the City's existing permit scheme for rental car companies. As to the latter, the ordinance would make compliance a condition of all written agreements between the City and rental car companies concerning rental car companies' operations at the Airport—including, but not limited to, leases for the use of Airport real estate, such as the Airport's Rental Car Center.

The ordinance is intended to combat automobile burglary. Rental cars often carry barcode stickers and advertisements (for example, license-plate frames) that render rental cars easily identifiable as rental cars. As set out in the ordinance's findings, visitors to San Francisco—and the rental cars they drive—are particularly attractive targets for automobile burglary. By prohibiting conspicuous barcodes and advertisements, this ordinance is intended to make rental cars less identifiable, and therefore make it more difficult for would-be automobile burglars to target rental cars.

The ordinance does not apply to truck rentals or to car-share companies, on the theory that those do not present the same visitor-specific automobile-burglary concerns.