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Keg theft is a growing issue for all in the beer industry--brewers, wholesalers and retailers. The Brewers Association is working with the Beer Institute and the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries on a public awareness campaign among scrap dealers that makes them aware a keg is stolen property if someone attempting to exchange a keg for money is not associated with the company that owns the keg. Multiple states have started addressing the issue of stolen metal or keg deposit values in their statutes and more will follow as more awareness grows on this issue. The loss of kegs is a drain of resources for breweries in specific and society as a whole.

All strategies to address keg theft must tread carefully, so as not to cross a line where industry participants undertake activities that aim at setting the price of keg deposits, as activities could be construed as anti-competitive, and therefore a violation of law. This issue is a tough one but it is critically important to reduce the half million kegs a year that "disappear" in the U.S.

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