



Guilty of Claiming Innocence

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Some gangsters take it personally if you object to being railroaded. So they railroad you some more.

That's what happened to Robert Reeves, a Detroit auto mechanic and construction worker. In 2019, Wayne County confiscated his Camaro after police saw him visit a site that supposedly contained stolen equipment. The police did not formally accuse him of the alleged theft or try to convict him of it.

Nevertheless, the county wanted Reeves to pay \$900 to retrieve his car.

Instead, Reeves went to court to end what Institute for Justice, which has been representing him, calls a

“seizure-and-ransom policy.”

Soon the county was accusing Reeves of made-up felonies of receiving stolen property and telling the court that he had no right to challenge its forfeiture policy while being accused of these felonies.

Reeves challenged the county's dishonest challenge, and the court dismissed the charges for lack of evidence. Two weeks later, though, the county did the exact same thing, making the same fake charges and asking the same judge to dismiss the same case on the same grounds. The judge again refused.

Now, years later, Reeves is suing Wayne County for the way it further violated his rights when he challenged its initial violation of his rights.

Although this again makes Reeves a target, “Robert will not be silenced,” [says](#) IJ attorney Christian Lansinger, and the Institute will continue to hold accountable governments that seize the vehicles of individuals without evidence of wrongdoing.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.