



ANNETTE C. DELGADILLO
Mayor

PEGGY LEMONS
Vice Mayor

ISABEL AGUAYO
Councilmember

BRENDA OLMOS
Councilmember

VILMA CUELLAR STALLINGS
Councilmember

May 13, 2024

The Honorable Jackie Irwin
Member, California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
Member, California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 5610
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: RETAIL THEFT AGGREGATION AND MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL LEGISLATION

Dear Assembly Members:

One of the City of Paramount's top priorities is to address crime and retail theft, organized retail theft and shoplifting. Our city is pleased that both houses of the Legislature have made this issue a priority in 2024. As such, the City of Paramount would like to identify a few bills that we believe would help to address the issue of aggregating multiple retail theft offenses across a multi-jurisdictional area.

As you may know, retail theft continues to be a problem in nearly all California communities. For example, commercial burglary is at the highest rate since 2008. In fact, according to the PPIC, commercial burglary increased statewide since 2020, especially in larger counties with an increase of 13% among 14 of the 15 largest counties. To address rising theft, city officials need additional tools to reduce crime and improve the safety of their neighborhoods.

It has become common for offenders to try to avoid higher charges, such as grand theft, by stealing small amounts of items they know are under \$950 across several retail businesses. Current law provides that multiple thefts can be aggregated to one charge if these incidents can be proven to be "one intention, one general impulse, and one plan." Unfortunately, this law is limited in scope and Cal Cities strongly believes it needs strengthening.

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Improved aggregation laws for multiple incidents of theft will not be helpful without active prosecution of cases across several jurisdictions. Expanding coordination and abilities of District Attorneys to work together to prosecute theft offenses that occur in several counties will ensure offenders are held accountable.

Therefore, we support the following bills:

AB 1779 (Irwin) Theft: Jurisdiction.

(As Amended on 4/25/2024)

AB 1794 (McCarty) Crimes: Larceny

(As Amended on 4/11/2024)

These bills propose several methods of ensuring and clarifying the process of multi-jurisdictional prosecution as well as aggregation of multiple theft incidents with several victims.

The Paramount business community has experienced multiple instances of retail theft that were committed by perpetrators who targeted numerous businesses in rapid succession at adjoining, adjacent, and nearby properties. Local retail stores have also been victimized as part of regional theft sprees where the offenders target similar establishments in multiple jurisdictions as part of a chain of criminal activity. These bills would strengthen our ability to coordinate the response and enforcement of these types of collective criminal incidents in the future.

For these reasons, the City of Paramount supports both AB 1779 (Irwin) and AB 1794 (McCarty). Please feel free to contact City Manager John Moreno at (562) 220-2225, if you have any questions. On behalf of the City of Paramount, we thank you for your time and consideration.

CITY OF PARAMOUNT



Annette C. Delgadillo
Mayor

cc. Honorable State Senator Lena Gonzalez, 33rd District
Honorable Assembly Speaker Emeritus Anthony Rendon, 62nd District
Kristine Guerrero, Regional Public Affairs Manager, League of California Cities
Jorge Morales, Legislative and Governmental Affairs Consultant, California
Contract Cities Association