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Mayor

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Vice Mayor

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Councilmember

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Councilmember

VILMA CUELLAR STALLINGS  
Councilmember

April 26, 2023

The Honorable Reginald Jones-Sawyer  
Chair, Assembly Public Safety Committee  
1020 N Street, Room 111  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SUPPORT OF AB 1708 (MURATSUCHI) THEFT**

Dear Assembly Member Jones-Sawyer:

The City of Paramount would like to express its support for Assembly Bill 1708 (Muratsuchi), which will increase accountability for repeat theft offenders and offer pathways for pre-plea diversion programming. If passed, the bill would send the issue to the voters for approval at the next Statewide general election.

Proposition 47 (Prop 47) of 2014 made promises of safe neighborhoods, but instead relaxed criminal prosecution for petty thefts and certain types of fraud. Under this measure, repeat offenders face no escalating penalties and dangerous drug possession cases were reclassified as misdemeanors.

Following the implementation of Prop 47, the City of Paramount saw an 11% increase in petty thefts going from 756 in 2014, to 842 in 2018. More striking is the 47% increase in grand theft autos, which spiked from 388 in 2014, to 572 in 2021. Paramount believes the passing of AB 1708 will help address these continuous and escalating offenses in a modest but meaningful way.

AB 1708 allows prosecution of shoplifting and/or theft under \$950 to be charged as a felony if the offender has two or more convictions for specific theft-related offenses. These changes are vital to deterring continued retail and petty theft, as offenders will face increased penalties.

The City of Paramount is a small, blue-collar community in Southeast Los Angeles County that depends heavily on sales tax to provide essential services to its residents and community members. Our retail business community are the ones that experience

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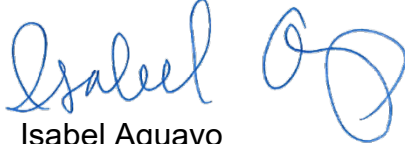
*Dedicated to providing fiscally responsible services that maintain a vibrant community.*

firsthand the challenges that Prop 47 has brought upon our City. If shoplifting and theft continues with no consequences for repeat offenders, and big box stores decide to leave our City, it will ultimately have a devastating ripple effect on our residents and the services the City provides.

Although passed by California voters in 2014 in good faith, the unforeseen consequences are clear that Proposition 47 has negatively impacted communities throughout California. AB 1708 is an opportunity to better the original intentions of Proposition 47 with clarity and truly make strides toward "Safe Neighborhoods." In addition, AB 1708 holds repeat offenders accountable for their actions.

For these reasons, the City of Paramount strongly supports AB 1708 (Muratsuchi). 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



Isabel Aguayo  
Mayor

CC. Honorable State Senator Lena Gonzalez, 33rd District  
Honorable Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, 62nd District  
Honorable Assembly Member Al Muratsuchi, 66th District  
Kristine Guerrero, Regional Public Affairs Manager, League of California Cities