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Vice Mayor

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Councilmember

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Councilmember

VILMA CUELLAR STALLINGS
Councilmember

April 7, 2026

The Honorable Nick Schultz
Chair, Assembly Public Safety Committee
1020 N Street, Room 111
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1941(González) Organized metal theft.
Notice of SUPPORT (As of 2/13/2026)

Dear Assemblymember Schultz,

The City of Paramount is pleased to support AB 1941 (González), which would enhance enforcement against copper wire theft by targeting repeat and organized offenders who steal or traffic prohibited metal materials, and would establish a statewide data-sharing tool to increase collaborative intelligence gathering into organized theft operations.

Metal theft has become a costly issue for cities across California and the nation, severely impacting critical infrastructure components such as streetlights, fire hydrants and fire department connections, manhole covers, electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, and backflow prevention devices. Thieves often target these public assets due to the high value of precious metal—specifically copper—leaving behind significant damage that endangers public safety and imposes burdensome repair costs on local governments and businesses.

The consequences of metal theft are far-reaching:

- **Streetlight Tampering:** Stolen copper wiring from streetlights creates hazardous conditions by leaving streets and neighborhoods in darkness, increasing risks for pedestrians, motorists, and law enforcement.
- **Fire Protection System Compromise:** The theft of metal components from fire hydrants or fire department connections weakens emergency response capabilities, endangering lives and property in the event of a fire.
- **Manhole Cover Theft:** The removal of manhole covers poses severe hazards to drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians, leading to potential accidents and injuries.

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

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- **Backflow Device Damage:** Backflow prevention devices protect drinking water supplies from contamination, and theft-related damages compromise water quality and public health.

As a small, densely populated city with aging infrastructure and limited financial flexibility, Paramount has been significantly impacted by organized metal theft. The City has experienced repeated copper wire theft from streetlights, resulting in darkened corridors that increase traffic hazards and undermine neighborhood safety. Paramount has also faced costly repairs to damaged backflow devices and vandalized utility infrastructure, diverting scarce General Fund resources away from community programs and essential services. These incidents often occur in clusters, suggesting coordinated activity that is difficult for local law enforcement to track without broader data-sharing tools. AB 1941 would give Paramount stronger enforcement mechanisms to hold repeat offenders accountable and provide access to a statewide information-sharing system that would help identify patterns, disrupt organized theft rings, and protect critical public infrastructure.

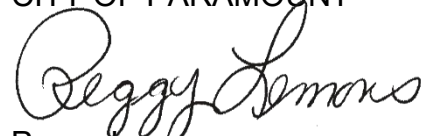
Local governments are not the only entities plagued by this issue. Telecommunication companies are also facing the devastating consequences of metal theft crime. AT&T reported 2,200 separate incidents of copper wire theft in 2024—more than a 3,000% increase since 2021—and spent millions on repairs due to theft and vandalism to their network.

The financial burden of repairing and replacing stolen infrastructure components falls on taxpayers, utility providers, and municipalities, draining resources that could otherwise be used for community development and essential services.

AB 1941 would protect vital public infrastructure from ongoing damage by allowing prosecutors to bring enhanced charges for coordinated or repeated thefts and enabling a more robust information-sharing system to tackle this issue.

For these reasons, the City of Paramount is pleased to support AB 1941 (Gonzalez). Please feel free to contact City Manager John Moreno at (562) 220-2225, if you have any questions. We thank you for your time and consideration.

CITY OF PARAMOUNT



Peggy Lemons
Mayor

Cc: Honorable Congresswoman Nanette Barragan, 44th District
Honorable Assemblymember Jose Luis Solache, 62nd District
Honorable State Senator Lena Gonzalez, 33rd District
Nicholas Cabeza, Public Affairs Manager, League of California Cities
Jorge Morales, Legislative and Governmental Affairs Consultant, California Contract Cities Association