



April 4, 2024

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
Chair, Assembly Committee on Public Safety
1020 N Street, Room 111
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Aisha Wahab
Chair, Senate Public Safety Committee
1020 N Street, Room 545
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Retail Theft Enforcement and Increased Penalties Legislation

Dear Assemblymember McCarty and Senator Wahab:

One of the League of California Cities' (Cal Cities) top advocacy priorities is to address crime and retail theft, organized retail theft and shoplifting. Our organization is pleased that the Assembly Public Safety Committee will be hearing a slate of bills to address the growing problem of retail theft in our state. As such, Cal Cities would like to identify a few bills that we believe would help to address the issue of providing critically needed tools of enforcement to combat retail theft.

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. Rising theft is impacting every corner of California, and city officials need additional tools to reduce crime and improve the safety of their neighborhoods.

There are reforms needed to ensure that both apprehension rates of offenders improve and that those apprehended for more serious theft offenses meet meaningful consequences. Specifically, there are a several bills that would address these necessary reforms through increasing the certainty and severity of apprehension for retail theft offenses.

Therefore, we support the following bills:

[AB 1960 \(Soria\) Sentencing Enhancements: Property Loss.](#)
[\(As Introduced on 1/29/2024\)](#)

[AB 1990 \(Carrillo\) Criminal Procedure: Arrests: Shoplifting.](#)
[\(As Amended on 3/18/2024\)](#)



AB 2438 (Petrie-Norris) Property Crimes: Enhancements.
(As Introduced on 2/13/2024)

AB 2814 (Low) Crimes: Unlawful Entry: Intent to Commit Package Theft
(As Introduced on 2/15/2024)

AB 3209 (Berman) Crimes: Theft: Retail Theft Restraining Orders
(As Amended on 4/1/2024)

SB 1242 (Min) Crimes: Fires
(As Amended on 3/19/2024)

These bills propose several methods of increasing enforcement tools on the front end of our criminal justice system and increasing the penalties on the back end. These methods range from increasing ongoing funding of local and statewide enforcement programs, improving law enforcements' powers and arrest authority, creating new offenses, and adding sentencing enhancements for felonious offenses of retail theft.

While these individual bills are important to continuing to make progress on retail theft, these bills are only one part of a comprehensive solution that needs to include prevention, enforcement, and supervision. Cal Cities is part of a larger coalition of business, labor, law enforcement and local governments trying to address the increase in retail theft that is impacting so many Californians. Addressing enforcement tools and increased penalties are some of the methods that can help solve this growing problem, however additional changes are needed in order to make our communities safer.

For these reasons, Cal Cities **supports the bills listed above**. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me at jvoorhis@calcities.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jolena Voorhis", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jolena Voorhis
Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist

cc: The Honorable Marc Berman
The Honorable Wendy Carrillo
The Honorable Evan Low
The Honorable Dave Min
The Honorable Cottie Petrie-Norris
The Honorable Esmeralda Soria
Members, Assembly Public Safety Committee



LEAGUE OF
CALIFORNIA
CITIES

Members, Senate Public Safety Committee
Sandy Uribe, Chief Counsel, Assembly Public Safety Committee
Gary Olson, Consultant, Republican Caucus
Mary Kennedy, Chief Counsel, Senate Public Safety
Eric Csizmar, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus