



CARMICHAEL



April 13, 2023

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

Re: AB 1708 (Muratsuchi): Retail Theft – COALITION SUPPORT

Dear Chair Jones-Sawyer:

On behalf of the California Retailers Association, and the undersigned organizations, we are writing to express our strong support for AB 1708 (Muratsuchi), which holds repeat offenders of retail theft more accountable and also allows for lower-level offenders to enter diversion programs to stop their cycle of retail theft. If passed, the bill would send the issue to the voters for approval at the next statewide general election.

According to the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD), a few repeat offenders seem to be driving the city's retail crime. SFPD data identified 116 repeat offenders in 2020 and 33% of them were rearrested by the department. In Orange County, 45% of individuals prosecuted for theft-related crimes were repeat offenders, and 23% had three or more prior convictions. Most of these incidents can be traced back to a few repeat offenders who have learned how to game the system.

Although this is occurring nationwide, California is recognized as a hot spot for these activities. The National Retail Foundation notes that three of the top 10 cities for retail crime are in California. Los Angeles ranks number one, with San Francisco and Sacramento ranking numbers five and ten on the list.

This spike in retail theft is one of the reasons a majority of California voters expressed a desire to see changes made to Proposition 47 to better address theft crimes, according to a 2022 survey by UC Berkeley.

AB 1708 holds repeat offenders accountable and also provides a pretrial diversion option. If a person has two or more prior convictions related to theft, they could be charged with a misdemeanor or felony on their next offense. The bill also establishes a pretrial diversion program for persons charged with theft-related offenses and offers them appropriate mental health and substance abuse treatment in an effort to help prevent future theft and more serious crimes. This bill would only become effective with voter approval.

For these reasons, CRA and the undersigned organizations strongly support AB 1708 and urge your AYE vote. Please contact Ryan Allain at Ryan@calretailers.com with any questions.

Sincerely,



Director, Government Affairs
California Retailers Association

On behalf of:

BizFed Los Angeles, Sarah Wiltfong
BOMA California, Matthew Hargrove
California Building Industry Association, Dan Dunmoyer
California Business Properties Association, Matthew Hargrove
California Business Roundtable, Brooke Armour
California Chamber of Commerce, Brenda Bass
Carmichael Improvement District, Rebekah Evans
Crime Victim Survivors, Patricia Wenskunas
El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce, Laurel Brent Bumb
El Dorado Hills Chamber of Commerce, Debbie Manning
Elk Grove Chamber of Commerce, Angela Perry
Folsom Chamber of Commerce, Joe Gagliardi
Goods Movement Alliance, Brooke Armour
Greater Ontario Business Council, Peggi Hazlett
Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, Chris Micheli
Inland Empire Chamber Alliance, Benjamin Lopez
Inland Empire Economic Partnership, Benjamin Lopez
Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, Tom Indrieri
Menifee Bicycles, Craig Cooper
NAIOP, Matthew Hargrove
National Federation of Independent Business, Tim Taylor
Rancho Cordova Chamber of Commerce, Diann Rogers
Rocklin Chamber of Commerce, Robin, Trimble
Roseville Area Chamber of Commerce, Rana Ghabdhan
Roseville Chamber of Commerce, Rana Ghabdhan
Shingle Springs/Cameron Park Chamber of Commerce, Colette Thiel
Southern California Leadership Council, Lisa Tarpin
UCAN – United Chamber Advocacy Network, Dave Butler
Yuba Sutter Chamber of Commerce, Kristen Perry