CITIES ASSOCIATION
OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY

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May 16, 2024

The Honorable Berman and Rivas
California State Capitol
1021 O Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 3209 (Berman and Rivas): Crimes: Theft: retail theft restraining orders

Notice of Support

Dear Assembly Members Berman and Rivas,

We write today on behalf of the Cities Association of Santa Clara County (CASCC), a Joint Powers Authority, an association of fourteen cities of the county and the elected representatives of more than 1.8 million Bay-Area residents. Since 1990, the city representatives have been gathering to discuss and find consensus and solutions for regional issues. The cities of our association are diverse and include cities of a few thousand people and a city of a million people.

On Thursday, May 9, the CASCC Board of Directors, at the recommendation of the Legislative Action Committee (LAC), voted to support Assembly Bill 3209.

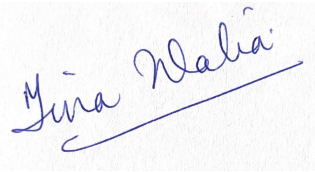
As you may know, retail theft continues to be a problem in nearly all California communities. For example, commercial burglary is at the highest rate since 2008. In fact, according to the PPIC, commercial burglary increased statewide since 2020, especially in larger counties with an increase of 13% among 14 of the 15 largest counties. Across Santa Clara County, cities are experiencing a significant increase in commercial burglaries. For example, in 2023 the city of Cupertino saw an increase of 244% in retail theft as compared to the previous year. To address rising theft, 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. This bill proposes several methods of increasing enforcement tools on the front end of our criminal justice system and increasing the penalties on the back end.

While AB 3209 is important to continuing to make progress on retail theft, this bill is only one part of a comprehensive solution that needs to include prevention, enforcement, and supervision.

For these reasons, the CASCC is pleased to support AB 3209.

Sincerely,



Neysa Fligor
President, Cities Association of Santa Clara Co.
Councilmember, City of Los Altos

Tina Walia
Chair, CASCC Legislative Action Committee
Councilmember, City of Saratoga