



City of Whittier

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Joe Vinatieri
Mayor

Fernando Dutra
Mayor Pro Tem

Cathy Warner
Council Member

Octavio Martinez
Council Member

Jessica Martinez
Council Member

Brian Saeki
City Manager

January 22, 2024

The Honorable Bob Archuleta
Chair, Senate Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs
State Capitol Building, Room 4066
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 923 (Archuleta) Theft.
Letter of SUPPORT (*Introduced January 11, 2024*)

Dear ~~Senator~~ Archuleta:

As Mayor of the City of Whittier, I am writing to express our strong support for Senate Bill (SB) 923, which would revise the definition of shoplifting to require an intent to steal retail property or merchandise and would require a person convicted of petty theft or shoplifting, if the person has 2 or more prior convictions for specified theft-related offenses, to be punished by imprisonment in the county jail.

This legislation is an important step toward rectifying the unintended consequences of the voter-approved Proposition 47, since it addresses the pressing issue of theft within our community and provides much-needed measures to protect our residents and businesses. The City of Whittier has unfortunately experienced an increase in theft incidents in recent years, causing concern among our residents and local businesses. Compared to 2022, the City has experienced a 43% increase in reported commercial burglaries and an 11% increase in reported shoplifting as of August 31, 2023.

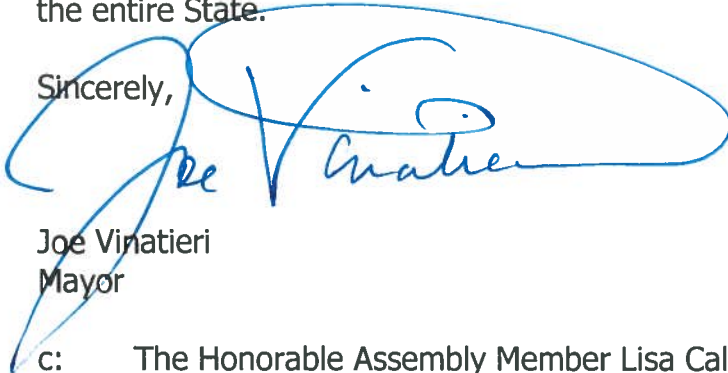
SB 923, with its comprehensive approach to addressing theft-related challenges, aligns with our City's commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of our community members by deterring individuals from engaging in repeated theft-related offenses by holding them accountable for their actions through jail time. The bill's focus on individuals with two or more prior convictions for specified theft-related offenses acknowledges the issue of recidivism. By imposing more severe consequences for repeat offenders, the legislation aims to address and potentially reduce the cycle of criminal behavior.

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We appreciate your efforts and Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer in recognizing the significance of this issue and proposing legislation that seeks to enhance penalties for theft, deter criminal activities, and safeguard the interests of our residents and businesses. Senate Bill 923 will undoubtedly contribute to creating a safer and more secure environment for our business community.

Senate Bill 923 is crucial in our collective efforts to combat theft and protect the rights and property of our residents and business owners. We are confident that this legislation will have a positive impact on reducing crime rates, enhancing public safety, reducing recidivism, and fostering a stronger sense of security among our community members. Thank you for considering our endorsement of Senate Bill 923. We look forward to the successful passage of this legislation and its positive impact on the City of Whittier and the entire State.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Vinatieri", is written over a large, light blue oval scribble.

Joe Vinatieri
Mayor

c: The Honorable Assembly Member Lisa Calderon
Whittier City Council