



MAYOR REX RICHARDSON

August 22, 2024

The Honorable Mike McGuire
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 8518
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for the Safer California Plan

Dear Senate President pro Tempore Senator Mike McGuire,

I am writing on behalf of the City of Long Beach (City) to express support for the bipartisan [Safer California Plan](#), a package of California State Senate bills aimed at addressing the fentanyl crisis and curbing retail theft and community-based crime.

Opioids are a major health and substance use issue nationally, and evidence suggests opioid-related overdose death rates are prevalent in Long Beach. From July 2019 to April 2023, the Long Beach Fire Department received and responded to 1,330 opioid-related overdose calls. Furthermore, from 2016 to 2022, there has been an increase in fentanyl overdose deaths in Long Beach every year until 2022, when the number decreased from 92 in 2021 to 65 in 2022. The number of Commercial Burglaries in Long Beach has also risen, with a reported increase of 28.5 percent, or 117 incidents, when comparing the period from January through May 2024 to the same period in 2023. Similarly, over the same time frame, the number of Petty Thefts Under \$950 increased by 13.3 percent, or 209 incidents.

The Safer California Plan focuses on addressing the fentanyl crisis through treatment and prevention, as opposed to increasing the severity of punishment. The Safer California Plan also focuses on combatting retail theft through crime prevention and enhanced tools for law enforcement. The City supports legislation and grant efforts that assist municipalities in combatting opioid overdose. The City also supports legislation that assist municipalities in preventing and reducing the number of deaths from illicit sales of opioids, including fentanyl, by holding drug traffickers accountable. Furthermore, the City supports the funding and use of regional task forces to combat organized crime involving robbery, commercial burglary, human trafficking, sex trafficking, and retail theft/smash and grabs.

The Safer California Plan offers strategic and evidence-based approaches to address the rising tide of retail theft and fentanyl that's impacting our communities, while also providing law enforcement the tools necessary to protect the quality of life for residents and businesses in Long Beach.

For these reasons, the City supports the Safer California Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex Richardson".

Mayor Rex Richardson
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 65th District
The Honorable Josh Lowenthal, State Assembly, 69th District

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