

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR JANICE HAHN

September 26, 2023

Organized Retail Theft Task Force and Grant

The COVID-19 pandemic provided many challenges to brick-and-mortar businesses as they were forced to shut down temporarily and/or faced a smaller clientele base as many people turned to online options instead. As we emerge from the pandemic, many of these businesses are rebuilding their base and attempting to regain footing and make up for losses experienced during the pandemic. At the same time, they have been faced with an increase in organized retail theft, including smash-and-grab robberies that have recently become more brazen and violent. A recent survey from the National Retail Federation found that organized retail crime has increased by 26% since 2000. Unfortunately, this trend holds true in Los Angeles County.

In response to the increase in organized retail theft, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) has partnered with neighboring law enforcement organizations to create the Organized Retail Theft Task Force (Task Force). Within LASD, this task force will consist of one lieutenant, three sergeants, and thirty detectives who are dedicated to preventing and addressing organized retail theft, including smash-

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and-grabs, catalytic converter thefts, and cargo theft. The Task Force, which will also be supported by civilian professional staff, will be divided into three geographic teams, and they will collaborate with other law enforcement agencies, the District Attorney's Office, and local businesses.

Shortly after this Task Force was created, the State of California (State) announced that more than \$250 million in grant funding would go to law enforcement entities across the state specifically to fight organized retail crime. After a competitive grant application process, the State announced the winners on September 12, 2023, and LASD was awarded \$15.6 million. LASD plans to use these funds to support their Task Force in their efforts to prevent and address organized retail crime. This support will include training, outreach to local businesses, purchasing equipment and vehicles, funding overtime for personnel, and other vital components of the Task Force's efforts.

These funds will help provide LASD with financial support and necessary tools to effectively and efficiently address the increase in organized retail crime that is harming many businesses across Los Angeles County. Given the increasing frequency in which such thefts are occurring, it is important to accept the funds as soon as possible and begin building up the newly formed Task Force.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Authorize the Sheriff, or his designee, to immediately accept the Organized Retail Theft Prevention grant award agreement (Standard Agreement) upon receipt from the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) and execute and submit all required grant documents, including but not limited to: agreements; modifications; extensions; and annual expenditure reports;

- 2) Authorize the Sheriff, or his designee, to apply for and submit, future grant applications to the BSCC related to the Organized Retail Theft Prevention grant program in future fiscal years, if applicable, and to execute and submit all required grant application documents;
- 3) Authorize the Sheriff, or his designee, to accept all future grant awards from the BSCC related to the Organized Retail Theft Prevention grant program in future fiscal years, if applicable, and execute all required grant award documents, including but not limited to: agreements; modifications; extensions; and annual expenditure reports;
- 4) Authorize the Sheriff, or his designee, to deposit funds received from the BSCC into an interest-bearing account, if deemed necessary by the BSCC, and to utilize any interest earned on expenditures related to the Organized Retail Theft Prevention grant program.

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