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Transcript

March 4, 2026

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GL Gamino, Leslie 0:04

This is supervisor Katherine Barker's motion addressing copper wire catalytic converter and other non ferrous metal theft in Los Angeles County.

This motion intends to maintain and strengthen the board's commitment to addressing the ongoing issue of copper theft that's impacting our counties across Los Angeles County.

So as we know, this problem continues to affect residents quality of life. It's important that the county keep this issue top of mind.

And develop a coordinated plan to address these challenges. This build on the board's previous direction last May that task departments with tracking theft incidents. So this motion requests a report from the experts, our county departments and stakeholders so that we can better understand the scope of the.

Issue and identify recommendations to implement moving forward. With that, I'll turn it over to my colleague Anish Sharaya.

SA Saraiya, Anish 0:59

Hi everybody.

I'm pretty sure this is my first time at public safety cluster for so thanks for having me.

Yeah, just wanna echo exactly what Leslie said.

You know, this is obviously a very acute problem in our community, in Altadena, as that Community is starting its rebuilding process after the devastating Heaton fires.

So just as a quick snapshot, we have, you know, lost almost 6000 homes, many multifamily buildings, but.

The key is right now there's an incredible amount of construction.

That's taking place.

We have almost 850 homes in construction, another 7 to 800 that are permitted. And so our goal is to make sure that as these properties start to go through the

rebuilding process, as our families come home, that we ensure that they're protected and that.

There are measures in place to discourage theft and vandalism and any other associated challenges they'll face in what has already been an incred arduous recovery effort for our community. So with that, we just appreciate support and happy to answer any questions.

GL Gamino, Leslie 2:09

OK.

Also just want to mention that we have representatives from the Sheriff's Department, Major Crimes Bureau, CEO layer and public works available as well for question.

NR Natalya Romo 2:20

Thank you for that.

Are there any questions from the justice deputies if you could raise your hand?

Alright, seeing none.

I'm trying to talk slow 'cause. Sometimes things pop up.

But seeing none, let's open it up for public comment.

Correct Rd.

DC Dardy Chen 2:43

All right. Are there any public comment?

Please speak up or raise your hand on teams please.

+19***50** 2:51

I have a comment.

DC Dardy Chen 2:51

11 OK, your name Sir.

+19***50** 2:54

Darryl Terrell.

DC **Dardy Chen** 2:56

OK, we'll start your minute when you start speaking.

+19***50** 3:00

OK, I was at the last board meeting yesterday and I've been on this.

I guess mission for the last four years to to have Counties pass the catalytic converter on law for possession ordinance, so recently was Orange County and last and I got some statistics to share with you guys. According to Los Angeles County's Sheriff's Department, catalytic converter thefts in.

20/24 was 2396.

There were catalytical writ of thefts in 2025 that was 2409.

These catalytic converters desk hasn't gone away.

Johnny Wagner was killed over a catalytic converter in 2024, and Juan Sanchez of Englewood was killed in 2025 of catalytic converters, and I think LA County should join the rest of our other counties in passing the catalytic converter unlawful possession ordinance. It's very import.

That we all be on the same page.

As I said before, all your neighbors counties have passed it. Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino.

Orange County and Kern and Ventura has passed its ordinance.

DC **Dardy Chen** 4:09

Thank you very much.

Thank you very much.

+19***50** 4:10

Thank you.

DC **Dardy Chen** 4:11

Next we have Jodi. Jodi, start your time when you start speaking.

FJ **FRINGER, JODI** 4:17

Morning and thank you, Madam Chair and committee.

I'm Jody fringer.

I'm the regional sales director of AT&T in Southern California for public Sector and Firstnet for more than 150 years.

AT&T has worked to keep communities connected through secure and reliable communications.

Today, those connections are increasingly being disrupted.

By copper cable theft and the problem is growing.

Copper wire is not just a utility asset. It is essential to the county's public infrastructure infrastructure that supports emergency communication used by first responders and water and sanitation systems that protect public health. When copper cable is stolen, these systems fail.

At present, 52 county of Los Angeles facilities are experiencing. Service outages.

DC **Dardy Chen** 5:19
Thank you, Jodi.

FJ **FRINGER, JODI** 5:21
OK.

DC **Dardy Chen** 5:21
Thank you very much Odie.

FJ **FRINGER, JODI** 5:21
Thank you.

DC **Dardy Chen** 5:22
Thank you.
All right, next our Ori margarosia to unmute and we'll start your time.
Cory marozian.

+18***53** 5:34
Good morning, Madam Chair.
Yes. Can you hear me?

DC **Dardy Chen** 5:36

Go ahead.

+18***53** 5:37

Good morning, Madam Karen. Thank you.

My name is Judy Marduasan.

I'm the director of copper recovery for AT&T. Copper cable theft possesses a serious threat to our ability to modernize our network and expand advanced fiber broadband access.

These steps result in significant repair costs and divert critical resources away from planned network upgrades and expansion. Each incident disrupts communication for residents and essential services, including schools, hospitals and emergency response systems that depend on reliable connectivity.

The growing trend of copper theft across Los Angeles County puts these at vital risk. As resources are redirected to address ongoing repairs, the deployment of advanced fibre broadband is delayed, limiting high speed Internet access and slowing economic growth in our communities, threatening local regulations, penalties and oversight of copper recycling facilities is essential.

We respectfully request the county's participation in evaluating ordinance measures that address these public safety and communication risks. Thank you.

DC **Dardy Chen** 6:35

Thank you very much, Joseph.

Santana, we'll start your time when you start speaking.

ST **SANTANA, JOSEPH T** 6:39

Good morning and thank you, Madam Chair. I'm Joseph Santana.

Solicit director network build operations for AT&T in Los Angeles.

Copper cable depth in Valley County is no longer isolated vandalism.

It's a serious and rapidly growing infrastructure threat that will directly affect public safety and communications reliability.

Now the county alone. In 2025, we lost more than 5000 distinct cable theft incidents due to these thefts. That resulted in more than 7373 thousand labor hours and about \$9.1 million in labor cost while averaging 25.7.

Days from reported outage to service restoration.

Holly County alone accounts for nearly as much death activity as all other California counties combined.

The impacts due to these these steps are serious.

Isn't just streetlights, hospitals, emergency services being affected, for example, recent copper cable theft impacted hospitals in San Fernando Valley, where 100 critical medical lines were out of service.

But death takes out communication that that scale.

It can delay emergency responses to short patient care and put the public at risk.

The broader impact is staggering across the industry. Reported incidents in Alley County tied to copper theft climb from 8 to 18,000 plus.

In 2023 and 28,500 plus in 2024, around 37,000 by late.

DC **Dardy Chen** 7:41

Thank you very much, Joseph.

Thank you very much.

All right.

Next, Josh, we'll start your time when you start speaking Josh Alvarado.

AJ **ALVARADO, JOSH** 7:48

Good morning and thank you, Madam Chair.

I'm Josh Alvarado, public safety director for AT&T in California, Los Angeles County, the most populous county in California, will be at the forefront of major global events, including the 2026 FIFA World Cup, the 2027 Super Bowl and the 2028 summer.

Olympics and Paralympic Games.

It is essential that we ensure reliable connectivity for 911 services, not only during these events but on an ongoing basis.

In 2025, LA County recorded around 77 instances.

Of call rerouting for public safety, answering points, peace apps, and none of these incidents were due to copper theft, as reported to Cal Oes. Conversely, in January of this year, there were 19 instances of rerouted traffic, with a 16 attributed to copper theft, indicating that a staggering 80.

4% of disruptions in January are caused by these thefts.

The issue is critically effects our dispatchers, law enforcement divisions, first

responders and overall safety security of our county county.

Copper thieves indiscriminately target copper.

Infrastructure for profit.

DC **Dardy Chen** 8:53

Thank you very much.

All right. Rodizi. Olcott, your next, we'll start your time when you start speaking.

AW **ALCUTT, RAHDEESE W** 8:59

Good morning and thank you, Mr. Chair.

My name is Roddy Silkut and I'm a lead investigator with AT and TI.

Want to speak to you today about how copper cable theft is not just a telecom infrastructure problem? It's a shared security problem that poses significant security risks affecting vital infrastructure. As Steve often target live systems crucial for daily operations such as traffic, traffic, signal networks, transportation, corridors, public. Safety circuits, utility grids, commercial facilities and communications backrooms that tie them all together.

Each step disrupts the industry's residents depend on everyday.

This means dark intersections, disabled roadway signs, interrupted business operations and strain emergency responses.

Every theft creates a gap in those gaps compound. From security standpoint, each compromise line reduces redundancy and resiliency.

It reduces uncertainty into systems designed to function reliably under stress.

Now consider some context. In high stakes global event, like the upcoming Summer Olympics, one with high visibility, high impact and watch by billions. If a communications backbone were compromised by copper cable theft during such an event, the emergency coordination could suffer.

Transit systems would lose connectivity and public confidence could go.

DC **Dardy Chen** 10:02

Thank you very much.

Thank you very much for your comment.

Next we have Erica Ericka Muell started time when you started speaking.

Erica Jacques. Right. Go ahead. Go ahead.

EJ Erica Jacquez-Verizon 10:13

Thank you so much for your time.

My name is Erica Hawkins, and I work for Verizon and I wanted to thank you so much for ST5, for leading the charge on this issue, as our colleagues have mentioned, this is a major safety issue for all of us.

All of your constituents and residents directly impacting the district or we like the spirit of the motion and we would just ask that you list consulting all county departments to consult with utility companies, telecom providers including wireless Internet services.

In addition, we want to make sure that.

The terminology for wireless included includes wireless and fiber in the term terminology, so that's also on in the motion as well.

Again, we support this 'cause of the issues of safety for World Cup Olympics and also all major quality of life. The past year we've spent over close to \$1,000,000 in cost for repair, so we're looking forward to working with the county with the cluster, with the Sheriff's Office and let us know how we can support to continue to work and combat this incredible issue.

Thank you.

DC Dardy Chen 11:12

Thank you very much.

Christina Cortez, you're next.

We'll start your time. We start speaking.

Christina, can you mute please?

Christina, can you unmute?

CE CORTEZ, CHRISTINA E 11:27

I apologize for that.

DC Dardy Chen 11:28

Go ahead.

CE CORTEZ, CHRISTINA E 11:29

Good morning and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm Christina Cortez client solution executive from public sector AT&T.
Corporate theft has become an increasingly serious issue impacting students and family of the Los Angeles Unified School District. We've seen dramatic increases in copper cable stolen from our infrastructure, supporting the school facilities and within the the district.
This pattern of.
This pattern that has consistently evolved over 2024 through 2026 currently.
Has had major major indications that this item has to be has to be.
I'm sorry, I apologize.
Has to be addressed. The pattern consistently indicates that current penalties and enforcement mechanisms and prosecution outcomes have failed to discourage repeat offenders and organize thefts without stronger criminal classifications and consistent prosecutions.
Enhance agencies for repeat and organized offenders.
These crimes will continue to endanger education and public safety.

 **+19*****50** 12:30
Please.

 **Dardy Chen** 12:31
Thank you, Jodi.
Thank you very much.
All right.
Are there any other public comments?
OK, hearing none back. Oh, is there someone there?
OK, here now, back to chair for the next remainder of the agenda.

 **Natalya Romo** 12:48
Thank you, darde.
We don't have any presentation items, so we'll go to general public comment.

 **Dardy Chen** 12:54
All right. Are there anyone here for general public comments?
Please speak up or raise your hand on teams.
OK.

Well, once, twice.

All right, back to you for adjournment.

NR **Natalya Romo** 13:05

Thank you and thank you for everyone for coming.

It was super quick, so we'll join this meeting now and move to our closed session.

DC **Dardy Chen** 13:11

Thank you.

Thank you very much.

LE **Lim, Esther** 13:13

Thank you.

SA **Saraiya, Anish** 13:14

Bye. Thank you. Thank you.

FJ **FRINGER, JODI** 13:15

Thank you.

□ **Catherine Colbert** stopped transcription