



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
SACRAMENTO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

GEORGE GASCÓN • District Attorney  
JOSEPH F. INIGUEZ • Chief Deputy District Attorney

DANIEL FELIZZATTO • Legislative Advocate  
TAMAR TOKAT • Legislative Advocate

April 8, 2024  
Senator Aisha Wahab  
1021 O Street, Suite 7330  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Senate Bill 982  
SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Wahab:

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office is pleased to support Senate Bill 982 (Wahab).

SB 982 would remove the sunset date on Penal Code section 490.4, California's Organized Retail Theft statute, which makes it a crime chargeable as a felony or a misdemeanor for an organized group of two or more persons to steal goods from a merchant with the intent to sell, exchange, or return the goods for value. That section will expire on January 1, 2026; however, by removing the sunset date, section 490.4 will become permanent.

Organized retail theft is a nationwide problem. A recent study by the National Retail Federation found that organized retail theft has increased by over 26% nationally since 2021. In addition to big retailers, many small businesses are suffering the consequences of organized retail theft, and often, they do not have the same resources to protect themselves. Further, when retailers are affected by these crimes, they typically make up their losses by raising prices, reducing hours, or closing their stores. Ultimately, these thefts impact consumers.

California's Organized Retail Theft statute is an important tool in combating this pernicious crime. The number of criminal prosecutions for organized retail theft have increased significantly since 2020. In Los Angeles, criminal filings under Penal Code section 490.4 increased from 95 cases filed in 2020 to 541, mostly felony filings, in 2023. SB 982 will ensure that prosecutors and law enforcement officers have the tools necessary to curb organized retail theft and hold perpetrators accountable.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Tamar Tokat in our Legislative Office at 916-442-0668.

Very Truly Yours,

GEORGE GASCÓN  
District Attorney