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NEWS RELEASE



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**District Attorney-Sponsored Bill to Combat Organized Retail Theft
Signed by Governor Newsom**

VENTURA, Calif. – The Ventura County District Attorney’s Office applauds the signing of Assembly Bill 1779 by Governor Gavin Newsom. This crucial legislation, authored by Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin and signed by Governor Newsom on August 16, 2024, strengthens California’s ability to combat organized retail theft, a growing concern for business owners and communities across the state.

“The Legislature, led by Speaker Rivas and Pro Tem McGuire set out with a mission this year to address organized retail theft,” said Assemblymember Irwin. “They recognized the financial burden these crimes have placed on everyday Californians trying to buy household products, and the retailers trying to serve them. By signing AB 1779, the Governor restored a common-sense law that allows district attorneys to convene a single prosecution for organized theft activities spanning multiple counties.”

AB 1779, sponsored by Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko, amends Penal Code section 786.5, granting county district attorneys the authority to consolidate related theft offenses occurring across multiple counties into a single prosecution. Consolidated prosecutions under AB 1779 will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice system in dealing with these complex and often violent crimes.

"Organized retail theft is not just a financial crime but a threat to the safety of our communities," said District Attorney Nasarenko. "With the passage of AB 1779, we now have a powerful tool to hold these criminals accountable for crimes against Ventura County businesses, even when their schemes involve crimes in other counties."

The bill also includes safeguards to ensure cooperation among district attorneys from different counties. Before consolidating cases, prosecutors must obtain written authorization from all district attorneys in counties with jurisdiction, ensuring that the venue for prosecution is agreed upon by all parties involved.

“Special thanks to Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko for your steadfast support and advocacy on behalf of Ventura County residents,” Irwin added. “It’s far past time to hold these criminals accountable.”