



City of
SANTA CLARITA

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April 9, 2024

Cameron Smyth
Mayor

The Honorable Al Muratsuchi
California State Assembly, District 66
1021 O Street, Suite 5310
Sacramento, CA 95814

Bill Miranda
Mayor Pro Tem

Dear Assembly Member Muratsuchi:

SUBJECT: AB 2309 (MURATSUCHI): SUPPORT

Jason Gibbs
Councilmember

On behalf of the Santa Clarita City Council, I am writing to express our support for Assembly Bill 2309, related to authorizing a city to prosecute any state misdemeanor without needing to obtain consent from their District Attorney. The Santa Clarita City Council voted unanimously to support this measure on March 26, 2024.

Marsha McLean
Councilmember

In partnership with local law enforcement agencies and community-based organizations, we believe the most important role of cities is to ensure the public safety and wellbeing of its residents. With that said, we understand that a key piece to public safety is individual criminal accountability and the prosecution of those accused of committing a crime.

Laurene Weste
Councilmember

Prosecutorial responsibility is not just critical in ensuring that the public at-large remains safe but that victims obtain adequate due process and justice granted by state law and criminals receive the rehabilitation and treatment needed to reintegrate into society as law-abiding citizens.

This legislation is paramount in ensuring that cities have the ability to prosecute misdemeanors and protect their communities from potential prosecutorial changes at the county level that may be inconsistent with a city's priorities or compromise safety within its communities.

As you know, immediately following his swearing-in, Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascon issued a series of special directives, including eliminating the filing of sentence enhancements and dismissing the prosecution of several misdemeanor crimes. The directive related to misdemeanor crimes



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identified several misdemeanors that would be declined or dismissed prior to arraignment including trespassing, criminal threats, public intoxication, resisting arrest, driving without a valid driver's license, driving on a suspended driver's license, loitering to commit prostitution, disturbing the peace, and minor in possession of alcohol.

Since the implementation of the special directives, the City of Santa Clarita has experienced a significant increase in Part I crimes and repeat offenders arrested by the Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station are at an all-time high.

Modifying the process in granting general law cities the ability to prosecute misdemeanors without potentially being stonewalled by their District Attorney, enables cities the ability to restore autonomy in prosecuting state misdemeanors and respond swiftly and adequately to the unique public safety challenges we may face.

For these reasons, the City strongly supports Assembly Bill 2309. Should you or your staff require any further information regarding our position on this bill, please contact Masis Hagobian, Intergovernmental Relations Officer, at (661) 286-4057 or mhagobian@santa-clarita.com.

Sincerely,



Cameron Smyth

Mayor

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cc: Members of the City Council
Senator Scott Wilk
Assemblywoman Pilar Schiavo
Kenneth W. Striplin, City Manager
Frank Oviedo, Assistant City Manager
Leadership Team
Masis Hagobian, Intergovernmental Relations Officer
California Contract Cities Association
Joe A. Gonsalves & Son