

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF _____
SUPPORTING CALIFORNIA'S PROPOSITION 20 ON THE NOVEMBER 2020 BALLOT.

WHEREAS, protecting every person in our state, including our most vulnerable children, from violent crime is of the utmost importance. Rapists, child molesters and other violent criminals should not be released early from prison; and

WHEREAS, recent changes to parole laws allow the early release of dangerous criminals by the law's failure to define certain crimes as "violent," and these changes allowed individuals convicted of sex trafficking of children, rape of an unconscious person, felony assault with a deadly weapon, and felony domestic violence to be considered "nonviolent" offenders; and

WHEREAS, as a result, these "nonviolent" offenders are eligible for early release from prison after serving only a fraction of the sentence ordered by a judge; and

WHEREAS, violent offenders are also being allowed to remain free in our communities even when they commit new crimes and violate the terms of their post release community supervision; and

WHEREAS, Proposition 20 reforms the law so felons who violate the terms of their release will be brought back to court upon their third violation and can be held accountable for such violations; and

WHEREAS, nothing in the Proposition is intended to create additional "strike" offenses which would increase the state prison population; nor is it intended to affect the ability of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to award educational and merit credits; and

WHEREAS, recent changes to California law allow individuals who steal repeatedly to face few consequences, regardless of their criminal record or how many times they steal; and

WHEREAS, as a result, between 2014 and 2019, California saw a 30% increase in certain theft and property crimes, while most states have seen a steady decline; and

WHEREAS, according to the California Department of Justice, the value of property stolen has increased 25% since 2014; and

WHEREAS, grocery store operators and other retail outlets around the state have seen unprecedented increases in the amount of losses associated with shoplifting in their stores, with some reporting up to 150 percent increases in these losses from 2012 to present, with the largest jumps occurring since 2014; and

WHEREAS, shoplifting incidents have started to escalate in such a manner that have endangered innocent customers and employees; and

WHEREAS, individuals who repeatedly steal often do so to support their drug habit, but recent changes to California law have reduced judges' ability to order individuals convicted of repeated theft crimes into effective drug treatment programs; and

WHEREAS, California needs stronger laws for those who are repeatedly convicted of theft related crimes, which will encourage those who repeatedly steal to support their drug problem to enter into existing drug treatment programs, and this Proposition would enact such reforms; and

WHEREAS, collecting DNA from criminals is essential to solving violent crimes, and over 450 violent crimes including murder, rape and robbery have gone unsolved because DNA is being collected from fewer criminals; and

WHEREAS, DNA collected in 2015 from a convicted child molester solved the rape-murders of two six year-old boys that occurred three decades ago in Los Angeles County; and DNA collected in 2016 from an individual caught driving a stolen car solved the 2012 San Francisco Bay Area rape-murder of an 83-year-old woman; and

WHEREAS, recent changes to California law unintentionally eliminated DNA collection for theft and drug crimes, but this Proposition restores DNA collection from persons convicted for such offenses; and

WHEREAS, permitting collection and more DNA samples will help identify suspects, clear the innocent and free the wrongly convicted; and

WHEREAS, this Proposition does not affect existing legal safeguards that protect the privacy of individuals by allowing for their removal of their DNA profile if they are not charged with a crime, are acquitted or are found innocent.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF _____, CALIFORNIA, that the City Council hereby supports California's Proposition 20 on the November 2020 ballot.