

RESOLUTION RULES, ELECTIONS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, copper wire theft continues to be a persistent and escalating issue throughout the City of Los Angeles, resulting in widespread infrastructure damage, prolonged service outages, and significant threats to public safety; and

WHEREAS, in 2024 alone, the Los Angeles Bureau of Street Lighting received approximately 45,000 service requests, with an estimated 40 percent attributed to copper wire theft, placing substantial strain on City resources and delaying critical repairs; and

WHEREAS, current California law calculates the value of stolen copper based on its minimal scrap value, rather than the full cost of repair and replacement, creating a significant gap in accurately reflecting the true financial hardship to victims, including public agencies and utilities; and

WHEREAS, as a result of this valuation gap, many instances of copper wire theft fall below the \$950 felony threshold established under Proposition 47, despite causing tens of thousands—or even millions—of dollars in damages to public infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, organized theft rings often exploit this loophole by committing repeated small-scale thefts to avoid felony prosecution, thereby perpetuating ongoing damage to critical infrastructure systems; and


WHEREAS, Senate Bill 1266, introduced by Senator Henry Stern, seeks to address this enforcement gap by redefining the value of stolen copper wire to include the full cost of repair and replacement, including labor and equipment, rather than solely relying on scrap value; and

WHEREAS, SB 1266 would also authorize the aggregation of multiple thefts committed against critical infrastructure within a 90-day period, allowing prosecutors to more effectively hold repeat offenders accountable and meet the felony threshold; and

WHEREAS, by strengthening the legal tools available to law enforcement and prosecutors, SB 1266 aims to deter copper wire theft, disrupt organized theft operations, and better protect public safety and essential infrastructure;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2025-2026 State Legislative Program SUPPORT of SB 1266 (Stern), which would require that the valuation of stolen copper wire be calculated based upon the comprehensive cost of repair and replacement incurred by the victim, encompassing all necessary labor and equipment expenses, as opposed to the nominal scrap value; and furthermore, authorize the aggregation of multiple thefts targeting critical infrastructure within a 90-day window to satisfy the felony threshold established by state law.

PRESENTED BY:


ADRIN NAZARIAN
Councilmember, 2nd District

SECONDED BY:




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