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California State Senate

SENATOR
SCOTT WILK
SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER
TWENTY-FIRST SENATE DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
GOVERNMENTAL
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TRANSPORTATION



September 15, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Recommended Veto of AB 333 (Kamlager)

Dear Governor Newsom:

I respectfully write to request your veto of Assembly Bill 333, which narrows the scope of existing gang enhancements, making it more difficult to prosecute these crimes by eliminating the ability to consider crimes committed to further the reputation of the gang.

Existing law recognizes that crimes committed for the benefit of a criminal street gang are dangerous and need to be discouraged when possible. This bill attempts to make it more difficult to prosecute these crimes by removing certain offenses from the list of predicate crimes, which includes, burglary, vandalism, and certain theft-related offenses from the list that can be used to establish a pattern of criminal gang activity.

At the same time the author and others are seeking to reduce penalties, gang crime is rising throughout this state. For example, in Los Angeles County, homicides have risen by more than 113 percent in the first three months of 2021, with 64 people murdered, up from 30 killed last year. In that time, aggravated assaults with guns have risen by 82 percent, with 465 victims over 255 in 2020. Many of these killings are gang related. In San Diego, they have observed a 129% increase in gang-related shootings since January 1, and more than 1,000 firearms from various investigations in the same time period have been recovered by the police department. Clearly, this is not the best time to remove one of the few solid tools law enforcement has to solve these very complex and difficult cases.

For these reasons, I respectfully request your veto. If you have any questions about my request, please call my office at 916-651-4021 or email me at Senator.Wilk@senate.ca.gov

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott Wilk".

Scott Wilk
Senate Republican Leader