



GREG COX

VICE CHAIRMAN
SUPERVISOR, FIRST DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: May 15, 2007
TO: Board of Supervisors
SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR ASSEMBLY BILL 844 (BERRYHILL)
(ALL DISTRICT)

SUMMARY:

Overview

On February 22, 2007, Assemblyman Tom Berryhill introduced Assembly Bill 844 which would help stop the growing problem of metal theft throughout California. In addition to the current requirements, AB 844 would mandate that all scrap-metal dealers and recyclers hold scrap metal for 15 days or get a picture of the person trying to sell the metal. It would also require the records to include a description of the material, type, quantity, weight, and size of junk purchased or sold, and that scrap-metal dealers and recyclers pay anyone selling metal with a check instead of cash, payable 10 days after the transaction.

Recommendation(s):

VICE CHAIRMAN COX AND SUPERVISOR JACOB

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to draft a letter for the Chairman's signature to Assemblyman Berryhill and all members of the San Diego delegation in support of Assembly Bill 844.
2. Direct the CAO to communicate this Board of Supervisors' support of Assembly Bill 844 to San Diego County's Legislative Representative in Sacramento.

Fiscal Impact:

There is no fiscal impact associated with these recommendations.

Business Impact Statement:

N/A

Advisory Board Statement:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR ASSEMBLY BILL 844 (BERRYHILL) (ALL DISTRICTS)

In just the last year alone, San Diego County has seen a significant rise in metal theft throughout the county. From funeral urns at cemetery gravesites to manhole covers on our local streets, metal theft is an easy crime for a thief looking for a quick buck.

Current law requires recyclers and scrap-metal dealers to keep a written record of all items sold and also have the ability to properly identify the seller. Assembly Bill 844 would add critical requirements to current law by revising the definition of a junk dealer and placing tougher guidelines on payment and handling of metal sales. With the implementation of AB 844, all recyclers and scrap-metal dealers would have to hold scrap metal in the same condition it was received for at least 15 days or get a picture of the person trying to sell the metal. It would also require the records to include a description of the material, type, quantity, weight, and size of junk purchased or sold, and that recyclers and scrap-metal dealers pay anyone selling metal with a check instead of cash, payable at least 10 days after the transaction.

Recently, a scenic overlook off the Silver Strand in Coronado was dismantled, stolen, and sold to a local recycler. Despite law enforcement's quick response, they were unable to apprehend the thief because the recycler couldn't identify the man. To add insult to injury, the recycler had already melted the metal, making it impossible to recover and reuse for the project. The cost to rebuild the overlook is estimated at well over \$50,000. The payoff to the thief? A mere \$1,900.

Additionally, the County's Department of Public Works has experienced the costly theft of irrigation pumps and copper wire for street lights removed out of the conduit in the ground. Schools, cities, and the private sector are also experiencing a rise in metal theft. Construction sites are often targets of theft because of the lack of security and openness of the sites. Given the rising cost of construction, stolen metal can throw a project into debt or severely delay its completion date. Because the laws governing the sale of junk metal are weak, it has become a trendy crime for thieves looking for a quick influx of cash with a low risk of getting caught.

Assembly Bill 844 would stop the quick cash sale of high-priced metals like copper and aluminum. It would give local investigators more information and time to track down thieves. It would also hold dealers accountable for the metals they buy. Today's action would put the County of San Diego on record with other organizations, including the State Sheriff's Association, supporting Assembly Bill 844.

We urge your support.

Respectfully submitted,

GREG COX
Vice-Chairman
Supervisor, First District

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

CONCURRENCE(S)

COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Written Disclosure per County Charter Section 1000.1 Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY FINANCE DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Requires Four Votes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
COUNTY TECHNOLOGY OFFICE	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

Other Concurrence(s):

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: First Supervisorial District /Second Supervisorial District

CONTACT PERSON(S):

Maddy Morris
Name
531-5511
Phone

Tale Halse
Name
531-5522
Phone