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For Immediate Release

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Governor Brown Signs DA-Sponsored Bill Targeting Bail Skippers

Law Keeps Defendants in Custody, Saves Taxpayers Thousands of Dollars

San Diego County District Attorney [Bonnie M. Dumanis](#) announced today that legislation adding an additional \$100,000 to the bail of those defendants who have previously failed to appear in court has been signed by Governor Jerry Brown. The Governor signed the bill this morning, which was authored by State Senator Juan Vargas and sponsored by the San Diego County District Attorney's Office. It will become law on January 1, 2012.

"This law will stop defendants from slipping out of custody and save taxpayers thousands of dollars," said DA Dumanis. "It costs a lot of money to extradite defendants to face charges in San Diego County. Every time one of them posts bail and flees our jurisdiction prior to appearing in court, tax dollars are squandered."

Because bail is sometimes set at a low level, fugitives are able to bail out of jail and disappear before they are arraigned. Criminals become fugitives for a second time, requiring law enforcement to extradite them again, placing an unnecessary financial burden on California counties.

Senate Bill 291 will provide that bail be set at \$100,000 for a defendant who is extradited back to California to face original charges. The \$100,000 will be in addition to bail already set on the underlying charges. In these circumstances, a 48-hour noticed hearing will be scheduled to allow prosecutors the opportunity to inform the judge of the defendant's flight risk and to argue for higher bail. SB 291 protects communities from the release of individuals who have been involved in serious or violent felonies.

The cost to extradite a defendant ranges from \$3,000 to \$6,000 depending on where they are finally located. SB 291 essentially provides an "insurance policy" against an extradited defendant being released before they are brought to court to face the original charges.

[Watch a recent "San Diego's Most Wanted" story about the bill here.](#)

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