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## Coalition Turns in Over 900,000 Signatures to Qualify Prop 47-Related Initiative for the November Ballot

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) said today that Californians for Safer Communities is submitting over 900,000 voter signatures to qualify the Homelessness, Drug Addiction, and Theft Reduction Act (Initiative 23-0017A1) to qualify for the November General Election ballot. To qualify the measure for the November 2024 ballot, the law requires 546,651 valid signatures.

Today, DA Stephan joined small business owners, as well as diverse community organizations and associations to thank them for their efforts in gathering signatures and marking this milestone of submitting signatures to qualify this initiative for the November ballot.

In February, Stephan was joined by the mayors of 15 cities across San Diego County as well as business leaders, crime victims, parents of children poisoned by fentanyl dealers, and other concerned citizens in an effort to inform the public and boost signature gathering for the initiative. The measure would make communities, businesses, and streets safer and healthier by restoring the rule of law, holding repeat retail thieves and fentanyl dealers better accountable, and incentivizing individuals who are addicted and homeless to accept life-saving treatment.

The mayors of Carlsbad, Vista, San Marcos, Solana Beach, Encinitas, Escondido, Coronado, Chula Vista, National City, Oceanside, Poway, El Cajon, La Mesa, and Santee all supported the signature gathering effort.

“This is a balanced, commonsense initiative that addresses the fentanyl crisis by going after drug dealers who are killing our loved ones and imposes stronger penalties for repeat offenders of organized retail theft, which is hurting far too many families and local businesses,” said DA Stephan. “We need responsible reform that allows judges to incentivize life-saving treatment for those struggling with severe addiction, holds repeat offenders accountable but also gives first, second, and even third chances for those who commit theft or possess hard drugs to be treated for addiction or mental illness. Voters should have the opportunity to debate and weigh in on this important initiative.”

The bipartisan measure is focused on improving safety in every community and neighborhood in California. It focuses narrowly on accountability measures for repeat offenders of theft and drug traffickers of serious drugs like fentanyl, while incentivizing and encouraging more individuals

to participate in and complete drug treatment programs. The measure creates a deterrent for repeat offenders and redirects addicts towards treatment rather than incarceration.

Passed in 2014, Prop 47 had a goal of reclassifying several felony offenses as misdemeanors in order to make California's criminal justice system more equitable. However, it led to unintended consequences of increased homelessness driven by addiction and increased overdose deaths. It also harmed small and large businesses and their employees over the past decade through repeat and often organized retail theft, store closings, and difficulty convincing people to seek drug and mental health treatment. These issues can be corrected by the voters at the ballot box with commonsense changes to Prop 47.

The proposed ballot measure will:

- Hold those who are committing repeated retail theft and fentanyl sales crimes accountable, for the safety and health of our communities.
- Create accountability for repeat smash and grab offenders who are driving up costs for all Californians and chasing retailers out of the state.
- Bring back incentives and accountability that are needed for individuals to get into necessary drug treatment and job training programs -- helping them begin new lives. Currently those arrested multiple times for hard drug possession currently have no incentive to choose treatment with no consequences.

For more information, go to [www.CASafeCommunities.com](http://www.CASafeCommunities.com).

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**About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office**

*The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.*

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