

Newsom doubles down on ending organized retail crime rings

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In response to a recent increase in organized retail theft activities across the state, Governor Gavin Newsom has directed the California Highway Patrol to increase their presence near major retail sites and announced a proposed increase in the 2022-2023 state budget to combat retail theft.

“The level of organized retail theft we are seeing is simply unacceptable,” said Newsom. “Businesses and customers should feel safe while doing their holiday shopping. That’s why California is substantially increasing CHP’s presence, especially near retail areas, and will be investing even more to aggressively curb retail crime. As a small business owner myself, I am resolved to holding these criminals accountable and protecting our local businesses.”

Since the recent string of robberies, the administration has coordinated with local mayors, police departments and retailers to address the increase in felony theft. The state has increased the California Highway Patrol

presence in highly-trafficked shopping areas. Saturation patrols will continue through the holiday season to assist allied partners in the apprehension of criminals as well as to improve public safety.

Addressing retail crime and safety has been a top priority for the Newsom Administration. In July, Newsom joined law enforcement leaders and Big 13 mayors to reestablish CHP's Organized Retail Crime Task Force. Since its inception, the Task Force has held 773 investigations, leading to the arrests of 240 individuals and over \$18.9 million in stolen merchandise recovered.

The Organized Retail Crime Task Force is responsible for collaborating with allied law enforcement agencies and district attorneys to identify and prosecute organized theft rings, recover lost merchandise, collaborate with the retail industry to reduce theft and improve safety for shoppers.