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MOTION

PUBLIC WORKS

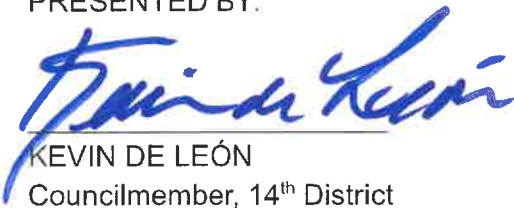
On February 26, 2024, Council adopted CF 24-0079 to create a Copper Wire Task Force to address the rampant theft of copper wiring from city street lights. Since that time, the Los Angeles Police Department has modified the task force to become the Heavy Metal Task Force (HMTF) due to the prevalence of theft of items beyond copper wire from city street lights. One of these items is telecommunications cable.

The HMTF has conducted numerous operations resulting in over 80 arrests. During these arrests, many of the individuals have been found to be in possession of telecommunications cable. This cable is available for sale only to those in the telecommunications industry and is something an average member of the public would not be able to acquire. Telecommunications cable is the black cabling that hangs below power lines throughout the city. Inside of this cabling are copper wires that are specifically manufactured to transmit voice data. Thieves cut the wiring in order to remove the copper wiring from the cables and sell them to metal recyclers. However, because the telecommunications cable is often tied together with fiber optic cables, cutting the telecom cable also interrupts fiber optic communication that provides emergency services.

While it might seem that theft of telecommunications cabling only affects the utility companies, the reality is that schools and businesses, particularly in low income communities, rely on the voice and data services provided by the telecommunications industry. Moreover, due the fact that burning or melting the cable results in the production of hazardous materials, only certain metal recyclers are allowed to dispose of telecommunications wire.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Attorney be REQUESTED to prepare and present a draft ordinance, with an urgency clause, prohibiting the possession of telecommunications cable by any individual or business except for telecommunications companies and their approved subcontractors and recyclers.

PRESENTED BY:


KEVIN DE LEÓN
Councilmember, 14th District


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SECONDED BY:



JUL 30 2024

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