



# Agenda Report

June 9, 2025

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**THROUGH:** Legislative Policy Committee (June 3, 2025)

**FROM:** City Manager's Office

**SUBJECT:** **SUPPORT FOR AB 476 (M. GONZÁLEZ): METAL THEFT**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the action proposed herein is covered by the common sense exemption set forth in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) as CEQA only applies to projects that may have a significant effect on the environment;
2. Support Assembly Bill 476 (M. González) – *Metal Theft*, and any subsequent related legislation; and
3. Authorize the Mayor to send letters to the appropriate authorities stating Pasadena's position.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Over the last 24 months, Pasadena as well as other areas of Los Angeles County, have fallen victim to a rise in copper wire theft. In our area, criminals are breaking into street light pull and electrical boxes and stealing this wire. This results in disabled street lights which leave areas darkened and exposed electrified live wiring. In other jurisdictions these thefts have disrupted other critical services such as telecommunications, water systems and public transportation. After stealing the wire, thieves are often selling the material to junk dealers and recyclers for quick cash.

Assembly Bill 476, introduced by Assembly Member Mark González, would help strengthen theft prevention and enforcement against copper wire theft by requiring:

1. **Enhancing Reporting Requirements** – Junk dealers and recyclers must collect detailed transaction records, including proof of legal ownership, signed statements of ownership, and additional identification details. Dealers must also retain these records for at least one year and provide access to law enforcement.
2. **Requiring Licensing for Copper Sellers** – Individuals selling copper must obtain a state license, ensuring that only legally obtained materials enter the market. Contractors and licensed trade professionals are exempt from this requirement.
3. **Expanding Restrictions on Scrap Metal Possession** – Additional categories of scrap metal from public infrastructure will be illegal to possess without proper documentation, increasing accountability for both sellers and recyclers.
4. **Increasing Fines to Better Reflect the Cost of Damages to the Taxpayer** – Adjusting fines for salvaging, recycling, purchasing, possessing or selling scrap metal from public infrastructure to accurately address the disproportionate cost and impact to communities from stolen scrap metal from public infrastructure.

To help address this growing problem, the Mayor should be authorized to voice Pasadena's support for this and any related legislation by sending letters to appropriate and key State officials.

#### **COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:**

Support of this bill helps further the City Council goals to ensure public safety and improve, maintain and enhance public facilities and infrastructure.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

The proposed action has been determined to be exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines section 15061 (b)(3), the Common Sense Exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

While there is no cost to support this bill, it should be noted that losses from copper wire thefts have cost Pasadena nearly \$100,000 over the past two years.

Respectfully submitted:

  
BREND HARVEY-WILLIAMS  
Assistant City Manager

Approved by:

  
MIGUEL MÁRQUEZ  
City Manager

Attachment A – AB 476 text