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**DA Zimmer Announces Drug and Theft Act Ballot Eligible for November General Election:
Kern County Accounts for 22,559 Validated Signature
*Challenges Still Ahead***

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer is pleased with local efforts as the California Secretary of State announced that the Homelessness, Drug Addiction, and Theft Reduction Act (Initiative 23-0017A1) is eligible for the November 5, 2024 General Election ballot. State law required 546,651 valid signatures to qualify the initiative. On June 11, 2024, the Secretary of State announced that 910,441 signatures were collected and through random sampling, 652,100 valid signatures qualified the act. Of the signatures collected, 27,891 were submitted on behalf of Kern County voters. 80% were deemed qualified, resulting in 22,559 local signatures applied toward the ballot eligibility.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer is elated with the news, stating:

“Kern County has united to make a significant contribution toward qualifying the measure and demanding a safer California. Volunteers from the Kern County District Attorney’s Office and the community worked tirelessly in educating our community on the initiative and collecting petition signatures in the pursuit of making a true difference. Proposition 47 has significantly damaged our state as organized retail theft has soared and the homelessness and drug epidemic have ruined lives. Thanks to the strong push from our region and other counties throughout California, we are one step closer to taking back control of our state and demanding tougher consequences for criminals.”

The 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 the necessary drug treatment and job training programs – helping them begin new lives. Currently those arrested multiple times for hard drug use have little incentive to choose treatment, as the consequences for drug use have been set too low by Proposition 47.

Although the Homelessness, Drug Addiction, and Theft Reduction Act has had overwhelming bi-partisan support, challenges are on the horizon that can potentially hinder its progress. The “poison-pill” amendments currently being considered by the legislature and backed by Governor Newsom, aim to set back the effectiveness of the bill by allowing the Attorney General to amend the ballot’s proposed title and language on the November ballot, potentially causing confusion for voters.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented on the foreseeable challenges:

“Californians showed strong support to reform Proposition 47 in the hopes of strengthening current drug and retail theft laws that we’ve experienced for far too many years. The poison pill amendments put a restraint on a safer future for California by deceiving voters with the possible alteration to the bill. Although we can be facing setbacks, District Attorneys across the state and I will continue to work to protect the people of California and fight crime for the protection and safety of our communities.”

For more information on the ballot eligibility, visit: <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-measures/initiative-and-referendum-status/eligible-statewide-initiative-measures>