

LETTERHEAD

[Date]

Honorable Bob Archuleta
Capitol Office
State Capitol, Room 4066
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 651-4032
Fax: (916) 651-4932

RE: SB517 – Department of Motor Vehicles: Records: Confidentiality

Dear Senator Bob Archuleta:

As a [Title] for [name of organization/department/division], I strongly support SB517. **[1-2 statements about your organization, for example, mission, vision, goal or another statement about your work that put you at a safety risk or experience you may have had].**

The profession of code enforcement is inherently dangerous. Code Enforcement Officers enforce state and local laws that potentially impact the businesses and individuals involved. These laws involve health and safety, building violations, business regulations, property nuisances, and poor housing conditions. Additionally, individuals in our profession may enforce various codes that are typically not handled by law enforcement professionals as they involve land use, housing-related violations, or specific local ordinances. Examples of those codes include but are not limited to; enforcement of marijuana grows linked to cartels, abatement of honey oil labs or meth labs, human trafficking related to prostitution under the cover of massage establishments, rental inspection, and multi-family housing in gang-ridden or drug-ridden areas and many more. Enforcing such regulations may expose officers to disgruntled property owners, mentally unstable people, or criminal organizations which hinder an officer's ability to perform their duties without the fear of retaliation and can expose an officer to unsafe conditions in and out of the workplace.

Some examples of the essential tools that Code Enforcement Officers use are, but not limited to: issuing fines, prosecuting violators, closing unpermitted businesses, issuing "Notice to Appear" citations for both infraction and misdemeanors violations, filing criminal complaints with the City Attorney/District Attorney's Office, providing courtroom testimony, preparation of documents where a jurisdiction takes legal action to seize control of property due to breaches of law or regulations, prepare and execute inspection/search warrants, seizure and impounding or destruction of property, closure of businesses, and vacating structures, homes, and land, and homeless camp abatement. In certain cases, code enforcement can cause substantial financial hardship on violators due to imposed fines or by impacting business. Although these are tools of last resort when voluntary compliance cannot be achieved, these tools have lasting effects on the violators.

It is a well-known fact that a certain percentage of individuals in our society are faced with emotional health problems. The outcome of those conditions as manifested in these individuals can, in turn, cause an emotional trigger when a sense of loss is felt against their home belongings, property interests, lifestyles, and livelihoods. This then can cause these individuals to react irrationally and out of control, and potentially violent towards the officer if they feel threatened or if they sense a potential loss.

Code enforcement personnel go to work to serve their community and should be afforded a certain level of protection from harm following them home. The Code Enforcement profession parallels the majority of professions already authorized for DMV confidentiality. It is for these reasons that I support SB517. Thank you for your leadership on this issue and your commitment to the safety of Code Enforcement Officers.

Sincerely,

[signature]

[name]

[title]

[Organization]