

Submitter: ji li
On Behalf Of:
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Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1516

For over 10 years, I have owned and operated a Chinese restaurant here in Eugene. I have worked 14-hour days to feed this city, raised my children in our local schools, and invested every cent I have into the dream of a peaceful life in Lane County. But for the first time in a decade, I am afraid. I am not just testifying today as a business owner; I am testifying as a member of a community that feels like it has a target on its back.

In my ten years here, I have seen the shift. We are no longer dealing with random acts of mischief. We are being watched. Organized rings are staking out our homes while we are at our restaurants. They know our schedules. They know when we are most vulnerable.

It is a specialized kind of terror to realize that your ethnicity is being used as a "data point" for a burglary crew. These aren't just crimes of opportunity; they are coordinated, professional, and—most frustratingly—they are happening with a sense of impunity. The most painful part of this situation isn't just the stolen property; it's the loss of faith in our system.

- The Flight Risk is Real: We see defendants arrested for these coordinated hits, only to be released pretrial. Because these rings are multi-jurisdictional and well-funded, they often disappear before they ever see a courtroom.

- Justice Denied: When a burglar is released and flees, the victim—the family who lost their life savings or their sense of safety—is left with nothing. No closure, no justice, just a boarded-up window and a sinking feeling.

SB 1516A is vital because it gives judges the common sense back. It doesn't ask for unfair treatment; it simply asks that a judge be allowed to look at the real-world risk a defendant poses. If someone is part of a professional theft ring with a high risk of fleeing, the law should allow a judge to keep them in custody to protect the rest of us. When the system allows dangerous, high-flight-risk individuals back onto the streets immediately, it tells us that our safety is not a priority.

I love Eugene. I want to keep my doors open for another 10 years. But to do that, I need to know that the law stands behind the victims, not just the people hurting them. Please support SB 1516A. Give our judges the tools they need to keep our families safe in their own homes.

Thank you!