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Prop. 36 Homelessness, Drug Addiction, and Theft Reduction Act Goes into Effect Tomorrow:
What Residents Can Expect Moving Forward

(Kern County) – In just a few hours, Proposition 36 – the Homelessness, Drug Addiction, and Theft Reduction Act – will take effect in California. Millions of Californians voted “yes” on this proposition in the November elections, signaling a clear demand for change across our state. That change begins at midnight.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer highlights the persistent issues plaguing our communities: “Our streets are flooded with homeless individuals, drug overdoses are becoming increasingly common, and businesses are struggling with frequent ‘smash-and-grab’ crimes.” Proposition 36 aims to address these challenges head-on. Under this new law, repeat retail theft and smash-and-grab crimes will result in increased penalties. Fentanyl will be added to the list of controlled substances that warrant increased consequences. While non-violent offenders battling drug addiction will have the opportunity to undergo drug and mental health treatment programs instead of incarceration, focusing on long-term solutions for public safety.

For far too long, residents have expressed frustration when criminals are released back into their neighborhoods mere hours after being arrested due to lenient laws. “We hear you,” says District Attorney Zimmer. “That’s why I along with several other district attorneys across California advocated for this new law to be implemented.” District Attorney Zimmer says prosecutors are now equipped to impose appropriate consequences; “The law is now on our side. I want our community to feel confident that when they call for help, officers will respond, criminals will be arrested, and justice will be served. My hope is that Proposition 36 will hold offenders accountable, help persons with addiction get well, and make California, especially Kern County, a safer place to live. There’s hope for a safer California, and it begins at midnight.”