



"SERVING OUR MEMBERS FROM EAST TO WEST"

April 16, 2003

Honorable Bob Margett, Member
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 3082
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 209 – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Margett:

The Riverside Sheriffs' Association, which represents over 2,000 rank and file Deputy Sheriffs, Deputy Probation Officers, District Attorney Investigators, and Deputy Coroners – the entire law enforcement team in the County of Riverside – is pleased to support SB 209.

Currently, it is a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment in a county jail up to six months, for any driver to intentionally evade, willfully flee or otherwise attempt to evade a pursuing peace officer's motor vehicle or bicycle.

This measure makes such offenses punishable by imprisonment in state prison for two, three, or four years. In other cases with lesser circumstances time served in county prison is extended to one year. Under this bill those sentenced to state prison, are guilty of so serious an offense that it becomes a felony. Such sentencing stems from the defiant, dangerous act by the suspect driver which endangers not only the public, but the Sheriffs' lives as well as that of the driver himself. In the case of known criminals who attempt to flee, these individuals believe they can evade capture, and *if crooks believe they will not be chased, they will victimize and then run.* The number of officer chases has grown expeditiously in the last few years and, as such, cannot be allowed to continue without more serious consequences.

Very truly yours,

Pat McNamara
President

Timothy H. B. Yaryan
Legislative Counsel and Advocate

cc: RSA