

A D D E N D U M

to

**BEYOND THE SMASH AND GRAB:
CRIMINAL NETWORKS
AND ORGANIZED THEFT**

This Addendum is available at:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-119shrg61886/pdf/CHRG-119shrg61886-add1.pdf>

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Press Release

ATA Champions Bill Cracking Down on Cargo Theft

Apr 10, 2025

Washington – Today, the American Trucking Associations applauded a bipartisan, bicameral group of lawmakers who introduced the *Combating Organized Retail Crime Act*. The bill seeks to establish a unified, federal response to the proliferation of cargo theft perpetrated by criminals who often operate across state and international borders.

Thieves targeting freight shipments are costing the supply chain up to \$35 billion annually and fueling price inflation for consumers. Strategic theft has risen 1,500% since the first quarter of 2021, and the average value per theft is over \$200,000. Cargo theft comes in many forms and causes significant financial losses and operational disruptions, whether it involves imitating a legitimate company, pilfering goods over time, breaking into a parked tractor-trailer, double-brokering fraud, or holding freight hostage. Increasingly, thieves are employing sophisticated cyber methods to steal product.

“The trucking industry takes great pride in delivering America’s freight safely and on time; however, the billions of tons of goods transported by trucks from coast to coast have increasingly become a prime target for organized crime rings, including transnational organizations, putting truck drivers at risk and raising costs for consumers,” **said American Trucking Associations President & CEO Chris Spear**. “ATA commends this bipartisan group of leaders for addressing this alarming trend and safeguarding our supply chain. By empowering federal agencies to improve cooperation across jurisdictions and ramp up enforcement actions, this bill would strike an effective blow against organized crime.”

Due to the complex nature of cargo theft, only the federal government has the authority, resources, and technical abilities to mount an effective defense. The *Combating Organized Retail Crime Act* would enhance legal frameworks; improve enforcement capabilities; and foster coordination among federal, state, and local agencies.

The bill was introduced in the Senate by Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and Sens. Catherine Cortez Masto (D-Nevada), Marsha Blackburn (R-Tennessee), Amy Klobuchar (D-Minnesota), James Risch (R-Idaho), Jacky Rosen (D-Nevada), Bill Cassidy (R-Louisiana), Martin Heinrich (D-New Mexico), Ted Budd (R-North Carolina), Bill Hagerty (R-Tennessee), Lindsey Graham (R-South Carolina), and Steve Daines (R-Montana).

Companion legislation was introduced in the House by Reps. David Joyce (R-Ohio), Susie Lee (D-Nevada), David Valadao (R-California), Dina Titus (D-Nevada), Michael Baumgartner (R-Washington), Brad Schneider (D-Illinois), Laurel Lee (R-Florida), Lou Correa (D-California), Brad

Knott (R-North Carolina), Joe Neguse (D-Colorado), Nick LaLota (R-New York), Joe Morelle (D-New York), Mark Amodei (R-Nevada), Salud Carbajal (D-California), Juan Ciscomani (R-Arizona), Henry Cuellar (D-Texas), Troy Nehls (R-Texas), and Jim Costa (D-California).

ATA added security—including cargo theft and cyber threats—to its list of strategic priorities last year.

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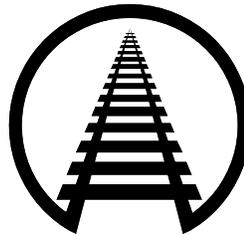
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STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

IAN JEFFERIES

PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RAILROADS



BEFORE THE

UNITED STATES SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

**HEARING ON “BEYOND THE SMASH AND GRAB: CRIMINAL
NETWORKS AND ORGANIZED THEFT”**

JULY 15, 2025

**Association of American Railroads
425 Third Street SW
Washington, DC 20024
202-639-2100**

On behalf of the members of the Association of American Railroads (AAR), thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record regarding cargo theft. AAR freight railroad members represent approximately 84 percent of U.S. freight railroad mileage, 93 percent employees, and 97 percent of industry revenue. The major freight railroads in Canada and Mexico are AAR members as well.

America's freight rail network is the best in the world, spanning more than 135,000 route-miles.¹ By linking businesses to each other domestically and internationally, freight railroads have played an essential role in America's economic development for nearly 200 years. Today, freight railroads remain indispensable, serving nearly every industrial, wholesale, retail, and resource-based sector of our economy.

Given the volume of rail freight (more than 1.5 billion tons and 28 million carloads and intermodal units in a typical year) and the long distances freight typically travels by rail (averaging nearly 1,000 miles), the direct economic role of freight railroads is immense. Beyond their significant contribution to the national economy, freight railroads deliver substantial public benefits as well:

- *Safety.* Safety is the freight rail industry's highest priority, and the industry is steadfast in its commitment to reducing the frequency and severity of accidents through continuous improvement and proactive safety measures. While any train accident is one too many, data from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) confirm that moving freight by rail remains one of the safest options available. Between 2005 and 2024, the train accident rate declined by 32% and the employee injury rate fell by 26%. Today, freight railroads have lower employee injury rates than most other major industries—including trucking, airlines, agriculture, mining, manufacturing, and construction, and even grocery stores. By these and other measures, the past decade has been the safest in rail history—thanks to sustained investments in advanced technologies, modernized infrastructure, and rigorous workforce training.
- *Fighting Highway Congestion.* By moving large volumes of freight efficiently, railroads help alleviate pressure on the nation's highway system. A single train can replace several

¹ Route-miles refers to the length of a single rail route even if the track is double or triple-tracked in some sections. Including parallel tracks, rail yards, and sidings adds tens of thousands of miles to the rail mileage total.

hundred trucks, reducing highway congestion, lowering infrastructure wear and tear, and lessening the need to spend taxpayer dollars on highway construction and maintenance.

- *Re-Investments.* Unlike trucks, barges, and airlines, America’s privately owned freight railroads operate primarily on infrastructure they own, build, maintain, and pay for themselves. From 1980 to 2024, America’s freight railroads invested more than \$825 billion (over \$1.3 trillion in today’s dollars) — of their own funds, not government funds — on capital expenditures and maintenance expenses related to locomotives, freight cars, tracks, bridges, tunnels and other infrastructure and equipment. The American Society of Civil Engineers has consistently recognized these achievements, awarding rail one of the highest grades of all American infrastructure.²
- *Affordability.* The affordability of freight rail saves rail customers billions of dollars each year, enhances the global competitiveness of U.S. products, and benefits American consumers. In 2024, average rail rates—measured by inflation-adjusted revenue per ton-mile—were 44 percent lower than in 1981. This affordability has a ripple effect across the economy: millions of Americans are employed in industries that remain competitive in the global marketplace thanks in part to the efficiency and productivity of the freight rail network. Over time, rail rates have increased at a much slower pace than the prices of many everyday consumer goods, underscoring the value railroads provide to both businesses and households.
- *Appealing Jobs.* The freight rail industry supports approximately 140,000 high-quality jobs and offers compensation levels that rank among the highest of any U.S. sector.. In 2023, the average U.S. Class I freight rail employee earned \$112,600 in wages and received \$36,300 in fringe benefits—for a total compensation of \$149,000. By contrast, the average wage per full-time equivalent U.S. employee in 2023 was \$80,300 (71 percent of the rail figure) and average total compensation was \$97,200 (65 percent of the rail figure).
- *The Environment.* On average, railroads are three to four times more fuel-efficient than trucks. As a result, moving freight by rail instead of truck can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 75 percent.
- *Passenger rail.* Freight railroads provide essential infrastructure for passenger rail across the country. More than 70 percent of the miles traveled by Amtrak trains occur on tracks owned by other railroads — primarily freight railroads. In addition, approximately half of America’s commuter railroads operate at least partially on right-of-way owned by freight railroads.

Given these public benefits, legislative actions that support and strengthen freight rail operations represent sound public policy —advancing economic growth, environmental sustainability, and a more efficient, resilient transportation network.

² See American Society of Civil Engineers, *2025 Report Card for America’s Infrastructure* (available at: <https://infrastructurereportcard.org/>).

Cargo Theft is a Serious and Growing Problem

Cargo theft — the criminal theft of goods from railcars, truck trailers, and shipping containers — is a growing threat to the U.S. supply chain, costing the economy hundreds of millions of dollars if not billions, of dollars annually. These attacks occur across every freight service provider, in every region and at every stage of the supply chain. The cumulative effect is widespread : delayed shipments, increased costs, and reduced reliability that ultimately affect American businesses and families. In many cases, these crimes also pose serious safety risks, particularly as criminal tactics become more aggressive and confrontational. Cargo theft is no longer just a nuisance — it is a serious economic and public safety issue that demands urgent attention and coordinated action.

Organized theft groups are increasingly targeting the nation’s railroads, using sophisticated tactics and technology to carry out cargo theft. For example, the criminals can damage an air hose or mechanical equipment on a train or signal systems along the right of way to force the train to stop. They are also deploying drones to identify optimal locations for theft and monitor railroad activity in real time. In some cases, they recruit individuals from vulnerable populations to serve as lookouts—enabling them to better evade law enforcement detection and delay rapid response efforts by railroad personnel and local police. These crimes disrupt supply chains, delay shipments, and impose significant costs on railroads, businesses, and consumers. We estimate that, in 2024 alone, theft-related losses for Class I railroads alone exceeded \$100 million, and industry estimates suggest that more than 65,000 thefts occurred in 2024 — a 40% increase from the previous year. These are conservative estimates; actual losses are almost certainly much higher.

Beyond the direct loss of goods, railroads incur substantial additional expenses from infrastructure repairs, operational disruptions, investments in anti-theft technology, and other costs. These rising expenses contribute to inflationary pressures and ultimately lead to higher prices for American consumers. At the same time, cargo theft operations are becoming more brazen and dangerous. An increasing number of incidents involve armed suspects, elevating the risk of violent encounters and posing serious threats to railroad employees and public safety.

To be clear, cargo theft is not only impacting consumer products such as electronics and high-end apparel. Agricultural products, including perishable items like milk, have been lost due to tampering. Under federal food safety regulations, once a sealed container is compromised, the contents must often be destroyed—driving up costs for producers and contributing to higher grocery prices for consumers. Moreover, freight trains frequently carry highly sensitive cargo, including hazardous materials and equipment bound for the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). While we are not aware of any incidents in which these types of shipments have been targeted, the mere possibility should be deeply concerning to policymakers. The prospect that organized criminal groups could, for example, gain access to munitions or defense-related materials through rail theft underscores the urgent need for robust security and prevention measures.

Despite the growing threats posed by cargo theft, perpetrators are rarely held accountable. Railroads estimate that fewer than one in ten theft attempts results in an arrest, and repeat offenders are commonplace. In one instance, a railroad reported apprehending the same individual five times in a single day, while another railroad has arrested the same person 17 times for repeated theft attempts. Limited law enforcement resources—combined with local jurisdictions that choose not to prosecute these crimes—allow offenders to continue operating with minimal consequences. This lack of accountability undermines deterrence efforts and

emboldens organized theft groups, putting continued pressure on supply chains, rail operations, and public safety. These shortcomings are why the freight rail industry was pleased to see federal prosecutorial action against these types of crimes. On February 11th, a grand jury in Arizona returned indictments against eleven individuals that were involved in stealing over \$440,000 of apparel from a BNSF train. The press release on these indictments, which is included as an attachment to this written testimony, appropriately points out the risks that incidents of cargo theft pose to railroad operations as well as noting the ties that the individuals in question have to transnational criminal entities. It is our hope that the work by both the Homeland Security Investigations and the Assistant US Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona provides a blueprint for other federal prosecutors to disrupt future incidents of cargo theft.

Railroads have invested millions of dollars in technology, personnel, and operational protocols to combat cargo theft across their networks. However, they cannot effectively deter or rapidly respond to these well-organized, and often transnational, criminal groups alone for a multitude of reasons. First, due to the nature of railroad operations will mean that certain instances of cargo theft are not discovered until the train arrives at its destination after having crossed multiple state lines and dozens of local jurisdictional boundaries. Determining where the theft occurred is often difficult, and those challenges are compounded by the inability of state and local law enforcement officials to respond effectively based on limited information in these instances. Additionally, while railroads utilize their own police forces to combat these thefts, a complete hardening of over 135,000 miles of track across the United States is not feasible.

A stronger federal response is essential to effectively combat cargo theft. This includes coordinated law enforcement efforts across jurisdictions, enhance data collection (for example, to identify theft hotspots and common tactics used by criminals), and ensure the effective

prosecution and detention of offenders. To break this cycle current cycle of theft and impunity, policymakers must take decisive action. Sustained federal engagement, increased penalties, and dedicated resources for intelligence-sharing and cross- agency collaboration are critical to curbing cargo theft, protecting supply chains, and ensuring the safe and efficient movement of goods across the country. In short, cargo theft must be treated as the serious crime that it is.

Railroads are actively working in coalition with other supply chain stakeholders to address cargo theft in several ways.

First, the freight rail industry and others support Chairman Grassley’s *Combating Organized Retail Crime Act*. This legislation would establish an industry-led data-sharing repository and enhance coordination between the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, and local law enforcement agencies to better prevent and respond to cargo theft. Second, the disincentives associated with cargo theft are too low in certain jurisdictions. Railroads support, where appropriate, increased state penalties for those who commit cargo theft.

Third, railroads encourage efficient and effective prosecution for cargo theft crimes when an arrest occurs. Enforcement without follow-through undermines deterrence and public confidence.

Fourth, s policymakers should secure funding for dedicated federal prosecutors to tackle cargo theft. Railroads have previously supported legislative efforts that would direct at least \$2 million to U.S. Attorney’s Offices in Illinois, California, Tennessee, and Texas specifically for the prosecution of crimes involving cargo theft and that directs each such United States Attorneys’ Offices to assign at least one attorney to prioritize cargo theft prosecutions.

To conclude, cargo theft isn't just a problem for businesses —it is a national public policy issue with serious implications for economic stability, transportation reliability, and public safety. We respectfully urge Congress to act decisively to address this growing threat.



Statement for the Record

U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee

Beyond the Smash and Grab: Criminal Networks and Organized Theft

July 15, 2025

Chairman Grassley, Ranking Member Durbin, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on behalf of The Home Depot regarding combatting organized retail crime (ORC). As the largest home improvement retailer in the world, The Home Depot is keenly aware of how large-scale retail crime is an increasing threat to customers and associates that walk into retail stores every day.

Background

The Home Depot operates 2,350 retail stores across North America, with over 2,000 in the U.S., and employs over 470,000 associates. Every five minutes, an Organized Retail Crime event is reported in a Home Depot store during hours of operation. According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, ORC has caused more than \$125 billion in lost economic activity across the nation. It has also triggered a loss of more than 685,000 jobs, affecting retailers of all sizes.

As ORC and its impact have rapidly grown in scale and scope, The Home Depot and many of our retail peers have intensified safety measures to increase deterrence and protect our customers, associates, and products. Our safety measures include locking up items for sale, employing off-duty police officers and security guards, and staging police cars at the front of our stores, among many other tactics. Despite these efforts, the problem continues. Tragically, some ORC encounters have ended fatally for associates. Though some question whether the media are overhyping the problem, retailers like The Home Depot know firsthand that ORC and its consequences are significant and must be addressed.

We have seen an alarming rise in the frequency and aggressiveness of organized and professional criminal groups stealing from our stores. There is a myth that ORC rings happen only in big cities. Criminals and bad actors don't discriminate when it comes to targeting stores, and organized retail crime is happening everywhere – in urban and suburban areas and everywhere in between. Generally, the intent of ORC actors is to resell and monetize the product as quickly as possible.

We partner closely with law enforcement agencies who often find these crimes linked to other more sinister activities such as drug, gun and even human trafficking. Far from petty shoplifting, ORC is not theft for need, but theft for greed. In many cases, theft from our stores is used to fund ongoing criminal enterprises. Organized retail crime is large scale, multi-jurisdictional activity that is carefully choreographed. Sophisticated criminal rings recruit individuals from vulnerable populations to steal and the quickly sell the stolen products, often anonymously through online third-party platforms.

Rising ORC on Online Marketplaces: Causes Behind the Surge

At The Home Depot, a significant number of all ORC cases involve an online marketplace. Since 2020, we have seen a significant uptick in our store and asset protection associates coming into

violent contact with criminal actors. These individuals are becoming increasingly aggressive. They are dangerous and often care little about any consequence other than getting out of the store with as much product as possible. Our associates have been threatened with knives, guns, and other physical attacks. We believe there are three primary reasons for this increase.

First, the availability of drugs, opioids and fentanyl specifically, has driven a need for easy and fast cash. Many of those we call “boosters” in these operations are simply pawns for higher level fences and criminal organizations to commit their crimes. Organized retail crime is often connected to other illicit activities. According to Homeland Security Investigations, organized theft groups also engage in cybercrime, money laundering, drug trafficking, terrorism financing, weapons trafficking, and transnational organized crime.

Secondly, the rise of third-party marketplaces allows criminals to anonymously resell stolen or counterfeit goods. We see this happening even on reputable online platforms, which have made it easy to monetize goods and sell them at scale.

To fight this, The Home Depot strongly supported the INFORM Consumers Act, a bipartisan bill led by Senators Dick Durbin and Bill Cassidy that went into effect in June 2023. However, ORC actors are trying to evade the INFORM Act by using peer-to-peer websites to arrange offline transactions, where they pay for stolen goods with cash instead of using the marketplace's payment systems. We urge Congress to update the INFORM Act to prevent the theft and sale of stolen goods online, particularly those arranged through offline transactions.

The last contributor is an increasing lack of resources and support needed by local, state, and federal law enforcement to assist retailers, store associates, customers, and broader communities to disrupt criminal networks. Many police departments across the country are perpetually and significantly understaffed, and this results in less support for retailers and the broader community. We see policies such as increased felony thresholds and lack of aggregation as creating an environment where little can be done by retailers alone to address the issue.

Solutions to Combat ORC

The Home Depot is working hard to address all three underlying causes. First, we have grown our investigative team over 180% since 2016 and have increased our overall budgets by tens of millions of dollars. In our stores, we use technology and physical deterrents. These include everything from increased security personnel to secure lockup enclosures, to smart shopping carts, to machine learning and data analysis tools. We’ve also launched a program called “Game Plan,” where we invite local law enforcement and politicians to visit stores and see our technology and tactics in action, in order to educate and build relationships proactively.

To address online concerns, we have added resources and implemented tools to identify bad actors using the anonymity of online marketplaces. While these marketplaces are a convenient outlet for the second-hand consumer market, legitimate resellers would not be selling branded, new-in-box products at prices better than national retailers. The platforms simply need to do more in terms of accountability to mitigate illegitimate sales and outright fraud.

We work in close partnership with local, state, and federal law enforcement to build case files and help dismantle these networks through public-private coordination and task forces. We have worked closely with more than a dozen state attorneys general who have established task forces over the past two years to better protect their communities and businesses. For example, during an investigation in Little Rock, Arkansas, a booster, the individual who steals the product for a ringleader, admitted to stealing over \$1 million dollars of product from Home Depot and selling it on Facebook Marketplace. He used this cash to buy and distribute large amounts of fentanyl. Our investigators worked with Homeland Security and the Little Rock Police Department, and our evidence was used to conduct controlled sales to the fence. The suspects were ultimately arrested and charged under a federal indictment. A federal task force would allow us to expand upon the progress made at local and state levels, like this case in Arkansas, and give all of us a greatly needed nationwide partner.

Passing the Combatting Organized Retail Crime Act

A critical step that Congress can take to help us stop this brazen theft is to pass the Combatting Organized Retail Crime Act (S.1404/H.R.2853), introduced in the Senate by Senators Chuck Grassley and Catherine Cortez Masto and in the House by Representatives Dave Joyce, Susie Lee, David Valadao, Dina Titus, Michael Baumgartner, Brad Schneider, Laurel Lee, and Lou Correa.

The Home Depot strongly supports CORCA and we are pleased to see that the Senate bill has over 20 bipartisan cosponsors. The bill would create the Organized Retail Crime Coordination Center, bringing together federal, state and local law enforcement and private sector experts to share information and collaborate on strategies to keep our stores, customers, and associates safe and secure. The bill would allow us to expand upon the progress made at the local and state levels and address cases that reach certain thresholds or cross state lines.

We join the retail community in urging Members of Congress to work together to ensure that the Combatting Organized Retail Crime Act urgently becomes the law of the land to help stop these senseless crimes in our stores and communities.

April 10, 2025

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Catherine Cortez Masto
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Joyce
2065 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Susie Lee
365 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Support for the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act

Dear Senator Grassley, Senator Cortez Masto, Congressman Joyce, and Congresswoman Lee:

On behalf of the Intermodal Association of North America (IANA), I am writing to express our strong support for the bipartisan Combating Organized Retail Crime Act.

As the only transportation trade association representing the combined interests of intermodal freight providers and customers, IANA represents more than 1,000 corporate members, including railroads, ocean carriers, ports, intermodal truckers and over-the-road highway carriers, intermodal marketing and logistic companies, and suppliers to the industry. IANA's associate (non-voting) members include shippers (defined as the beneficial owners of the freight to be shipped), academic institutions, government entities, and non-profit trade associations.

In recent years, instances of organized cargo theft and fraud have increased at an alarming rate. Analysis by CargoNet found that reported cargo theft incidents rose by 27 percent between 2023 and 2024. During the same period, the average value per theft increased to over \$202,000. Given that cargo theft is widely underreported, these occurrences are likely even more prevalent than the data suggests.

The effects of supply chain crime ripple across the U.S. economy. These crimes impose significant financial burdens resulting from cargo losses, damage to equipment, increased insurance costs, and delivery delays, which ultimately raise consumer prices. Moreover, increased criminal activity risks the safety of hard-working supply chain workers, including truck drivers, rail operators, warehouse workers, and others who support the movement of intermodal freight.

While cargo theft is not a new concept, thieves have become far more sophisticated. The interstate nature of goods movement makes it particularly challenging to effectively track supply chain theft within existing law enforcement procedures and resources. A coordinated response at the federal level is needed to address this growing threat. The Combating Organized Retail Crime Act offers commonsense solutions to identify and deter organized crime throughout the supply chain by enhancing legal frameworks, improving enforcement capabilities, and fostering collaboration across relevant federal, state, and local agencies. The legislation will strengthen the U.S. economy by enhancing supply chain efficiency, penalizing dangerous crime groups, and protecting American workers and consumers.

We applaud your leadership and would be pleased to serve as a resource on this important issue. I can be reached at areinke@intermodal.org or 301-982-3400.

Sincerely,



Anne Reinke
President and CEO
Intermodal Association of North America

CC: Combating Organized Retail Crime Act Co-Sponsors

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February 24, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Thune, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Johnson and
Minority Leader Jeffries:

As Attorneys General of Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois and South Carolina we are joined by the 34 Attorneys General of the undersigned states to encourage action during the 119th Congress to support our efforts to combat the nationwide organized retail crime epidemic. The 118th Congress saw increased attention to this pressing issue, and we applauded the efforts in both the House and Senate to address it through the introduction of H.R.895/S.140 – Combating Organized Retail Crime Act of 2023 and S. 139 – Organized Retail Crime Center Authorization Act of 2023. This legislation would provide the necessary resources at the state and federal level to bring the organizations and individuals behind this nationwide problem to justice.

Organized retail crime has reached a level never before seen in this country and, unfortunately, no community is immune from the economic impact and the violence that comes with it. Across the country, retailers, such as: Walgreens, Walmart and Target, have been forced to close stores due to a combination of sustained financial losses and their employees being physically assaulted by organized retail crime rings. With financial losses totaling over \$121 billion and 76% of retail asset protection managers reporting their employees have suffered from violence at the hands of an organized retail criminals, Americans are paying the price. Many communities – including underrepresented communities – are devastated by store

closures leading to a lack of access to groceries, medication and the staples of everyday life.

Many of our offices have formed task forces and created prosecution units to combat this growing problem but our resources are finite. Improved coordination with federal law enforcement, as envisioned by creation of an Organized Retail Crime Coordination Center at the Department of Homeland Security through the legislation proposed in the 118th Congress, would expand upon and synchronize our efforts with federal law enforcement to combat organized retail crime. This new entity would act as a force multiplier for our offices and facilitate the information sharing necessary to combat the complex cross-border nature of organized retail crime.

Beyond what we see at the local level, a significant component of organized retail crime is cargo theft, which disrupts supply chains and acts as an inflationary pressure on the price of everything from baby formula to clothing. The theft of essential supply chain infrastructure—such as pallets, crates and containers—further exacerbates these issues by hindering the movement of goods and contributing to delays and increased costs. We hope that when this important legislation is re-introduced in the 119th Congress it will be strengthened by including provisions to increase federal penalties for supply chain thefts to act as a strong deterrent against the organized theft of goods in transit, which disrupts supply chains and affects every consumer.

Our prosecutors, and law enforcement officials work tirelessly to serve their communities in the face of growing, and increasingly sophisticated organized crime syndicates. But unfortunately, our resources are stretched thin. As Congress reconsiders this legislation, and continues consideration of the annual appropriations process, we also urge Congress to dedicate additional grant funding for state Attorneys General and local law enforcement to support investigations, prosecutions, and task force operations combating organized retail crime.

It is our hope that Congress will maintain its focus on these issues affecting our communities and provide resources needed to combat the epidemic of organized retail crime at the federal and local level. We look forward to working collaboratively with your offices on this important issue.

Sincerely,



William Tong
Connecticut Attorney General



Christopher M. Carr
Georgia Attorney General

Kwame Raoul
Illinois Attorney General

Alan Wilson
South Carolina Attorney General

Steve Marshall
Alabama Attorney General

Treg R. Taylor
Alaska Attorney General

Kris Mayes
Arizona Attorney General

Tim Griffin
Arkansas Attorney General

Kathleen Jennings
Delaware Attorney General

Brian Schwalb
District of Columbia Attorney General

James Uthmeier
Florida Attorney General

Anne E. Lopez
Hawaii Attorney General



Brenna Bird
Iowa Attorney General



Russell Coleman
Kentucky Attorney General



Liz Murrill
Louisiana Attorney General



Anthony G. Brown
Maryland Attorney General



Dana Nessel
Michigan Attorney General



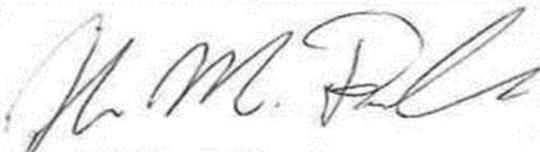
Keith Ellison
Minnesota Attorney General



Mike Hilgers
Nebraska Attorney General



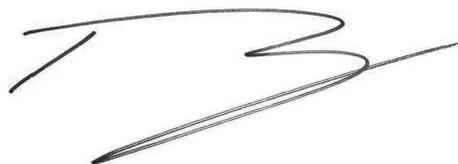
Aaron D. Ford
Nevada Attorney General



John M. Formella
New Hampshire Attorney General



Matthew J. Platkin
New Jersey Attorney General



Raúl Torrez
New Mexico Attorney General



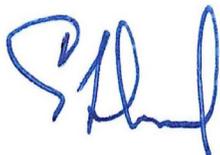
Letitia James
New York Attorney General



Jeff Jackson
North Carolina Attorney General



Dave Yost
Ohio Attorney General



Gentner Drummond
Oklahoma Attorney General



Dan Rayfield
Oregon Attorney General



Dave Sunday
Pennsylvania Attorney General



Peter F. Neronha
Rhode Island Attorney General



Marty Jackley
South Dakota Attorney General



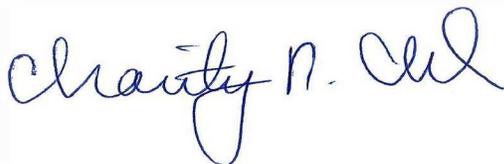
Jonathan Skrametti
Tennessee Attorney General



Gordon C. Rhea
U.S. Virgin Islands Attorney General



Derek Brown
Utah Attorney General



Charity Clark
Vermont Attorney General



Jason S. Miyares
Virginia Attorney General



Nick Brown
Washington Attorney General



John "JB" McCuskey
West Virginia Attorney General



Charles Crain

*Managing Vice President,
Policy*

July 18, 2025

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Durbin:

The National Association of Manufacturers appreciates the Committee on the Judiciary for holding a hearing on the issue of organized retail and supply chain theft. Manufacturers commend you for bringing attention to this important matter, as well as your efforts to advance bipartisan solutions such as the Combatting Organized Retail Crime Act of 2025 (CORCA).

The NAM is the largest manufacturing association in the United States, representing manufacturers of all sizes, in every industrial sector, and in all 50 states. Manufacturing employs over 13 million people nationwide and contributes \$2.9 trillion annually to the U.S. economy. We represent those who make and move products used all over the world.

Manufacturers depend on a secure supply chain to maintain production and efficiently deliver products to consumers. Unfortunately, organized retail and supply chain theft has created significant challenges in this regard, compromising manufacturing supply chain security, leading to increased costs and real safety risks for employees and consumers. Organized theft groups are continuously growing and evolving, utilizing new and innovative tactics—with estimated losses of over \$1 billion per year. A bipartisan, coordinated approach is necessary to fight this national problem.

CORCA would create new tools to combat evolving trends in organized retail and supply chain theft; it also would encourage a coordinated, multi-agency response to this threat. Additionally, the bill would harmonize federal enforcement of supply chain-related crime and strengthen reporting under an Organized Retail and Supply Chain Crime Coordination Center housed within the Department of Homeland Security. These provisions will help secure manufacturing supply chains and support American manufacturing overall.

The manufacturing sector is crucial to American economic growth and prosperity. By advancing bipartisan legislative solutions such as CORCA, policymakers can secure our nation's supply chains for American manufacturing competitiveness. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Charles Crain
Managing Vice President, Policy

June 17, 2025

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley, Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin, Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: S. 1404, Combating Organized Retail Crime Act – Support

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Durbin:

On behalf of the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), I write to express our strong support of S. 1404, the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act of 2025. As a leader in the fight against insurance fraud and crime, NICB urges the Committee to take up and advance this bipartisan measure, which will deter retail and cargo theft that harms American consumers and job creators; finances organized, transnational criminal networks; and increases costs for all.

With a 110-year history, NICB is the nation's premier non-profit organization exclusively dedicated to detecting, preventing, and deterring insurance fraud and insurance-related crimes through intelligence-driven operations. NICB is supported by approximately 1,200 property and casualty insurance companies, associate members, and other strategic partners within the anti-fraud ecosystem. While NICB provides value to our members and law enforcement—such as through investigative support; intelligence reports and information sharing; and education and training programs—we also serve a significant public benefit by helping to stem the estimated billions of dollars in economic harm that insurance crime—including organized retail and cargo theft—causes every year.

Insurance fraud is not a victimless crime. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), insurance fraud (excluding health insurance) is estimated to be more than \$40 billion per year, costing the average American family between \$400 and \$700 annually in the form of increased premiums.¹ A study performed by the Coalition

¹ Insurance Fraud, Federal Bureau of Investigation, available at <https://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/insurance-fraud>.

Against Insurance Fraud estimates that the damage is far greater, stealing approximately \$308 billion each year from American consumers.² These crimes take many forms—from vehicle and cargo theft; staged vehicle accidents and slip-and-fall schemes; and home and auto repair scams; to identity theft, predatory towing, and medical billing fraud—and are limited only by the scope of fraudsters' capabilities and resourcefulness.

Organized cargo theft is big business and, unfortunately, on the rise. NICB has witnessed this trend firsthand. Our agents play a crucial role in coordinating with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, as well as NICB member insurance companies, to aid in investigations of interstate and international organized criminal networks involved in cargo theft. Since 2022, NICB has opened an average of 150 commercial cargo crime cases per year. In the last 18 months, however, NICB has assisted in more than 240 cargo theft investigations, leading to more than 70 recoveries valued at nearly \$40 million. For the first time, the value of stolen merchandise and estimated loss rose to more than \$1 billion in 2023. In 2024, cargo crimes increased to an all-time high, up 27% from 2023 (according to CargoNet), and these losses are expected to rise another 22% from already historic levels by the end of 2025.

Cargo theft is often orchestrated by complex crime rings—spanning multiple jurisdictions and even countries—with one goal in mind: to score massive payouts. For instance, the estimated average value of an individual cargo theft is \$202,000. But the confluence of profitability to fund criminal enterprises, enhanced technology to defeat law enforcement, uncertain tariff negotiations, and other geopolitical circumstances has led to increased threats to the global supply chain. Moreover, as the logistics industry becomes more digital and dependent on third-party freight brokers and carriers, criminals are taking advantage of system-wide weaknesses using more sophisticated tactics.

Criminals exploit cargo delivery systems through identity theft, fraudulent pickups, posing as fictitious carriers, and cyber-enabled logistics manipulation. For example, NICB recently assisted law enforcement in uncovering a sophisticated international criminal enterprise that utilized multiple business email compromises to successfully arrange and ultimately export stolen industrial equipment overseas. Weaknesses in common-use business technologies such as voice over internet protocol and GPS, coupled with identity theft and synthetic identities, can enable sophisticated, transnational criminals to reroute high-value consumer goods from their intended destination to the black market.

One way to stop organized cargo theft is through deterrence. Accordingly, NICB strongly supports S. 1404, which would add additional teeth to federal criminal statutes to more effectively confront interstate and transnational organized theft. The bill would

² Fraud Stats, Coalition Against Insurance Fraud, *available at* <https://insurancefraud.org/fraud-stats/>.

allow for criminal forfeitures for convictions for the interstate shipment or transportation of stolen goods and for the sale or receipt of stolen goods. The bill will also strengthen money laundering statutes, permit the aggregation of thefts to strengthen deterrence, and would better enable the prosecution of organized retail and supply chain criminal networks that use interstate or foreign commerce—such as the internet—to facilitate their crimes. These are critical reforms needed to address a complex, highly organized threat landscape.

Additionally, S. 1404 would establish the Organized Retail and Supply Chain Crime Coordination Center within Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. This will improve collaboration and information-sharing between federal, state, and local law enforcement and would bring industry experts to the table to help ensure a coordinated approach to combating interstate and transnational organized crime. We know that fraudsters and criminals are coordinated in their tactics, so law enforcement and industry must likewise be coordinated in adopting countermeasures. NICB stands ready to support this Coordination Center and to provide any requested expertise, intelligence, and resources.

In short, NICB applauds the bipartisan Combating Organized Retail Crime Act of 2025 and urges the Committee to take up and favorably advance it to the floor.

If you have any questions, please contact me at kmccollum@nicb.org or 847-636-7041.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kyle T. McCollum", followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Kyle T. McCollum
Vice President
Strategy, Policy, and Government Affairs
National Insurance Crime Bureau



The National Police Association Endorses the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act

The National Police Association Endorses the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act

Indianapolis – May 9, 2025. Retail crime syndicates are a threat to public safety, the economy, and to the quality of life for communities across the country. These sophisticated, multinational criminal networks employ individuals to steal large amounts of merchandise from retail stores, warehouses, and trucks en route, then resell these goods to both online and brick-and-mortar resellers. Retail syndicates perpetuate fraud and cause legitimate businesses to lose money, raise their prices, and close stores. They impact communities, especially those that depend on retail jobs and the essential items these stores provide. Innocent civilians are placed in danger as these crimes are being committed. Meanwhile, these syndicates use their ill-gotten profits to fund terrorism, as well as drug and human trafficking operations. They have grown in recent years, emboldened by local district attorneys who refuse to prosecute theft.

Thankfully, members of Congress have introduced the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act (S. 1404 / H.R. 2853), a federal bill that would better equip law enforcement agencies with the resources they need to fight these egregious crimes. It was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Rep. David Joyce (OH-14) and in the U.S. Senate by Sen. Chuck Grassley (IA). This bipartisan bill, endorsed by the National Police Association (NPA), is currently being considered by the Judiciary Committee. The text for the Senate bill is **here**, and the House bill is **here**.

This legislation would lead to the creation of the Organized Retail and Supply Chain Crime Coordination Center, to be housed within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. This new Center would allow federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, as well as private sector partners, to coordinate enforcement activities via a central sharing system.

“Organized retail crime is a serious threat to consumers, our economy, and to the safety of innocent civilians. These syndicates are growing, in large part, because district attorneys have failed to treat retail crimes with the seriousness they merit. Compounding this are retailers who believe it’s futile to call the police,” said Paula Fitzsimmons, Legislative Director, National Police Association. “Thankfully, Rep. Joyce had the good sense to introduce legislation that would allow law enforcement agencies at all levels to strategically fight these heinous crimes.”

The NPA extends its gratitude to Sen. Grassley and Rep. Joyce for introducing the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act, a federal bill that would allow the private sector and law enforcement partners at all levels to work in tandem to fight these

crime syndicates. The government’s priority is to provide for the safety and welfare of its citizens, and this bill goes a long way in accomplishing this.

About the National Police Association: The National Police Association (NPA) is a nonprofit organization supporting law enforcement through advocacy, education, and law. For more information, visit **NationalPolice.org**.

###



This entry was posted in Law and Policy, SupportThePolice. Bookmark the permalink.

← 20 Benefits of President Trump’s Executive Order on Law Enforcement

ARCHIVES

Why Are You Still Calling the Cops? →

June 2025

May 2025

April 2025

March 2025

February 2025

January 2025

December 2024

November 2024

October 2024



July 15, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act of 2025 (S.1404/H.R.2853)

Dear Leaders Thune and Schumer, Speaker Johnson and Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of the National Retail Federation, our members, our employees, and our customers, the undersigned companies write in strong support of the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act of 2025 (S.1404/H.R.2853). For the past three years, Congress has considered legislation that takes a critical step in addressing the growing threat of sophisticated, multi-state and transnational organized retail crime networks. Today, we urge you to pass this important bill to help protect your constituents and safeguard our national economic and public safety interests.

Organized retail crime has evolved into a far-reaching threat that extends well beyond store shelves. Retailers, consumers, and communities across the country are facing increasing levels of coordinated theft, violence, and fraud — often orchestrated by criminal organizations operating across state lines and national borders. These networks target goods at every stage of the retail ecosystem including supply chains, warehouses and distribution centers, retail stores and online sales, creating ripple effects that disrupt commerce, drive up costs, and endanger workers and consumers alike. Violence remains a major concern for the retail industry. In a recent NRF survey¹, about three-quarters (73%) of those surveyed say that shoplifters are exhibiting more violence and aggression than they were a year ago.

While many states are stepping up to address these crimes, their efforts are often limited by jurisdictional constraints and resource shortages. The scale and complexity of these criminal operations demand a cohesive, national response. That's why 94% of retailers agree that federal legislation is necessary to effectively confront organized retail crime and the broader threats it poses to our economy and communities.

¹ [The Impact of Retail Theft & Violence 2024](#), December 17, 2024

The Combating Organized Retail Crime Act provides that federal solution. It enhances enforcement tools, modernizes criminal statutes, and establishes a centralized coordination center to lead long-term, strategic efforts. Building on the strong support of 158 lawmakers in the 118th Congress — and with broad bipartisan backing at reintroduction — CORCA reflects the growing consensus that federal leadership is essential in the fight against ORC.

We respectfully urge Congress to advance and pass the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act of 2025 without delay. This bipartisan, commonsense legislation is essential to modernizing our national response to organized retail crime, which threatens not only public safety but also the health and security of America’s supply chains and consumer access to goods. By strengthening coordination, enforcement, and prevention, CORCA will help protect American businesses, workers, and families. The time to act is now.

Sincerely,

2nd & Charles
3 Moms Organics
36 Lyn Refuel Station
Addison Bay
Agilence Inc.
Ahold Delhaize / Retail Business Services
Albertsons Companies
Alto US
Amazon
Amber’s Designs
Ambiance Boutique
American Eagle Outfitters Inc.
American Sale
Annie’s Blue Ribbon General Store
Ariat International, Inc.
Arvidson Pools & Spas
At Home
Atlanta Hobby
Auror
Axcelora
Axis Communications
B&W Hardware
Backcountry.com
Badcock Home Furniture & More
Bamblu
Beau Ties Ltd. of Vermont
Becky Beauchine Kulka Diamonds and Fine Jewelry
Belk, Inc.
Ben Franklin Crafts

Best Buy Co., Inc.
BJ’s Wholesale Club
Blazer Industries, Inc.
Bloomingdale's
Body Basics
Books-A-Million Inc.
Branded Strategic Hospitality
Brissonte Gifts & Home Decor
Brooks-Huff Tire & Auto Centers
Bueche’s Food World
Buffalo Exchange, Limited Inc.
Buffalo Jackson
Bundle x Joy
Candid Art
Capri Holdings, Limited
Carltons
Castle Megastore
Casual Adventure
CB Stuffer
Cedaredge Foodtown
Celtic Tides
Charles Frederick Jewelers, Inc
Chic to Chic
Chica Beauty LLC
Chocolat-e Inc.
Christine’s Upscale Resale
Classic City Creamery, LLC
Coalition of Law Enforcement and Retail
Colonie Cards and Gifts
Completely Kentucky

Conn's Hospitality Group, Inc.
Consignment Gallery at 56
CONTROLTEK
Country Casuals
Crystal Blue Vibrations
Cupcake Sisters LLC
Cure Coffeehouse
Cutie Patutie's Consignment
DarlingxDashing Boutique
David's Bridal Inc.
Dayton Hobbies, Inc.
Déjà Vu Furniture and More
Dessert Works
Destination XL Group, Inc.
Dick's Sporting Goods Inc.
Dicuore Diamonds
Dollar Tree
Dominion Jewelers
Down in the Valley
Duesway Inc.
eBay
ECi Stores
Eggers Furniture Inc.
Emily's Heirloom Pound Cakes
EssilorLuxottica
Farmers Union Oil Company of Kenmare
Farmstead Cheeses & Wines
Five Below
Floor & Decor Holdings, Inc
Foster Farrar Company
Gaines Jewelry, Inc.
Gap Inc.
Gelati Celesti Ice Cream
Goode Foods LLC
GROW Nebraska
H&M
Hale's Hardware
Hampton Foods
Hanson Pro Music, LLC
Harbor Freight Tools
Heart and Home
Helzberg Diamonds
Hibbett Inc.
Hi Nabor Supermarket
Hippies Closet

Hobbytown-Lincoln
Hockers Inc.
Home Nature, Inc.
Hugo Boss Fashions, Inc.
IKEA North America Services, LLC
Inca Brands, Inc.
Indi Chocolate
ink! Coffee
It's Nola/Brooklyn Granola
J. Noble Binns Plumbing Co., Inc.
James Avery Jewelry
JCPenney
Jersey's Cards and Comics, LLC
Joseph's Pawn & Jewelry, Inc.
Kathy Knack Interior Designs, Inc.
Kering Americas, Inc.
Kidtopia Toy Store
Klem's
Kohl's Corporation
Kroger Co.
Kroll/Tomas Inc.
Labyrinth Games & Puzzles
Laurie's Infants & Children's Wear
Leavitt & Peirce Inc.
Lex's of Carytown
LGS Prime Steakhouse
Loss Prevention Foundation
Loss Prevention Research Council
Luca Boutique Inc.
Luggage Shop of Lubbock
lululemon Athletica Inc.
LVMH Inc.
Macy's, Inc.
Madison Foods
Mandala Scrubs
Margaret's Boutique, Inc.
Marineland Boating Center
Marshall Grain Co.
Marshall Music Company
Mast General Store, Inc.
Master's Hand
Maurices Incorporated
Max Pawn Luxury
McDowell Professional Pharmacy
McKeithen Hardware LLC

Merle Norman Cosmetics/Kacy Cosmetics Inc.
Microsoft Corporation
Miera's Family Shoes, Inc.
Mike's Feed Farm
Minkee Blue, Inc.
Moonstruck Vintage
Murdoch's Ranch & Home Supply
Nahdi Medical Co.
NCR Voyix
NJB Protection
Nordstrom
Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Bookstore
Old Post Card Works
Orchard Markets
Orion Market
Otra Vez Couture Consignment
Out There Outfitters
Palmer Computer Services, Inc.
Party Fair
Patina Inc.
Pat's Food Center
Perry Ellis International, Inc.
Peterson's Market
PetSmart, Inc.
Philip Michael Fashion
Philips Ace Hardware
Picchioni's Inc
Pitkin's Home Center
Plenty Mercantile
Power's Clothing, Inc.
Prince Books
Proof Culture
Qurate Retail Group
Ralph Lauren Corporation
Ralston Valley Canine
Random Harvest Home
Reed Sportswear Manufacturing Company
Repeat Performance
Retail Management Hero
Rippy's Liquor and Marketplace
Riverhead Building Supply Corp.
Robinette's Inc.
Roundabouts Consignments
S&K Collectibles

Saks Off 5th
Schaefer's
Seltzer Goods
Sensormatic Solutions
Sephora USA
Shoppers Value Foods
Signet Jewelers
Simply Unique Jewelry Designs Ltd
Snyder Shoes
Sol Dias
Soul Connection
Southeastern Grocers
Southend Market LLC
Sparks Florist
Spencer Gifts LLC
Spirit Halloween Superstores, LLC
Staples US Retail
Steamatic of Southern Nevada
Stephenson's of Elkhart, Inc.
Stine Lumber
Stop & Shop
Stowe Mercantile
Sula NYC
Sun & Ski
Sunrise Boutique
Surrell
Surveyors Supply Company, Inc.
Sweet Seconds LLC
Tapestry, Inc.
Target Corporation
That Art Store
The Blue Shell Gifts
The Brass Owl
The Casual Pint
The Children's Place, Inc.
The Fitting Room
The Glynn Hospitality Group
The Kindship
The Music Wagon, LLC
The Pet Beastro LLC
The Retro Den
The Shoppes at Arbor Lakes
The Smoke Stack Hobby Shop
The Tiny Owl
The Western Breed

National Retail Federation

July 15, 2025

Page 5

The Wet Spot Tropical Fish

The Willis Music Company

ThinkLP

Timberland Truckstop LLC

TJX Companies, Inc.

Toffee to Go, Inc.

Total Wine & More

Town Center Music

Tractor Supply Company

Ulta Beauty

Victoria's Secret & Co.

Vinson Fine Furniture

VK Electronics

Walgreens

Walkabout Outfitter

Walmart

Waterford Farm Supply, Inc.

Wauseon Ace Hardware

Weaver's, Inc.

Williamsburg General Store, Inc.

Williams Ski and Pati

Willis Furniture & Mattress

Wohlfeil Hardware and Tools, Inc.



Written Statement of the

National Retail Federation

Submitted to the

United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary

For its hearing

Beyond the Smash and Grab: Criminal Networks and Organized Theft

July 15, 2025

The National Retail Federation respectfully submits this statement for the record for the July 15 hearing titled “Beyond the Smash and Grab: Criminal Networks and Organized Theft.” Thank you, Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Durbin, for holding this hearing to examine the issue of organized retail crime.

NRF, the world’s largest retail trade association, passionately advocates for the people, brands, policies and ideas that help retail succeed. NRF empowers the industry that powers the economy. Retail is the nation’s largest private-sector employer, contributing \$5.3 trillion to annual GDP and supporting one in four U.S. jobs — 55 million working Americans. For over a century, NRF has been a voice for every retailer and every retail job, educating, inspiring and communicating the powerful impact retail has on local communities and global economies.

NRF routinely brings together thousands of retail asset protection and loss prevention professionals through our member-led Loss Prevention Council, committees and conferences. We recently held NRF Protect, our annual conference dedicated to retail loss prevention, asset protection and cybersecurity. Attending were more than 2,000 retail executives, law enforcement and solution providers to discuss the latest threats to retail including ORC, cargo theft, gift card fraud, cybersecurity and more. Throughout the year, we foster relationships between retailers, law enforcement and prosecutors at local and state levels through our NRF ORC Investigators’ Network and engage across the country with other regional and state ORC associations that build alliances among state and local law enforcement and the private sector. Their experiences, insights, lessons learned and survey responses bolster our understanding of the theft threat landscape and assist in policy development to support NRF’s statement today.

We applaud the committee for holding today’s hearing to examine organized retail theft and bring to light the sophisticated ringleaders organizing the groups of individuals behind these crimes. ORC undermines the very fabric of American communities. Despite what some may believe, ORC is not

NATIONAL RETAIL FEDERATION
1101 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20005
www.nrf.com

shoplifting. Criminal activity orchestrated by organized theft groups is crime driven by greed rather than need. Through NRF surveys, retailers have reported increases in organized theft group activities, and most concerning, rising levels of violence tied to these crimes. This criminal activity impacts retail workers, local communities, our nation's supply chain and consumers through various frauds.

Preventing these crimes in order to protect the safety of our workers and our customers is retail's No. 1 priority. We urge Congress to prioritize S. 1404, the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act,¹ to support and enhance ongoing efforts by federal, state and local law enforcement to blunt the rise in organized retail crime. We thank Chairman Grassley and Senator Catherine Cortez-Masto for their leadership in introducing this critical legislation. We also thank the members of the committee who have co-sponsored this critical legislation — Senators Graham, Cruz, Tillis, Kennedy, Blackburn, Britt, Moody and Klobuchar. The retail industry greatly appreciates your continuing support of CORCA. NRF strongly urges every member of the committee to co-sponsor and support this important bill and advance it out of this committee, and we urge Congress to enact it.

Our statement will cover the definition of ORC and the history and scope of this challenge facing the retail industry, the supply chain, the cargo industry and law enforcement. We will present what retailers are doing to address these crimes and curb criminal activity. Finally, we will outline the federal legislative solution and how it would support and enhance state laws that have been modified or enacted to combat ORC.

What is Organized Retail Crime

The retail industry has learned much over the past few years regarding ORC. The issue is continuously evolving and the groups involved have become more sophisticated. Organized retail theft groups adapt quickly to evade retailer and law enforcement tactics and countermeasures developed to prevent these crimes. Thefts that Americans witness from retail stores are merely the tip of the iceberg. ORC extends beyond the theft of retail goods from a store. Supply chain and cargo theft incidents are on the increase across our nation. Criminal groups are conducting more sophisticated financial crimes, including fraud involving gift cards, in addition to product return fraud schemes. Profits derived from retail and cargo theft, in addition to sophisticated ecommerce fraud, are far greater than reported.

NRF defines ORC as theft or fraud activities conducted with the intent to convert illegally obtained merchandise, cargo, cash or cash equivalents into personal financial gain. It also must involve theft or fraud of multiple quantities, conducted in concert by two or more people. ORC typically involves multiple occurrences and may occur across several stores and jurisdictions.

Retail theft is often viewed by many Americans as shoplifting and thought of as victimless petty crime. While a specific shoplifting incident might be a single occurrence committed by an individual in need, it takes detailed investigative work and observations by dedicated retail loss prevention and security personnel to determine whether that is the case and provide a clearer picture of the scope of ORC. Retailers are not interested in seeking prosecution of every individual committing shoplifting from stores. Instead, they are focused on tracking shoplifting incidents and the individuals involved to determine whether they are part of an organized network that orchestrates not only the theft, but a scheme to convert stolen merchandise into cash. These organized crimes are coordinated or conducted

¹ <https://www.congress.gov/119/bills/s/1404/BILLS-119s1404is.pdf>

by structured and sophisticated hierarchies directing, demanding and re-distributing stolen goods into the marketplace, and retailers seek to identify the leaders.

Retail workers and customers are impacted by threats and acts of violence by thieves determined to leave with stolen goods. Retail companies are also impacted by labor and staffing challenges, and in many cases have no choice but to implement security measures that negatively impact the shopping experience. Communities lose sales tax revenue, face strained law enforcement resources and risk store closures, which result in lost jobs and product availability. The truth about organized retail crime lies beneath the surface of shoplifting or petty theft in a retail store.

Increasingly, organized criminal groups are stealing cargo from warehouses, railcars and trucks, posing a direct threat to our supply chain, commerce, the retail industry and our transportation partners. These thefts are not isolated incidents by opportunistic criminals but part of a broader network of ORC where stolen goods are resold to fund other criminal enterprises. These sophisticated and often international groups exploit weaknesses in security, infrastructure and law enforcement coordination. Their goal is purely financial as they move stolen goods through illegal domestic resale markets or export stolen goods abroad, fueling further criminal activity.

As more consumers shop online, ORC groups are expanding their criminal activity by exploiting the online environment, digital payment systems and financial platforms to commit large-scale fraud. Consumers continue to be victimized by various scams and schemes, either coerced or manipulated into providing criminal groups with gift cards. Retailers are defrauded by criminals who place altered or compromised gift cards in their store displays so that they are purchased by customers and the values are stolen the minute they are stored on the card at the point of sale. Criminals exploit retail return policies and online environments to convert stolen goods into gift cards. Gift cards are also used as financial instruments, laundered or resold, making the funds nearly untraceable. The sophistication of these operations — involving coordinated networks, digital tools and social engineering — makes detection and prevention difficult. These crimes involve international criminal groups, making it more challenging for local law enforcement to determine the true scope in their investigations.

Retailers and their law enforcement partners are focused on thieves who steal more frequently and who steal larger quantities of goods per incident or from a broader selection of merchandise. This is reflected in data provided by retailers themselves. According to NRF's "The Impact of Retail Theft & Violence"² study released in 2024, retailers reported a 93% increase in the average number of shoplifting incidents per year in 2023 versus 2019 and a 90% increase in dollar loss due to shoplifting over the same time period. According to the study, retailers surveyed experienced an average of 177 shoplifting incidents per day in 2023. However, that number can reach over 1,000 depending on the retail sector.

Violence remains a major concern for the retail industry. About three-quarters (73%) of those surveyed say shoplifters are exhibiting more violence and aggression than they were a year earlier, and 91% say that shoplifters are exhibiting more violence and aggression compared with 2019. The thieves most concerning to retailers are not those stealing for personal use or need. They are the thieves who are more brazen — openly stealing in front of workers, customers and security officers. They are stealing large amounts of goods and are more threatening or violent to those who attempt to deter or apprehend

² [The Impact of Retail Theft & Violence 2024](#), NRF Study, December 2024

them. These are the thieves who shoplift for personal greed and support a larger organized criminal group.

ORC groups use individuals known as “boosters” to commit theft and fraud on their behalf. Some individuals may steal to support themselves or family members. Other individuals who are addicted to drugs often steal merchandise to resell or trade to feed their habit. Consequently, these same individuals make appealing targets for ORC enterprises to recruit as boosters to support their criminal enterprises. While some individuals committing the initial thefts may warrant non-prosecutorial or other diversionary interventions, we firmly believe legislation can be tailored to focus on investigations and prosecutions of those leading and profiting from ORC while providing an effective deterrent to shoplifting.

ORC is Not a Victimless Crime

Retail theft is not a victimless crime. It negatively impacts jobs and harms consumers and communities in several ways. Increased violence involving theft has caused injuries to employees and consumers, the unfortunate death of some retail associates, and a fear of working or shopping in high-crime locations. This makes it difficult for retailers to retain or find labor to support consumers. Ninety-three percent of retail respondents to a 2024 NRF survey said the rise of violence-related theft and incidents has made it harder to hire and retain store employees in certain areas or regions of the country. Sixty-nine percent said it even made it harder to hire and retain in areas and regions where violence is less of an issue.³

Each item stolen and resold represents lost sales tax revenue to support communities and states, which is significant because retailers generate the most tax revenue for local governments and the second-most for states. Lost tax revenue impacts a community’s ability to fund services including law enforcement, health care, parks and roads.

Retail has very thin profit margins compared with other industries. Increased losses due to theft and additional expenditures to protect goods reduce a retailer’s ability to maintain a profitable business. Retailers *DO NOT* have insurance for retail theft. Even if such insurance existed, it would be unaffordable. The resulting actions can lead to increased prices, fewer jobs or opportunities to provide more pay and benefits, or a store closure. Closing stores impacts consumers, who lose convenient access to goods. and communities, which lose income and property taxes.

Retailers’ foremost concern with ORC activity is the safety of retail workers and customers. Individuals and groups committing these crimes have used threats and acts of violence, including the use of weapons like bear mace, to aid theft. Some have set fires in stores to create a distraction. Extremely concerning is the depressing fact that several retail workers have been killed during recent theft incidents — including trained security personnel as well as retail workers serving in customer-facing roles⁴.

As more blatant and deadly thefts take place in stores, the consequences are apparent for retailers and consumers alike. Both store associates and customers are being harmed and threatened. Shoppers

³ <https://nrf.com/media-center/press-releases/shoplifting-incidents-jump-93-since-pre-covid-according-to-new-industry-study>

⁴ <http://d-ddaily.com/archivesdaily/2023-Q4-Fatalities-Report.htm>

now see everyday items like toothpaste and dish soap behind lock and key. Retailers know it is an inconvenience for customers. The anti-theft security measures can lead to lost sales from customers who must wait for an employee to unlock a cabinet so they can access a product. As the theft of merchandise continues, the cost of securing those items skyrockets. While retailers operate on very slim margins, they are increasing capital investments for loss prevention and technology. According to NRF surveys, more than half of retailers are increasing budgets for personnel, technology solutions and equipment to combat ORC. With ORC incidents surging across the country, the cost of these additional security investments is passed along to consumers in the form of higher prices, fewer choices and less convenience.

Of great concern to consumers is that this type of criminal activity can put their health and safety at risk. For example, consumers are at risk when stolen consumable products such as over-the-counter medications⁵ and infant formula⁶ are put up for resale. Pilfered products may not be kept under ideal or required storage conditions, which threatens product integrity. And these organized criminal enterprises will re-package and re-label stolen products to falsely extend the product's expiration date or disguise the fact that the merchandise has been stolen. There have been numerous cases involving the theft of infant formula that was found improperly stored.

Retailers generate millions of jobs that pay well and are the foundation for successful careers, but NRF members report that incidents of violence and intimidation that accompany shoplifting have increased to a point where retail workers are indicating unease with reporting for work. Stores that experience frequent, visible ORC incidents, particularly those that involve threats or assault against retail workers, may experience reduced morale and higher staff turnover. Younger workers and their parents are citing the ORC they see on the news as a primary concern about the relative safety of jobs in retail stores or shopping centers.

The Sophistication of Organized Retail Crime Groups

ORC involves orchestrated efforts by criminal enterprises to focus on stealing merchandise from retailers on a large scale. These enterprises often employ or direct individuals to commit crimes using sophisticated techniques, such as organized shoplifting, fraudulent returns, hijacking of cargo shipments, and various gift card and payment-related fraud schemes. These enterprises provide direction as to what merchandise is stolen or fraudulently obtained, guidance related to retailer security measures or law enforcement response capabilities and even awareness of state laws related to felony thresholds or how to reduce the likelihood of arrest. Stolen goods, sold to the next level, a.k.a. "fenced," are resold or redistributed through various online and physical retail channels or offshored to other countries where products may be sold at higher prices.

Everyone has seen the videos of brazen thefts at local stores and shopping centers committed by several individuals working in concert. The public has also witnessed mob-related thefts, which are often opportunistic crimes committed during a time of protest or localized criminal activity. However, a significant majority of losses from organized retail crime go unnoticed by the public. Criminals involved

⁵ [2 brothers sentenced for roles in large-scale organized retail theft ring following HSI Houston, federal partner investigation](#), Department of Homeland Security Press Release, November 2023.

⁶ [2 suspects in retail theft ring accused of stealing \\$30k worth of baby formula to resell](#), 2KUTV, June 2025

in ORC-related thefts have developed sophisticated techniques to commit not only shoplifting or larceny but also cargo theft, burglaries and fraud that often result in much larger quantities of goods and value.

It is important to consider that retailers, as well as law enforcement, are typically not able to specifically identify each theft event or related criminal activity as ORC at the time of an incident. Whether it is shoplifting, burglary, ecommerce fraud, cargo theft or something else, the retailer may be able to identify some elements of ORC at the time of the incident that can be further developed based upon investigation. A smash-and-grab theft could be an opportunistic event by a small group of people, or it could be part of a coordinated series of thefts. Only through observation and investigation can retailers and law enforcement confirm if a specific theft event or series of events is in fact a component of ORC. Organized theft groups engage in cross-jurisdictional, national and international crimes. NRF advocates for government at every level to continue to take actions that curtail the ability and opportunity for these criminal organizations to profit from stolen merchandise, and to send a message that this type of criminal activity will no longer be tolerated.

Organized theft groups continue to evolve, engaging in theft and fraud across the retail industry and evading new countermeasures. As previously mentioned, cargo theft has increased both on rail and roads across the nation. These groups monitor shipping routes, identify security gaps and frequently conduct thefts in remote areas where law enforcement response is limited. Many use cybercriminals or cybercrime tactics to pose as reputable brokers and distributors, who then pick up trailers and re-route the cargo to criminal enterprises ready to resell and re-distribute goods both domestically and internationally.

The profits from organized retail crime often finance other illicit activities such as illegal drugs or weapons sales or the funding of terrorist and human-trafficking networks overseas. The profits from reselling stolen merchandise can also be used to launder and conceal financial gains from other illegal activities. Organized retail crime is a gateway to other nefarious criminal activities.

Examples of ORC Activity

Below are examples of ORC group activities NRF has received from retail executives who are members of NRF's Loss Prevention Council. Because some involve investigations, we cannot directly attribute these to specific companies and locations. These examples are illustrative of the types of ORC activity we are seeing today across the country.

- One organized group in Southern Ohio stole approximately 30 full truckloads of merchandise destined for a retailer's distribution centers. Using sophisticated cargo theft tactics, the products stolen included televisions, Lego sets and Meta goggles. Homeland Security Investigations is currently leading the investigation with a current known loss of approximately \$5 million.
- A group of ORC boosters in western New York traveled across the state stealing personal care items, appliances, tools, toys and high-value electronics from multiple retailers. The stolen items were found to have been sold to local retailers, who then sold the items both online and via their brick-and-mortar retail locations. Recovered merchandise from fencing locations was valued at \$4 million for one retailer alone.

- In Connecticut, multiple retailers worked with various law enforcement agencies to disrupt multiple fencing locations buying stolen goods from shoplifters and transporting the stolen goods to locations in central Mexico. Known losses from one retailer exceeded \$3 million.
- A string of burglaries across multiple states including South Carolina, Tennessee and Florida resulted in a multi-state and federal law enforcement investigation into over \$1.2 million in stolen merchandise for one retailer. This ORC burglary group gained access by defeating security systems (alarms and cameras), allowing them to steal entire inventories of merchandise and cash. Goods were shipped via UPS to a location in southern Florida, where additional goods were located. The same burglary crew is linked to a previous ORC group that operated in the same manner, resulting in a \$10 million loss to another retailer. Some arrests have been made and the investigation remains ongoing.
- An individual suspected of at least 195 incidents of retail theft was apprehended in Idaho after a nationwide theft spree impacting a single retailer for losses of over \$100,000. The individual traveled across multiple states, focusing on the theft of specific beauty items. The investigation remains active with the goal of determining where the stolen merchandise was transported or resold.
- A group posing as a legitimate truck carrier took over four loads of merchandise in Los Angeles, re-directing the shipment from the retailer to an unknown location. One trailer was located, with 31 pallets of merchandise recovered, but the location of the other trailers is still being investigated. The value of the remaining missing merchandise exceeds \$2.3 million

Law Enforcement Perspectives on ORC

Retailers have seen success in the investigation of ORC groups operating both domestically and internationally. Our law enforcement partners recognize the magnitude and the impact this has on the retail economy, consumers and our communities. Included here are several statements taken from press releases issued by federal law enforcement agencies.

“Individuals associated with South American theft groups are well trained to research and strike their targets immediately upon entering the U.S.,” said Department of Homeland Security Enforcement and Removal Operations Newark Field Office Director John Tsoukaris.⁷

“The scale of this alleged theft organization is simply astonishing. Special agents and officers seized tens of thousands of stolen items valued at over \$1.6 million, but this represents only a snapshot of this alleged scheme,” said Homeland Security Investigations New England Special Agent in Charge Michael J. Krol. *“HSI is proud to work alongside our federal, local, and private*

⁷ [ERO Newark arrest 12 noncitizens connected to South American Theft Groups](#), December 2024

*industry partners to unravel this organization. Organized retail theft is not a victimless crime and when theft groups undermine international commerce and the supply chain, we all pay.”*⁸

“The transnational criminal organization these two brothers led was responsible for the theft of more than \$30 million in retail goods,” said HSI Houston Special Agent in Charge Mark Dawson. *“Organized retail crime on this scale results in consumers having to pay higher prices and can force businesses to close that provide essential goods and services to the community.”*⁹

“The individuals named in today’s indictment all had an alleged role in an international conspiracy to cheat the online retail system and profit at the expense of American businesses,” said FBI Oklahoma City Special Agent in Charge Edward J. Gray.¹⁰

Quantifying the Impact of ORC

Unfortunately, comprehensive crime data on ORC at the national level does not exist, and many law enforcement agencies do not specifically track ORC as a separate category of crime. Statistics for certain crimes that overlap with ORC activity such as shoplifting, larceny, theft, robbery and commercial burglary have seen increases in major urban areas of the country. Congress should consider ways to require specificity and detail with respect to multiple categories of property crime, including the reporting of organized retail crime, as part of the Uniform Crime Reporting system. The Organized Retail and Supply Chain Crime Coordination Center, as created under CORCA, may provide an opportunity to improve definitions and data collection to better quantify the scope and scale of these crimes.

The property crimes Americans witness on the nightly news or in person are a small portion of larger criminal enterprises with global impact. Tactics range from basic shoplifting of large quantities of goods, to brazen smash-and-grab events, to sophisticated schemes exploiting gaps in security, to “*Mission Impossible*”-style burglaries in the middle of the night.¹¹

Policy Recommendations

The National Retail Federation strongly supports and urges Congress to pass the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act (S. 1404) and provide appropriate resources for its implementation. This bipartisan legislation would create an interagency Organized Retail and Supply Chain Crime Coordination Center located within the Department of Homeland Security’s Homeland Security Investigations division and include participation by other federal law enforcement agencies. The center would align counter-ORC activities by developing national-level ORC intelligence, facilitating information sharing across federal, state, local and tribal agencies, and supporting multi-agency investigations. It would serve as a hub of expertise for training and technical assistance for state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies.

⁸ [Department of Homeland Security, Press Release, 2 Rhode Island Men Charged for Leading Roles in Large-Scale Organized Theft Crime Ring After HSI, USPIS Investigation, September 2024](#)

⁹ [Department of Homeland Security, Press Release, 2 brothers sentenced for roles in large-scale organized retail theft ring following HSI Houston, federal partner investigation, November 2023](#)

¹⁰ [Department of Justice, Press Release, Ten Members of International Cyber Fraud Ring Indicted for “Refund Fraud” Scheme Targeting Online Retailers, November 2023](#)

¹¹ [Burglars cut hole in Best Buy roof, climb in and steal \\$93,000 in Apple goods, police say, Los Angeles Times, July 2019](#)

The bill would also make changes to the U.S. criminal code to provide investigators and prosecutors increased enforcement tools to blunt organized retail crime activity. We believe that S. 1404 appropriately places emphasis on organized retail and supply chain crime that differentiates those incidents from shoplifting for personal use. We also believe that the establishment of this new center can be undertaken within the scope of existing appropriations for HSI and other participating agencies. We applaud the 27 bipartisan senators who have co-sponsored this legislation as of this hearing.

HSI has significant experience in assisting law enforcement in bringing cases against some of the biggest organized theft groups. They have developed Operation Boiling Point¹² to target domestic and international criminal groups profiting from ORC, cargo and supply chain theft, and similar crimes. This experience ensures HSI can lead the interagency taskforce established in S. 1404 and bring to bear greater investigatory and intelligence-gathering assets of the federal government. State and local police departments throughout the United States are understaffed and sometimes have trouble dedicating resources to thefts and burglaries tied to complicated organized theft gangs. Federal intelligence sharing and investigation support would make a tremendous difference on the frontlines of ORC.

NRF strongly supported the INFORM Consumers Act — championed by Ranking Member Durbin — that Congress passed in 2022 and took effect in July 2023. This legislation addresses the frequent resale of stolen merchandise by third-party sellers using online marketplaces. It requires online marketplaces to verify the identity of individuals who sell a higher volume of goods. It appropriately protects the privacy of legitimate small businesses seeking to build their enterprise. This law provides state attorneys general and the Federal Trade Commission with new tools to curb the resale of stolen merchandise, cutting off a key outlet for organized criminal theft groups to quickly convert this merchandise into cash. We thank Senator Durbin and Congress for addressing this critical issue. However, curbing the resale of stolen merchandise is just one aspect of organized retail crime. CORCA would assist our pursuit of criminal theft groups leading the resale of stolen goods. Taken together, the INFORM Act and CORCA would protect our people, stores and communities.

State legislatures across the United States have responded swiftly and effectively to the needs of retailers, law enforcement and community leaders to address organized retail theft groups. In 2024, nine states and the District of Columbia enacted 23 new measures that either amended or expanded existing statutes. In 2025, nine more states have enacted new laws that also target different aspects of ORC. Many of the new laws provide increased flexibility for prosecutors to aggregate the total value of stolen goods across multiple incidents and jurisdictions. Other new laws increase funding for law enforcement to address these crimes, create statewide taskforces to combat ORC, or allow for tougher punishments and penalty enhancements for repeat offenders who have a demonstrated history of thefts or who committed thefts while utilizing violent tactics or weapons.

States that have enacted or recently amended laws to allow prosecutors to aggregate thefts within specific time periods, across different jurisdictions or across multiple incidents include: California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Kansas, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont and Virginia.

¹² Department of Homeland Security, [Operation Boiling Point](#)

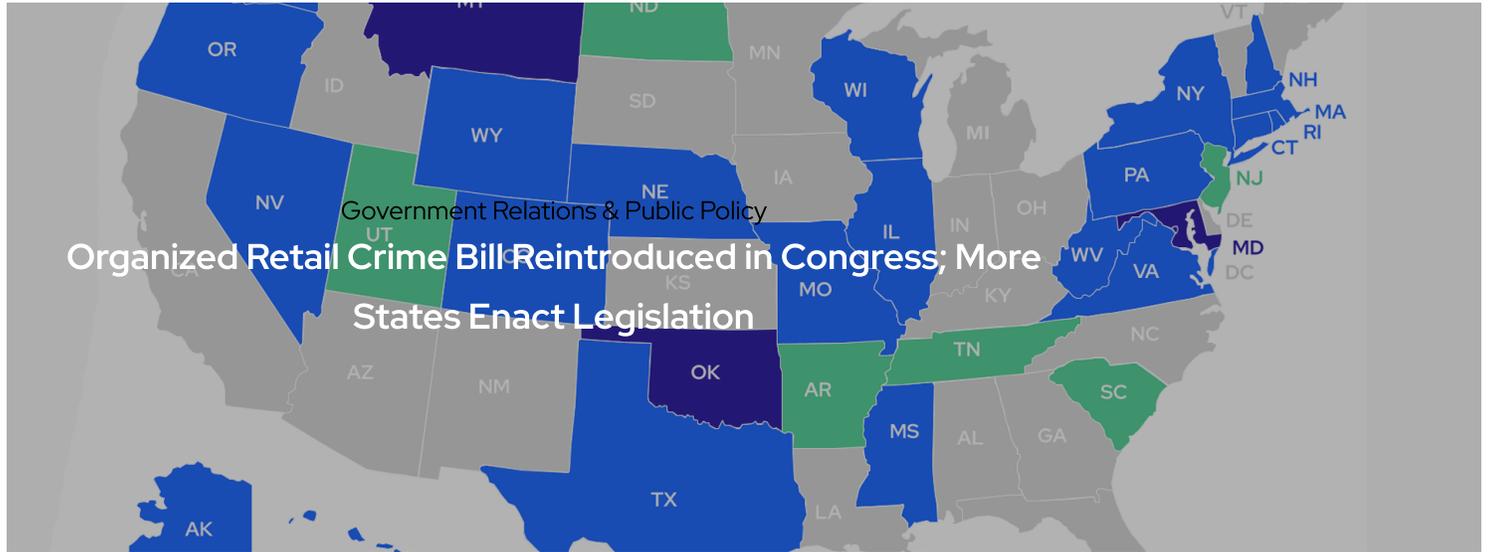
We believe the missing piece to complement the robust legislative response in the states is the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act. In addition to the state statutes addressing organized retail thefts, two dozen states have established local, state-wide and regional ORC alliances or formal taskforces to coordinate investigations and intelligence sharing activities. Ten states have enacted new laws to address fraud and theft of gift cards as financial instruments. The elements included in CORCA would wrap around these state and regional efforts to improve information sharing and reporting, which would better inform policymakers and Americans about the depth and breadth of organized retail and supply chain crime activity across the country and around the globe.

Conclusion

Preventing organized retail crime and protecting employees and customers remains the top priority for retailers nationwide. Expenditures to safeguard against retail theft have factored into retail budgets and include aspects such as construction of stores and distribution centers, store operations, merchandising, information technology, loss prevention, staffing and training. This is an enormously important and expensive effort for the retail industry. The continuing growth of ORC and the damage it causes to communities dictates that something needs to be done to control the theft and resale market for stolen goods.

The retail industry cannot solve this problem alone. If these criminal activities were solely a retail problem, the retail industry would have solved it by now. These crimes affect every single one of us as Americans. Passing S. 1404 would further establish and memorialize the public-private partnerships necessary for information sharing among retailers, law enforcement and financial institutions at the national level. While retailers will continue to invest billions of dollars in protecting their workers, customers and assets from organized retail crime, the problem cannot be solved by fighting these cases one-by-one at the local level. It is difficult for retail investigators and law enforcement to bring a case of ORC to a successful prosecution. Criminals understand this and are threatening our workers, exploiting our businesses and flouting our laws. Today in the U.S., ORC pays, and it pays well. It is viewed by its ringleaders and its perpetrators as a low risk for a high reward compared with more illicit crimes. We must change this equation. Therefore, we ask Congress to support and pass S. 1404, the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act, along with appropriate resources.

The National Retail Federation deeply appreciates the committee examining ORC today. We stand ready to work together to advance the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act, as well as other legislative proposals that would support our communities in preventing ORC and ultimately protect our people and customers.



April 17, 2025

Earlier this month Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), along with Representatives Dave Joyce (R-OH-14), Susie Lee (D-NV-3) and Dina Titus (D-NV-1) reintroduced bipartisan legislation to address the continuing issue of Organized Retail Crime (ORC). *The Combating Organized Retail Crime Act of 2025* would establish a coordinated multi-agency response and create new tools to tackle evolving trends in organized retail theft. Similar legislation was introduced in 2022 and 2023, but the current bill's scope has been expanded to include a new emphasis on supply chain and cargo theft.

The bill makes the following amendments to Title 18 of the U.S. Code:

- Allows criminal forfeiture for convictions under sections 659 (interstate shipments), 2314 (transportation of stolen goods) and 2315 (sale or receipt of stolen goods).
- Expands money laundering statutes to include gift cards as “monetary instruments.”
- Enables prosecution of organized retail and supply chain crime groups using interstate or foreign commerce (e.g., the internet) to facilitate crimes.

- Permits aggregation of theft values totaling \$5,000 or more over 12 months as a basis for charging under sections 2314 and 2315.

The legislation also mandates the establishment of a coordination center within Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) at the Department of Homeland Security to:

- Coordinate federal, state and local law enforcement efforts against Organized Retail and Supply Chain Crime (ORSCC).
- Partner with private industry to share threat information and collaborate on investigations.
- Track trends and issue annual public reports.
- Review and optimize grant programs and training to enhance enforcement.
- Issue a report to Congress on its progress and will sunset after seven years unless extended.

“Across the United States, communities small and large are facing an unprecedented number of ORC incidents,” ICSC President & CEO Tom McGee said. “*The Combating Organized Retail Crime Act* would provide the necessary resources to bring the people and organizations behind this nationwide problem to justice by establishing formal coordination between law enforcement and the private sector. We applaud Senators Grassley and Cortez Masto, and Representatives Joyce, Lee and Titus for reintroducing the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act. We believe the bill represents a huge step in the right direction towards addressing this growing issue.”

ICSC was joined in support of the bill by the National Retail Federation (NRF), United Parcel Service (UPS), Association of American Railroads (AAR), Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA), Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC), Intermodal Association of North America (IANA), National District Attorneys Association (NDAA), Reusable Packaging Association (RPA) and the American Trucking Associations (ATA).

In the States

State lawmakers are also continuing to address the issue of ORC this session. So far this year, lawmakers in six states – Arkansas, New Jersey, North Dakota, South Carolina, Tennessee and Utah – have enacted eight bills targeting retail theft gangs, with three other states close to joining that list.

South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster (R) signed the first ORC bill of the 2025 session (SC HB 352) into law in March. The legislation strengthens penalties for misdemeanor and felony theft counts and allows prosecutors to aggregate the total value of thefts committed across different jurisdictions within a 90-day period.

Legislation enacted in Arkansas (AR SB 300) allows multiple thefts to be aggregated over a period of 120 days, while North Dakota's law (ND SB 2257) increases penalties for repeat offenders.

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy (D) signed a comprehensive ORC bill (NJ SB 3587 and AB 4755) into law earlier this month that creates higher penalties for repeat offenders, those who assault retail employees and leaders of retail theft enterprises. The sweeping measure also allows law enforcement to charge thieves with the total value of thefts committed over a 12-month period.

Tennessee's legislation (TN HB 207 and TN SB 240) criminalizes the use of social media to sell or buy stolen merchandise, removing anti-shoplifting devices, and possessing 10 or more gift cards with the intent to defraud another.

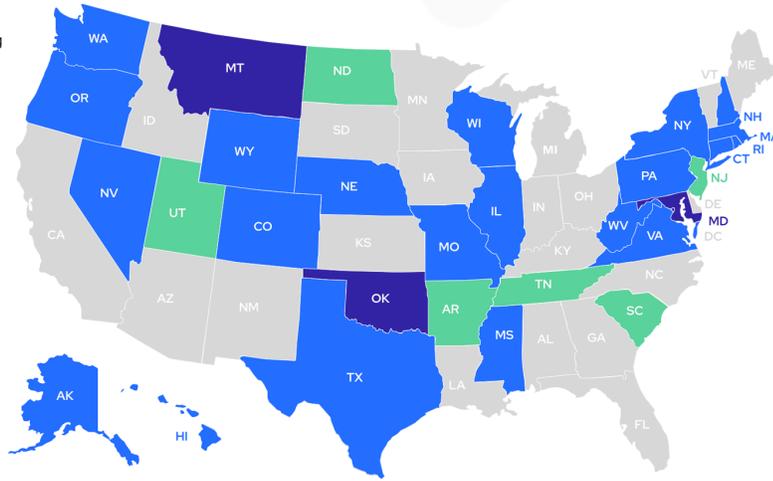
In Utah, lawmakers included some unique provisions in their bill (UT HB 38), such as allowing prosecutors to include prior convictions from other state courts for sentencing standards and higher penalties for bringing a minor into a criminal theft operation.

Other states are still considering bills addressing retail theft. Legislation to create higher penalties for retail theft awaits the Governor's signature in Maryland (MD HB 179 and MD SB 11) and Montana (MT SB 19). In Oklahoma, lawmakers are hoping to get legislation (OK HB 1592) to the Governor's desk that extends the ORC Task Force another two years, allows the Attorney General to have a dedicated task force officer to investigate crimes and requires offenders to pay restitution to theft victims.

For more information contact gpp@icsc.com.

Organized Retail Crime Legislation

- Introduced legislation addressing organized retail crime
- Legislation addressing organized retail crime passed out of one or both legislative chambers
- Enacted legislation addressing organized retail crime



Source: MultiState Associates, 2025.



July 15, 2025

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Chair
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

RE: U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing on the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act (CORCA)

Chairman Grassley, Ranking Member Durbin, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA), thank you for holding this important hearing on the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act (CORCA) and for your bipartisan leadership in addressing the growing threats of organized retail crime (ORC), cargo theft, and gift card fraud.

Organized Retail Crime (ORC) is a national crisis that is impacting retailers of all sizes and across all regions. These crimes threaten not only the safety of employees, customers and the communities we serve, but also the integrity of our national supply chain. ORC involves highly coordinated criminal networks that systematically target retail stores, distribution centers, transportation infrastructure and supply chains. These groups often operate across state lines, employing sophisticated tactics such as booster crews, fraudulent returns, and online resale schemes to profit from stolen goods. They exploit gaps in enforcement and coordination, highlighting the urgent need for a unified federal response. In many cases, the proceeds from ORC are funneled into other forms of criminal activity, including drug trafficking, human trafficking, and even terrorism.

The scale and brazenness of these crimes have escalated dramatically in recent years. Retailers report increasing incidents of violent confrontations, smash-and-grab robberies, and repeat targeting of high-value merchandise. These crimes not only endanger employees and customers but also place a significant financial burden on businesses and local economies. Recent reporting and industry estimates suggest that ORC imposes multi-billion-dollar losses annually that can have broader economic impacts, including pressure on operational costs, reduced tax revenues for local communities, and higher insurance premiums—factors that may ultimately affect the overall retail environment and consumer experience.

Congress stepped up in 2023 by enacting the INFORM Consumers Act—an important step toward bringing transparency to the growing threat from criminals selling stolen and counterfeit goods. In tandem with the INFORM Consumers Act retailers continue to invest heavily in loss prevention,

technology, and training, but they still cannot solve this problem alone. Federal leadership and coordination are essential to dismantling these criminal enterprises and restoring safety and stability to the retail environment.

Along with retail crime, cargo theft is another growing concern, particularly at intermodal hubs and along major freight corridors. Criminals are increasingly targeting trucks, rail containers, and distribution centers, using tactics such as fraudulent documentation, GPS spoofing, phishing attacks, and insider coordination to divert or hijack shipments. In recent years, retailers and logistics providers have reported a significant uptick in violent incidents, including the use of weapons and threats against drivers and personnel during these crimes. These thefts not only disrupt supply chains and delay deliveries but also pose serious safety risks to workers and impose substantial financial losses on businesses. The increasingly aggressive nature of these crimes also underscores the urgent need for stronger federal coordination and enforcement tools—many of which are addressed in CORCA.

Gift card fraud is another increasingly common scheme used by organized retail crime networks—not only to launder proceeds from theft, but also to directly steal funds that consumers load onto gift cards. Criminals exploit vulnerabilities in the gift card system to drain balances, often before the intended recipient has a chance to use them. CORCA’s provision to classify gift cards as “monetary instruments” under federal law is a critical step toward closing this enforcement gap and equipping law enforcement with the tools needed to investigate and prosecute these schemes more effectively.

The depths of retail crime and the complex challenges it creates for communities prompted RILA to establish the RILA Communities Foundation (RCF), a 501(c)(3) focused on bringing together diverse stakeholders to enhance collaboration and efficiencies to ultimately restore vibrance and economic growth in communities across America. The Foundation is currently focused on two major projects: RILA’s [Vibrant Communities Initiative](#), a first-of-its kind partnership between leading retailers and district attorneys’ offices to combat retail crime, and the [Gift Card Fraud Prevention Alliance](#) (GCFPA), a national effort to protect consumers and drive innovation to fight against gift card fraud. GCFPA has launched a nationwide advocacy campaign to ensure gift card fraud is clearly defined and prosecutable under state law. In 2025 alone, legislation was enacted in 11 states to empower law enforcement with the legal tools needed to arrest and prosecute individuals involved in gift card fraud—filling critical gaps in many existing criminal statutes.

Progress is being made to dismantle the criminal rings behind retail crime schemes, but much more needs to be done. That’s why RILA strongly supports CORCA’s comprehensive approach which includes stronger enforcement tools, improved coordination, and enhanced penalties for organized theft and fraud.

We commend Senators Grassley and Cortez Masto for their leadership on CORCA and strongly urge its swift passage. These crimes are not merely retail challenges - they pose serious threats to public safety, economic stability, and the resilience of our national supply chain. We also want to recognize Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Durbin for their continued commitment to combating organized retail crime, including their leadership on the INFORM Consumers Act.

RILA and our member companies stand ready to support this effort and work with Congress, law enforcement, and other stakeholders to ensure that our communities and commerce are protected from organized criminal activity.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SG' followed by a horizontal line.

Sarah Gilmore
Senior Director, Government Affairs
Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA)

cc: Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary

Statement for the Record

Ulta Beauty, Inc.

Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing on “Organized Retail Crime and the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act” (CORCA)

July 15, 2025

Chairman Grassley, Ranking Member Durbin, and members of the Committee:

Ulta Beauty appreciates the opportunity to submit this statement for the record in support of the “Combating Organized Retail Crime Act” (CORCA) and commends the Committee’s bipartisan leadership in addressing the growing threat of organized retail crime (ORC).

About Ulta Beauty

Ulta Beauty is the nation’s largest specialty beauty retailer by store count, with more than 1,450 stores across the U.S. and plans to open approximately 60 net new stores this year. We employ more than 60,000 associates across our corporate offices, retail stores, distribution centers, and in-store salons.

Founded 35 years ago on the idea of bringing together *All Things Beauty, All In One Place*, we offer an unmatched assortment of cosmetics, fragrance, skin care, hair care, and in-store salon services.

We serve a highly engaged and loyal community of beauty enthusiasts, including 45 million members in our Ulta Beauty Rewards program – the largest loyalty program in the beauty category. Our guests come to Ulta Beauty for a positive, fun, and inclusive shopping experience, and for the expertise of our incredible store and salon associates.

Statement of Support for CORCA

Organized retail crime is more than shoplifting. It involves coordinated, large-scale criminal operations in which sophisticated networks target retailers, resell stolen merchandise, and often fund broader illicit activity. Nearly a quarter (24 percent) of our resolved ORC investigations so far this year have been fencing cases (in which stolen goods are bought and resold, often through online marketplaces) linked to broader organized crime operations.

We support CORCA’s goal to establish a coordinated federal approach to fighting these crimes. By enabling real-time data sharing and cross-jurisdictional collaboration between federal, state, and local authorities, CORCA would empower law enforcement to pursue and prosecute ORC offenders more effectively, deterring future activity and protecting retail workers and consumers.

We believe this bill represents a meaningful and necessary step toward a safer, more secure retail environment, and we respectfully urge Congress to advance its passage.

Ulta Beauty’s Commitment to Combatting ORC

At Ulta Beauty, we take a proactive, multi-faceted approach to addressing ORC that includes investing in deterrence, intelligence and strategic partnerships with industry and law enforcement. Our dedicated ORC investigation team – primarily former law enforcement professionals – works closely with local, state, and federal agencies to investigate cases, bring repeat offenders to justice, and identify emerging trends. We are active members of NRF, RILA, and CLEAR, advocating for more effective policies and enforcement

strategies, and we also share best practices and intelligence with peer retailers to identify and disrupt criminal networks – strengthening outcomes across the retail industry.

Most importantly, this issue has a real human impact. Our top priority is always the safety and wellbeing of our associates and guests, and they deserve an environment free from disruption and risk. To support this, we've implemented associate training programs, provided post-incident care, and actively supported the communities affected by these crimes.

Conclusion

While retailers can play an important role in helping law enforcement build effective cases against organized retail crime, organized retail crime is a national challenge that requires a coordinated, national solution. CORCA will support law enforcement with the tools they need to intervene earlier, investigate more effectively, and hold criminal networks accountable.

Ulta Beauty is proud to be a part of the solution, and we are grateful to the Committee for its bipartisan leadership on this issue. We support the “Combating Organized Retail Crime Act” and respectfully urge Congress to move this important legislation forward.

Sincerely,

Amiee Bayer-Thomas

Chief Retail Officer

Ulta Beauty