

Opening Statement for the U.S. House Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials

Chairman Webster, Ranking Member Titus and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to address the growing threat of organized theft targeting our nation's railroads, trucking industry and retail sector. As a representative of the National Retail Federation, the world's largest retail trade association, I speak today on behalf of the retail community.

Organized criminal groups are increasingly stealing cargo from railcars and trucks, posing a direct threat to our supply chain, commerce and retail industry. These thefts are not isolated incidents by opportunistic criminals but part of a broader network of organized retail crime, where stolen goods are resold to fund other criminal enterprises.

These sophisticated and often transnational groups exploit weaknesses in security, infrastructure and law enforcement coordination. They monitor shipping routes, identify security gaps and frequently conduct thefts in remote areas where law enforcement response is limited. Their targets range from consumer goods and electronics to pharmaceuticals and essential supplies. Their goal is purely financial — moving stolen goods through illegal domestic resale markets or exporting them abroad, fueling further criminal activity.

The impact of these thefts is immense. Billions of dollars are lost annually, disrupting every link in the logistics chain. Retailers face delayed inventories and increased costs to replace products, while transportation and distribution companies must spend significant resources to investigate these incidents and implement security measures.

Food, medicine and other perishable items are particularly vulnerable, raising product safety concerns as stolen goods are often improperly stored or sold past expiration dates. Consumers depend on the retail

industry to deliver safe and timely products, yet these thefts erode confidence in our national economy.

This crisis demands a coordinated response across federal, state and local agencies. Public-private partnerships must strengthen intelligence-sharing, enhance investigative efforts and close regulatory loopholes that allow these criminal enterprises to flourish.

I urge the Subcommittee to support the **Combating Organized Retail Crime Act of 2025**, which will help dismantle these criminal networks by improving investigative capabilities, strengthening penalties for these criminal groups and increasing resources for law enforcement. With this legislation, we can protect our transportation infrastructure, safeguard our supply chain and defend American businesses and consumers against organized theft.

I look forward to answering your questions, discussing solutions and collaborating with you to resolve this issue. Thank you.