



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

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,<sup>1</sup> 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

---

<sup>1</sup> <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"<sup>2</sup> 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

---

<sup>2</sup> [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.<sup>3</sup>

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 roles<sup>4</sup>.

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

---

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

<sup>4</sup> <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 medications<sup>5</sup> and infant formula<sup>6</sup> 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

---

<sup>5</sup> [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.

<sup>6</sup> [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.<sup>7</sup>

*“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*

---

<sup>7</sup> [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.”*<sup>8</sup>

*“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.”*<sup>9</sup>

*“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.*<sup>10</sup>

## **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.<sup>11</sup>

## **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.

---

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

<sup>9</sup> [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](#)

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

<sup>11</sup> [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 Point<sup>12</sup> 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.

---

<sup>12</sup> 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.