



National District Attorneys Association

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February 16, 2024

The Honorable Jim Jordan
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Ranking Member, House Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

cc: Members of the House Judiciary Committee

Re: Support for H.R. 895 – Combating Organized Retail Crime Act of 2023

Dear Chairman Jordan, Ranking Member Nadler, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the National District Attorneys Association (NDAA), the oldest and largest national organization representing over 6,000 state and local prosecutors in the country, I write in support of the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act of 2023. This legislation would ensure relationship building and information sharing among Federal, State, Local, and Tribal law enforcement agencies and retail organizations, which is crucial to the success of H.R. 895.

Organized retail crime, often involving violence or threats of violence to subdue employees and shoppers while robbing stores of their most valuable and easily diverted merchandise, has been a growing concern to retailers, industry, and law enforcement. Retailers have seen a dramatic increase in occurrences of organized retail crime. Retailers, especially small businesses, are spending thousands of dollars repairing smashed windows, adding metal shutters for security, and even leaving display cases unlocked at night to reduce the probability of damage and repair. In order to offset losses, retailers are placing less expensive merchandise in storefronts and moving more expensive merchandise to less accessible areas. They assume that people will steal in this current environment and therefore offering less expensive merchandise for the taking is more effective.

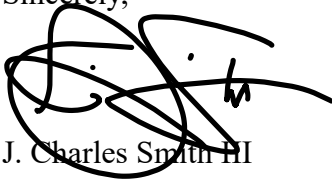
According to a report by the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA) on the impact of all forms of retail theft, billions of dollars' worth of products were stolen from U.S. retailers in 2019. Connected to that is the cost to federal and state governments in lost personal and business tax revenues. This is a growing problem in large and small, urban and rural communities. Organized retail crime and retail theft are equal opportunity destroyers of communities and must be addressed to ensure healthy and vibrant communities.

The Combating Organized Retail Crime Act would help tackle these challenges by expanding federal enforcement of criminal offenses related to organized retail crime and establishing an Organized Retail Crime Coordination Center within the Department of Homeland Security to align Federal, State, local, territorial, and Tribal efforts. Most importantly, State and local law

enforcement agencies will receive assistance with their investigations of organized retail crime groups.

NDAA has now testified twice within the last year in front of committees examining this growing challenge and we stand ready to assist in the fight against organized retail crime. With over 100 cosponsors already, we urge the passage of H.R. 895 out of the House Judiciary Committee. We look forward to working with you and your staff on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Charles Smith III", with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

J. Charles Smith III
President
National District Attorneys Association