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Combatting Retail Crime for Safer Communities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Prosecutors and Retailers Announce New Investment to Combat Organized Retail Crime

ARLINGTON, VA – Today, the National District Attorneys Association (NDAA) and the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA) announced a new investment in their partnership to combat organized retail crime. To continue collaboration between the nation’s prosecutors and retailers, RILA and NDAA are making a \$100,000 investment to develop training materials and a nationwide education curriculum to assist law enforcement, prosecutors, and retailers as they work together to safeguard communities.

“Tackling this problem in silos doesn’t work, and hasn’t worked,” said Lisa LaBruno, RILA’s Senior Executive Vice President of Retail Operations. “Organized retail crime has become more sophisticated and more violent, and a partnership between law enforcement and retail is the only way we meet this challenge. The investment in a national ‘playbook’ is a great step forward in this partnership.”

“Organized retail crime isn’t one person acting alone. These are professional retail crime rings stealing merchandise – sometimes medications and expired infant formula - and reselling online to unsuspecting consumers,” said Erie County District Attorney John J. Flynn, President of the National District Attorneys Association. “In addition to the economic cost, consumers face serious health and safety risks when they unknowingly purchase these items.”

Law enforcement agencies have also [identified a nexus](#) between many of these organized retail crime syndicates and other serious criminal activities such as human trafficking, narcotics trafficking, weapon trafficking and more. Prosecutors and retailers play critical roles in identifying and combatting these organized criminal networks operating in our communities.

To address the continued growth of organized retail crime, RILA and NDAA have committed to additional steps to keep our communities safe, including:

- Develop and implement training on retail crime topics to assist prosecutors and retailers in addressing barriers to tackling retail crime.
- Capture the latest trends in the retail crime space to inform current gaps in information and assistance in the field for addressing retail crime.

- Host a series of educational webinars along with an annual retail crime roundtable discussion for retailers and prosecutors.
- Launch a Retail Crime Advisory Group comprised of retailers and prosecutors.
- Exchange information and collaborate on policy discussions and strategies to highlight emerging trends in the retail crime space.

A [2019 report](#) found the rise of organized retail crime has resulted in \$125.7 billion in lost economic activity and 658,375 fewer jobs nationally. Retailers have reported a surge in violence in stores as these crimes escalate from crimes of opportunity to organized events designed to fund criminal enterprises.

The increased partnership between the nation's prosecutors and the nation's retailers will allow for the establishment of open lines of communication to identify common challenges, share information on repeat offenders and work together to identify criminal networks targeting our communities.

Formed in 1950, NDAA is the oldest and largest national organization representing state and local prosecutors in the country. With more than 5,500 members representing over two thirds of the state and local prosecutors' offices, NDAA is recognized as the leading source of national expertise on the prosecution function and is a valuable resource for the media, academia, government, and community leaders. NDAA's mission is to provide state and local prosecutors with the knowledge, skills, and support they need to ensure that justice is done and that public safety rights are protected.

RILA is the US trade association for leading retailers. They convene decision-makers to collaborate and gain from each other's experience. They advance the industry through public-policy advocacy and promote operational excellence and innovation. And through research and thought leadership, they propel developments that foster both economic growth and sustainability. Their aim is bold but simple: to elevate a dynamic industry by transforming the environment in which retailers operate.

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