

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-3313**

May 30, 2025

The Honorable Pam Bondi  
U.S. Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Emil Bove  
Acting Deputy Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi and Acting Deputy Attorney General Bove:

We write to urge the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to prioritize prosecutions and investigations against organized theft groups (OTGs) committing organized retail crime (ORC). After years of increased ORC happening across the country, it has become a growing threat to our communities and public safety.

Often confused with isolated incidents of petty shoplifting, ORC is perpetrated by highly organized professional thieves, also known as “boosters,” who operate as part of larger criminal enterprises. ORC extends beyond retail theft to include cargo and supply chain theft, e-commerce theft and fraud, fraudulent returns, and gift card fraud schemes. Because of this, a significant portion of ORC incidents go unreported to law enforcement. There are also links between OTGs and a myriad of other crimes, such as human and narcotics trafficking, money laundering, and terrorism. Securing our nation’s border is critical to prevent an increase of ORC by transnational criminal groups.

The risk of ORC is not only associated with the violence displayed during the act of retail theft but also with health risks posed by consuming stolen goods like baby formula or pharmaceuticals, which may be improperly stored or tampered with. ORC also endangers Main Street businesses and the economy. Retailers reported a 93 percent increase in the average number of shoplifting incidents per year in 2023 versus 2019 and a 90 percent increase in dollar loss due to shoplifting over the same period.<sup>1</sup> According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, ORC has caused \$125.7 billion in lost economic activity, including \$14.9 billion in lost in federal, state, and local tax revenue and 658,375 jobs.<sup>2</sup> This is just the known estimate of economic loss as not all ORC is reported.

---

<sup>1</sup> National Retail Federation. (2024). (rep.). *The Impact of Retail Theft & Violence*. Retrieved from [https://297051953189d612da9e-1e2a7931911c2abaf913026fb7c64860.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/Research/Retail%20Theft%20%26%20Violence/NRF\\_ImpactofRetailTheftViolence-2024.pdf](https://297051953189d612da9e-1e2a7931911c2abaf913026fb7c64860.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/Research/Retail%20Theft%20%26%20Violence/NRF_ImpactofRetailTheftViolence-2024.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Baker, G., & Lucy, I. (2024, March 8). Retail theft by criminal organizations costs consumers, employees, businesses. Retail theft by criminal organizations costs consumers, employees, businesses | U.S. Chamber of Commerce. <https://www.uschamber.com/economy/retail-crime-data-center/>

To help President Trump secure our borders and combat the influx of illicit opioids and other drugs, the United States must prevent Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs), gang members, smugglers, and human traffickers from using ORC to further enrich their operations.<sup>3</sup>

The need for prosecutorial action is underscored by recent cases like the March 2023 indictment<sup>4</sup> by the United States Attorney's Office of two individuals involved in a sophisticated retail theft scheme. The defendants, who pleaded guilty to wire fraud, collaborated to steal over \$800,000 worth of equipment from a large retailer by exploiting its rental service. Operating under false identities, they sold the stolen goods on platforms. Their operation spanned 190 store locations across 23 states, using 150 different names. While this case was successfully investigated by the Department of Homeland Security's Homeland Security Investigations, countless similar cases require the dedicated support of your office.

Currently, 18 states have established Task Forces dedicated to fighting ORC. We applaud the significant progress at the state level in combating ORC and urge the DOJ to build upon these efforts by expanding support for nationwide initiatives.

To further combat ORC, we believe the DOJ should:

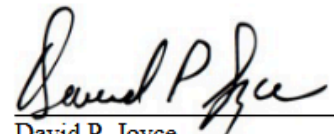
- Prioritize ORC-related prosecutions and investigations to stop organized theft groups;
- Provide additional resources to state Attorneys General and local law enforcement agencies combating ORC; and
- Work with Congress to update legislation that would ensure sophisticated criminal networks are appropriately prosecuted for stealing and selling stolen goods online to fund criminal activities.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Brad Knott  
Member of Congress



David P. Joyce  
Member of Congress



David G. Valadao  
Member of Congress



Barry Moore  
Member of Congress

<sup>3</sup> Baker, G., & Lucy, I. (2024, March 8). Retail theft by criminal organizations costs consumers, employees, businesses. Retail theft by criminal organizations costs consumers, employees, businesses | U.S. Chamber of Commerce. <https://www.uschamber.com/economy/retail-crime-data-center?>

<sup>4</sup> US attorney Tessa Gorman joins Hsi for a roundtable on organized retail crime. Western District of Washington | US Attorney Tessa Gorman joins HSI for a roundtable on organized retail crime | United States Department of Justice. (2024, March 4). <https://www.justice.gov/usao-wdwa/pr/us-attorney-tessa-gorman-joins-hsi-roundtable-organized-retail-crime>



---

Daniel Webster  
Member of Congress



---

Pete Stauber  
Member of Congress



---

Pat Harrigan  
Member of Congress



---

Mike Carey  
Member of Congress



---

Robert J. Wittman  
Member of Congress



---

Rick W. Allen  
Member of Congress



---

Dusty Johnson  
Member of Congress



---

Juan Ciscomani  
Member of Congress



---

John J. McGuire III  
Member of Congress



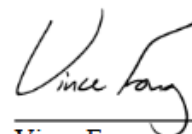
---

Vern Buchanan  
Member of Congress



---

Steve Womack  
Member of Congress

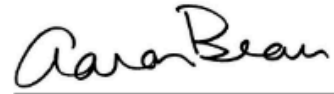


---

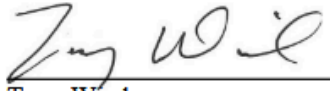
Vince Fong  
Member of Congress



Brad Finstad  
Member of Congress



Aaron Bean  
Member of Congress



Tony Wied  
Member of Congress



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter  
Member of Congress



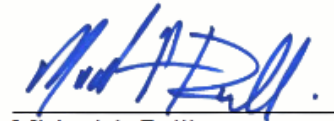
Mark E. Amodei  
Member of Congress



Michael Baumgartner  
Member of Congress



Laurel M. Lee  
Member of Congress



Michael A. Rulli  
Member of Congress