



Clackamas County Sheriff's Office

ANGELA BRANDENBURG
Sheriff

RE: Testimony in Support of SB 318 and SB 340

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

My name is Detective Michael Zacher of the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office (CCSO). I am assigned to the Property Crimes Unit at CCSO and I am the law enforcement president of the Organized Retail Crime Association of Oregon. I am here with the full support of the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office as well as the Oregon State Sheriff's Association (OSSA) and Oregon Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP).

I offer my testimony in support of SB 318 and SB 340 which I believe will combat organized retail crime in the State of Oregon.

I have worked for CCSO since 2005 and have been assigned to investigate property crimes as a detective since 2019. I have seen the Portland Metro Area change dramatically in that time regarding organized retail crime, and how that change has negatively impacted the community. In my experience, I have seen retailers throughout the metro area facing the brunt of this organized retail crime largely driven by substance abuse and the ability to easily sell stolen goods through secondary markets.

I have worked extensively with asset protection and loss prevention retailers to investigate large scale organized retail crime suspects. In that time, I have seen and investigated individuals and groups who have stolen tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars-worth of merchandise. Customers see the impact of organized retail crime through necessary items not being available on store shelves, increased costs for those items when they are in stock and the use of extensive security features to protect these items from theft. I have found many of these suspects were willing to place others at great risk of bodily harm to defeat these store security measures, to retain merchandise and to avoid capture by law enforcement. Some area retailers have deemed losses from suspects like these and the potential risks they pose to employees too extensive, and have chosen to relocate or close their locations entirely.

In 2022, an Organized Retail Crime Task Force was convened to identify the current problems and possible solutions to address organized retail crime in the State of Oregon. SB 318 and SB 340 have been proposed to this legislature as a means to provide those solutions.

SB 318 will provide funding for resources with the Oregon Department of Justice that would aid in combating organized retail crime. The other component would be establishing a \$5 million local grant program to support the funding of retail crime missions. Currently, we plan to coordinate retail crime missions with retailers throughout Clackamas County. These missions range from supporting individual stores experiencing high volume theft to

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supporting large scale missions targeting high volume thefts at multiple retailers at shopping centers. These missions are funded by individual law enforcement agencies.

For our agency, the personnel required to support these missions can range from roughly seven (7) CCSO members on smaller scale missions to over twenty-five (25) CCSO members for a large-scale mission. Other law enforcement agencies within Clackamas County and Washington County support these missions as well, using their own agency funding and personnel. Outside of the metro area and across the state for smaller agencies and those with smaller budgets, combating organized retail crime in their communities may not even be possible.

The availability of dedicated grant funding to support these operations throughout the state would provide the means to combat organized and large scale retail crime. We believe this task force has identified a problem within our communities that can be addressed through grant funding. Much in the same way that grant funding has successfully impacted traffic safety around the use of seatbelts, and driving under the influence of intoxicants, grant funding will impact the tide of organized retail crime in favor of safer communities. I am confident that organized retail crime can be impacted by the passage of SB 318 through grant funded targeted operations to protect retailers and hold offenders accountable.

SB 340 will address current deficiencies in Oregon law that will empower law enforcement investigators throughout the state to combat organized retail crime and address the actual conduct of these offenders. Organized retail crime doesn't recognize borders, and it affects retailers throughout the state. This bill will address necessary changes to Oregon Revised Statutes regarding venue and theft statutes. Those necessary changes will also empower prosecutors throughout the State of Oregon to address such rampant criminal conduct and hold offenders accountable.

Based upon my testimony and that of fellow members of the Organized Retail Crime Task Force before you today, I respectfully ask for your support of SB 318 and SB 340.

Respectfully,



Detective Michael Zacher
Clackamas County Sheriff's Office