



OREGON ASSOCIATION CHIEFS OF POLICE
EXCELLENCE IN POLICING

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OREGON STATE SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION
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To: Members of the House Committee on Judiciary

From: Jason Myers, Executive Director
Oregon State Sheriffs' Association

Kevin Campbell, Executive Director
Oregon Association of Chiefs of Police

Date: April 26, 2023

**Re: SB 340 - Testimony in support - Retail Theft Funding and Policy Packages
Chair Kropf and members of the committee,**

On behalf of the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association (OSSA) and the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police (OACP) we submit this testimony in support of SB 340.

As you have heard through testimony, retail theft by organized crime has skyrocketed in the last several years. At the same time, law enforcement personnel have been depleted by retirements and individuals leaving the line of work all together. This workforce challenge is more dire considering Oregon's status as one of the least policed states in the United States. Based on 2021 data, Oregon was ranked 50th in the nation with 1.48 officers per thousand population. This has forced many law enforcement agencies to focus almost exclusively on responding to life endangering calls for service due to low staffing. Often, when calls of retail theft are received by law enforcement, they are unable to respond quickly and, in some cases, are not able to respond at all.

OSSA and OACP participated in the Organized Retail Theft Task Force this past fall which informed SB 340. This Task Force brought together retailers, law enforcement, and prosecutors for a comprehensive discussion of the issues associated with organized retail theft and to develop strategies to address it from every angle possible. The organized retail theft package of legislation includes a combination of funding and resources for Law Enforcement and prosecutors to address these ever-increasing crimes.

SB 340 includes additional tools to address organized retail theft including:

- Adds the organized retail theft statute to the repeat property offender statute, authorizing judges to impose a longer sentence for repeat offenders.
- Allows prosecutors to aggregate the value of stolen property over 180 days for purposes of proving the crime of organized retail theft and allows prosecutors to add multiple theft

transactions together if they were against the same or multiple victims within a one-year period. In cases where crimes are alleged to have been committed in several counties.

- Provides that the defendant may be tried in any county in which one crime was allegedly committed against the same victim by the same defendant in a 180-day period.
- Provides that a person commits theft in the first degree, a Class C felony, if, during a theft, the person creates a risk of serious physical injury.

The provisions of SB 340 will allow police agencies to work in partnership with retailers and to focus limited resources on the most effective and targeted efforts to address organized retail theft. OSSA and OACP fully support this measure and ask for your support as well.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.