

SB 275 -2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Judiciary

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Meeting Dates: 3/26, 4/7

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

This measure directs the Department of Justice to study ways to address retail theft.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Fire exit thefts
- Sole proprietorship as organized theft
- Recent case law, including *State v. Baker*
- Deterrent effect
- Innocent purchasers
- Potential unintended consequences

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-2 The amendment replaces the measure, modifies the Organized Retail Theft (ORT) Grant Program and requires the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission to report on the same by September 1, 2027. Specifically, the measure modifies the ORT Grant Program to distribute grants to the Department of Justice, in addition to local law enforcement, and not to the Department of State Police or community-based organizations and clarifies that grants can be used to purchase equipment, broadly defined. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

REVENUE: Has minimal revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal impact issued

BACKGROUND:

Pursuant to Senate Bill 900 (2023), the purpose of the Organized Retail Theft (ORT) Grant Program is to lend financial assistance to local law enforcement agencies, the Oregon State Police, and community-based organizations in addressing and prosecuting organized retail theft, as defined in ORS 164.098.

The Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) administers the ORT program and prioritizes grants to agencies and organizations that demonstrate the following:

- Ability to address organized retail theft that places employees and/or the public at risk of injury.
- Ability to identify and address organized retail theft rings.
- Ability to identify and address individuals or groups who have committed or are at risk of committing organized retail theft.
- Evidence of collaboration with retailers or law enforcement agencies.
- Operations designed to have a regional or statewide beneficial effect.

Funds awarded under the ORT program must be spent on addressing and prosecuting organized retail theft.