

**Rep. Young Kim Remarks at Judiciary Member Day
Hearing, November 3, 2023**

Thank you, Chairman Jordan, Ranking Member Nadler, and Members of the Judiciary Committee for holding today's member day hearing and allowing me to testify on my legislative priorities.

I represent California's 40th Congressional District, which has been plagued by retail crime. We see businesses victimized by large scale thefts every week, and these thefts are often part of a broader scheme to steal goods, front them online or overseas, and launder money for criminal organizations. This scheme is known as organized retail crime and is responsible for roughly \$95 billion in losses for retailers every year.

The California Highway Patrol has set up a taskforce to better respond to organized retail crime and to work more closely with local jurisdictions to crack down on organized retail crime, but guidance and assistance from the federal government is limited. These crimes are normally prosecuted on the local and state level, whereas federal law enforcement is often occupied with more serious and violent crimes.

While I understand that federal law enforcement is not the most equipped to respond to retail theft cases, I do believe that the federal government can play a role in supporting state and

local law enforcement, especially in cases of organized retail crime where stolen goods or laundered money crosses intrastate or interstate lines.

Investigations of organized retail crime can be complicated given the number of agencies that could be involved in investigating different elements of the crime, and there is no agency that has exclusive jurisdiction over these cases when the crime crosses state lines. Since organized retail crime crosses different jurisdictions, federal enforcement agencies should be able to strategize on how to best support state and local law enforcement in combatting these crimes.

My bill, the Improving Federal Investigations of Organized Retail Crime Act, directs the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Postal Service and other relevant agencies to create a cohesive strategy and report to Congress on how the federal government can improve coordination and information sharing among federal law enforcement agencies, increase collaboration with retailers, organized retail crime associations and state-run retail crime taskforce, and assist state and local authorities in compiling evidence for the prosecution of organized retail crime.

While this is a small step in right direction, we should note that there are a number of other issues that will need to be addressed as we seek to tackle organized retail crime. I know a

number of my colleagues are working on this issue, and I stand ready to work with them and the Judiciary Committee to move legislation on this issue that is deeply important for my District.

I would also ask the Committee to keep in mind that California suffers from rogue prosecutors who refuse to enforce the laws on the books, and immediately release criminals back on to the streets after they are booked for misdemeanor and even felony thefts. I also stand ready to work with you on this issue.

I again thank Chairman Jordan and Ranking Member Nadler for allowing me to testify about my priorities, and I yield the balance of my time.