

January 12, 2026

Congressman Jim Jordan
Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member
House Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Jordan and Ranking Member Raskin,

On behalf of the National Grocers Association (NGA), I appreciate the opportunity to submit this letter strongly supporting the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act (CORCA).

NGA is the national trade association representing independent grocery retailers and wholesalers who serve them. An independent retailer is a privately owned or controlled company operating in a variety of formats. Having often been in business for generations, independent grocers are dedicated to their customers, associates, and communities. Much of NGA's membership is comprised of family-owned and family-operated businesses. Nearly half of NGA's members are single-store operators, and another quarter operate less than five stores. Independent retail and wholesale grocers are an important part of America's economy. Independent community grocers account for a third of all grocery sales, exceeding \$250 billion in sales, and more than one million American jobs. We are inherently tied to the strength and vitality of the markets we serve – at the heart of local communities and the U.S. economy.

Our members must contend with rising energy prices, labor shortages, increasing operational costs, and the unfair practices of power buyers. Those factors combined are enough to drive independent community grocers out of business and have been steadily driving up grocery prices. On top of that, retailers must now contend with a massive increase in organized retail crime. In an industry where the average profit margin is 1.5% grocers are unable to absorb rapidly increasing costs, especially those of retail theft and mitigation, and will have to pass them on to consumers in the form of higher grocery prices.

The National Retail Federation found that more than half of retailers surveyed reported increases in organized retail crime and that these groups now exploit both physical and digital channels, operating across state lines and even borders. When confronted, these organized retail crime gangs now exhibit even greater levels of aggression and violence than in previous years. Forty-six percent of survey respondents saw increases in guest-related violence and violence during a crime. This puts both employees and customers at risk.

While a growing number of independent grocers have programs in place to address retail crime in their stores, the national and even international nature of these criminal gangs necessitates the increased resources a federal response can provide. The CORCA would establish a new Organized Retail and Supply Chain Crime Coordination Center to align efforts, expertise and resources across local, state, federal and private-sector partners, improving information-sharing

and enabling more coordinated investigations and prosecutions. The bill also gives federal prosecutors and judges new methods to pursue and punish organized retail crime gangs.

Our members keep their communities fed and employed, but organized retail crime represents an existential threat to independent community grocers. We appreciate the Judiciary Committee's attention to this matter and look forward to working further to strengthen America's community grocers.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Max Wengroff', followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.

Max Wengroff
Senior Manager, Government Relations
National Grocers Association