

Lofgren CORCA (H.R. 2853) Statement

- Organized retail crime is not a victimless offense.
- It hurts small businesses and large retailers alike, drives up costs for consumers, and places the safety of retail workers, often low-wage workers, at risk.
- In California and nationwide, local law enforcement, retailers, and community stakeholders have made clear that more coordination and better tools are needed to disrupt sophisticated criminal networks that exploit jurisdictional gaps and online marketplaces.
- This bill is responsive to many of those concerns.
- I appreciate that it focuses on coordination, information-sharing, and supporting state and local efforts rather than relying solely on new criminal penalties.
- I also want to note the strong engagement from state and local stakeholders, including retailers, law enforcement, and community partners, who are on the front lines of this problem and have called for a more unified federal response.
- At the same time, I do want to briefly flag one area where I have some reservations.
 - The bill proposes to house the Organized Retail Crime Coordination Center within the Department of Homeland Security.
 - While DHS certainly has expertise relevant to transnational crime and border-related issues, organized retail theft is fundamentally a domestic criminal justice issue that intersects closely with DOJ, state attorneys general, and local law enforcement.
- As we move forward, I believe it is important for the Committee to continue examining whether DHS is the most appropriate home for this function, and to ensure that the Center's mission remains narrowly focused, well-coordinated with DOJ, and respectful appropriate jurisdictional boundaries.
- I recognize the urgency of the problem we are trying to address and the need to get a handle on organized retail crime before it further undermines public safety and economic stability in our communities.