

ORGANIZED RETAIL CRIME TASK FORCE

Mike Webb
Chief of Staff

Barbara Serrano
Assistant Attorney General



SCOPE

- 10th State with an Organized Retail Crime Task Force
- Organized Crime, not shoplifting
 - Multiple offenders working together
 - Sophisticated
 - Stealing for the purpose of resale for profit

Statewide Problem

Organized Retail Crime Incidents Around the State

Seattle Police arrest 53 in retail theft operation

- KOMO News, 06/10/2021

Two arrested after nearly two-month shoplifting spree at Spokane stores

- KHQ, 07/27/2020

Auburn Police looking to identify member of organized retail theft crew

- FOX 12, 09/29/2021

Three people face charges of organized retail theft in Woodland Walmart case

- The Columbian, 05/18/2022

Group charged with theft spree at Valley mall

- KIMA, 12/23/2019

Tri-Cities law enforcement arrests man connected to retail theft ring

- YakTriNews.com, 01/21/2022

KEY GOALS

- Increase coordination and collaboration
- Center workers' voices
- Research reforms and best practices
- Increase law enforcement resources to combat the problem

INCREASE COMMUNICATION

- First meeting on Thursday, July 7
 - State, federal and local law enforcement
 - Workers' representatives
 - Retailers
 - Small businesses
 - Online marketplaces
- Second meeting scheduled on Wednesday, November 30

INCREASE COMMUNICATION

- Ongoing Listening Sessions
 - Dozens of retailers, large and small
 - Online marketplaces
 - Local law enforcement
 - Other states' task forces

CENTER WORKERS' VOICES

The impacts of organized retail crime extend beyond the business owner and the economic impact. Impacted workers are on the front lines.

Reforms and Best Practices

- Guidance for Small Businesses

Reforms and Best Practices

- Meeting with Online Marketplaces to Improve Cooperation and Develop Best Practices
 - Creation of ORC investigation teams
 - Reasonable steps to hinder trafficking of stolen property
 - Data sharing with retailers

Reforms and Best Practices

- Future Goal: Guidance for Law Enforcement and Prosecutors

Resource Challenges

- Complexity of organized retail crime
- Law enforcement staffing issues
- Prosecutor caseloads and need for additional investigation

Increase Resources

- Requesting funding for a Statewide Organized Retail Crime Unit to assist local law enforcement and prosecutors
 - \$1.5 million
 - 2 prosecutors, 4 investigators, 1 data analyst
 - Comparable to other states: CA: \$27M; MI: \$1.75M; AZ: \$1.5M

Questions