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Senate Labor and Commerce Committee

Public Safety, Retail Theft Organized Retail Crime

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How Big is the Problem?

Retail theft and Organized Retail Crime: Long-term problems with explosive growth

- **54%** of small businesses experienced an increase in theft in 2022
- **\$112 billion** lost nationally in 2022
- **Almost \$3 billion** in Washington State – over \$300 million in lost state and local taxes

Source: 2023 National Retail Federation Security Survey



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So Why Does This Matter?

- **Impacts on employee mental and physical health and safety**
- **Costly resources are needed to protect employees and customers**
- **Consumers and business owners are absorbing the costs – higher prices and product shortages**
- **Retail theft and ORC fund many other crimes**



What is Organized Retail Crime?



Working Together to Address the Issues

A Multi-Pronged Approach – no “silver bullet”

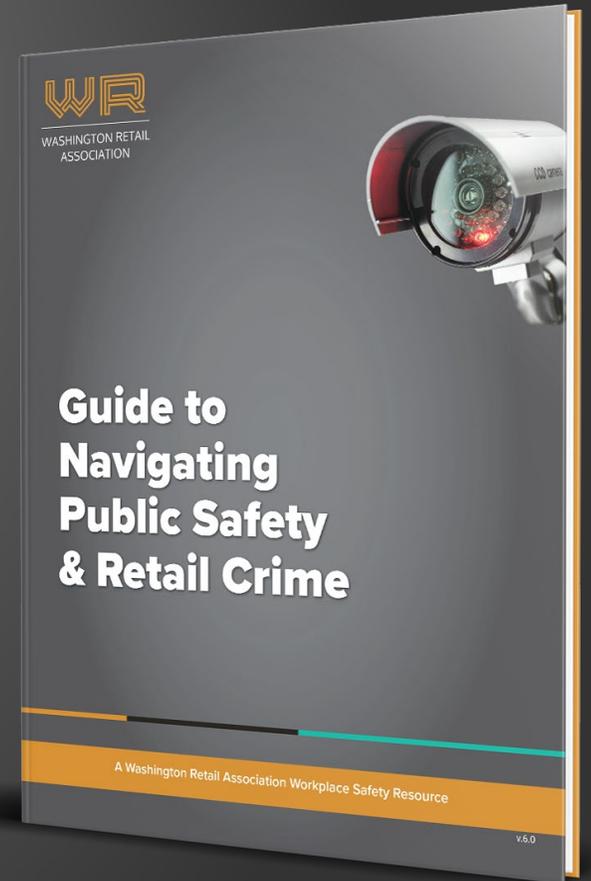
1. **Telling the story – educating the public and elected officials**
2. **Making it harder to sell stolen goods – National - *Integrity, Notification, and Fairness in Online Retail Marketplaces for Consumers Act (INFORM)* – effective 6/27/23**
3. **National pilot initiative the “Vibrant Communities” program – Seattle/King County – Retail Industry Leaders Association**
4. **Passing legislation and funding to support law enforcement, prosecutors, diversion and treatment programs, and ORC Statewide taskforce**



Working together to address the issues

A Multi-Pronged Approach (cont.)

5. **Coordination with the Washington State Organized Retail Crime Association (WAORCA)**
6. **Supporting national legislation – the Combatting Organized Retail Crime Act – CORCA – S. 140 HR 895**
7. **Providing resources for small and mid-sized retailers and municipalities**



Legislative

Still needed:

- **Safe, trained and authorized police vehicle pursuits for property crimes**
- **Organized Retail Crime (ORC) enhancements including - Multiple accomplices, repeat offenders, and concealment of goods**
- **Small business theft deterrent grants**



Safety as a Top Priority

Safety actions for brick & mortar stores requires planning – the 4 “Ps”

- **Prepare**
- **Prevent**
- **Protect**
- **Post-crime**





NEW AT 6

BUSINESSES SEE SURGE IN PROPERTY CRIME



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Safety as a Top Priority

- Artificial intelligence
- Locking product display cases
- Automatic License Plate Recognition
- Locking shopping cartwheels



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Organized Retail Crime Task Force and Association –

Get involved and stay informed:

**WA AG ORC
Task Force**

WAORCA
www.waorca.org



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Thank You!

Questions?

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