



Dear Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am Kevin Stone, a proud representative of the globally known Columbia Sportswear Company. Columbia Sportswear is a global leader in the design, sourcing, marketing, and distribution of outdoor and active lifestyle apparel, footwear, accessories, and equipment. Columbia Sportswear is also famously an Oregon based company that has nearly 8,325 employees and at Columbia Sportswear we invest in initiatives that have a positive impact on the people we reach, the places we touch, and the products we make.

In addition to being a representative of Columbia Sportswear Company, I am providing testimony in alliance with and as member of Oregon Business and Industry as well as the Oregon Organized Retail Crime Task Force. The task force is a collaborative initiative between public/private partners, is a solution-oriented group that provides greater coordination between law enforcement, prosecutors, and businesses to disrupt and dismantle organized retail criminal groups responsible for stealing billions of dollars of goods from retailers.

I am providing written testimony with a sense of urgency regarding the alarming issue of organized retail crime, which is causing losses of tens of billions of dollars each year. This is an issue that not only hurts the economy but also threatens the safety of our employees and customers. Offenders that engage in crimes against retailers not only steal from retailers but also resort to violence and intimidation to get their way. According to the National Retail Federation's 2022 National Retail Security Survey, ORC offenders have become increasingly violent, with 81% of participants reporting an increase in violence associated with these criminals.

At Columbia Sportswear, we believe that safety and security should be a top priority for every retailer in Oregon and that safety and security is more frequently being jeopardized at retailers in Oregon. Our employees have reported instances where they have been threatened and victimized by these criminals, causing a ripple effect that impacts not only our employees but also our customers and the communities we serve. This issue makes retention of employees and customers a growing challenge and a headwind to our storefront retail businesses.

We need to address the root cause of this issue by breaking the cycle of recidivism among repeat offenders and taking a new stance against organized crimes against retailers. It is time for new policies and funding to effectively address this problem and create a safer and more profitable retail environment in Oregon.

Senate Bills 318 and 340 are essential pieces of legislation that can help elevate responsibility, integrity, and compliance on the issue of organized retail crime. As a company that values responsible practices and accountability, Columbia Sportswear fully supports these bills and urges the Senate Committee to do the same.

In conclusion, I implore the Senate Committee to take a stand against organized retail crime and support Senate Bills 318 and 340. Our employees and customers deserve to feel safe and secure, and we need your help to make that a reality. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted, Kevin Stone