

THE OHIO COUNCIL OF

Retail Merchants

The voice of retail since 1922

November 18, 2020

The Honorable John Eklund, Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee
Statehouse
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Eklund and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the over 7,000 members of the Ohio Council of Retail Merchants, I write to express our concerns with Senate Bill 301. We appreciate the opportunity to share them with you.

Most importantly, we believe the bill is a solution in search of a problem.

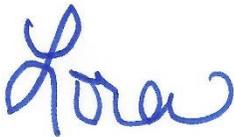
The Ohio Attorney General currently has all the tools in his arsenal necessary to combat price gouging when it occurs. That was evidenced by the Attorney General's ability to shut down the person selling N-95 masks online for an exorbitant markup at the beginning of the pandemic.

Also, the Attorney General's staff was sending weekly spreadsheets of price gouging complaints to our office during the first several months of the pandemic. At the time, there was a lock down occurring. People were panicking and hoarding. We began to hear about "price gouging" on the news, and, as a result, people were actively looking for price gouging and "seeing" it everywhere, even where it didn't exist. Of all the complaints made against members of the Council, not one was legitimate.

As for the product limit authority that would be granted to the Attorney General under the bill, Ohio retailers handled the hoarding of products at the beginning of the pandemic with their own product limits. They did not need the government's intervention to handle the situation effectively. Our members rose to the challenge and served their customers' needs during an unprecedented situation.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the Council's concerns regarding Senate Bill 301. My apologies for being unable to be with you today due to illness. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Lora Miller
Director of Governmental Affairs and Public Relations