



June 11, 2024

The Honorable Cindy Abrams
Chairwoman, Criminal Justice Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High Street, 13th floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: Support for House Bill 366 – Fight Organized Retail Crime and Empower Law Enforcement Act

Chairwoman Abrams and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony for House Bill 366, the Fight Organized Retail Crime and Empower Law Enforcement (FORCE) Act.

Walmart proudly employs over 55,000 associates at our 169 retail stores and 8 fulfillment centers across Ohio. Ensuring the safety of our associates and customers at each of these facilities is a top priority. Accordingly, Walmart supports HB 366 as a critical measure to keeping Ohio communities and shopping centers safe.

Since 2021, more than 10 states have statutorily established state or regional task forces focused on combatting the persistent and increased dangers of organized retail crime. Such efforts have proven successful in increasing coordination among law enforcement, retailers, and other community organizations, and by providing law enforcement with tools narrowly tailored to address the unique and evolving challenges associated with organized retail crime. Walmart supports the robust framework outlined in HB 366, specifically establishing a task force devoted to investigating organized retail crime activity, refining the definition of organized retail theft, providing for cross-jurisdictional law enforcement coordination, ensuring effective information sharing between law enforcement and retailers, and enhancing penalties for violations. Several other states have found such measures critical to fighting organized retail crime, and we believe these will go a long way in helping protect Ohio communities from the harms of organized retail crime.

Chairwoman Abrams and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony today. We respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of House Bill 366.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rachael Carl".

Rachael Carl

Director, Public & Government Affairs
Walmart, Inc.